



Austin/Travis County Health and Human Services Department

Austin Safe Routes to School

Taking SRTS to Urban & Low Income Schools

Nikki Treviño, CHES

Austin/ Travis Co. HHSD

www.saferoutesaustin.org



Project Overview

- 8 Elementary & 2 Middle Schools
- 2.5 year Non-Infrastructure Grant from Texas Department Of Transportation
 - Education
 - Encouragement
 - Award Winning Media Campaign!
 - Enforcement
 - Evaluation



Benefits of SRTS for Urban/ Low Income Youth

- Eat breakfast on time
- Safety in numbers
- Creates sense of community
- Gives children something to belong to
- Parent availability



School Profile: Zavala Elementary

- Spanish & English speaking parents
- Economically Disadvantaged
- Neighborhood school
- Excellent infrastructure
- Great support





Crime and Violence



- High crime area
- Perception of safety
- Lack of trust between families
- Parents concerns- bullying, gangs, drugs, kidnappings

Addressing Crime & Violence

- Don't be afraid!
- Create communities that care
- Build trust between parents
- Identify resources and community assets



Designing Programs for Urban/ Low Income Schools

- Know your audience
 - Work with people from the community
 - Learn history
- Invest time
- Utilize existing resources
- Collaboration between systems



Messages/ Strategies for Children



- FUN!!!
- Special privileges
- Responsibilities & Roles
- Simple Incentives
- Experiential Learning



Messages/ Strategies for Parents



Messages:

- Academic achievement
- Family connection
- Keep children safe
- Creating stronger communities
- Take back your community

Strategies:

- Create simple ways to help
- Be a part of their community
- Reward their contribution
- Help them see the whole picture



TAKE TIME.

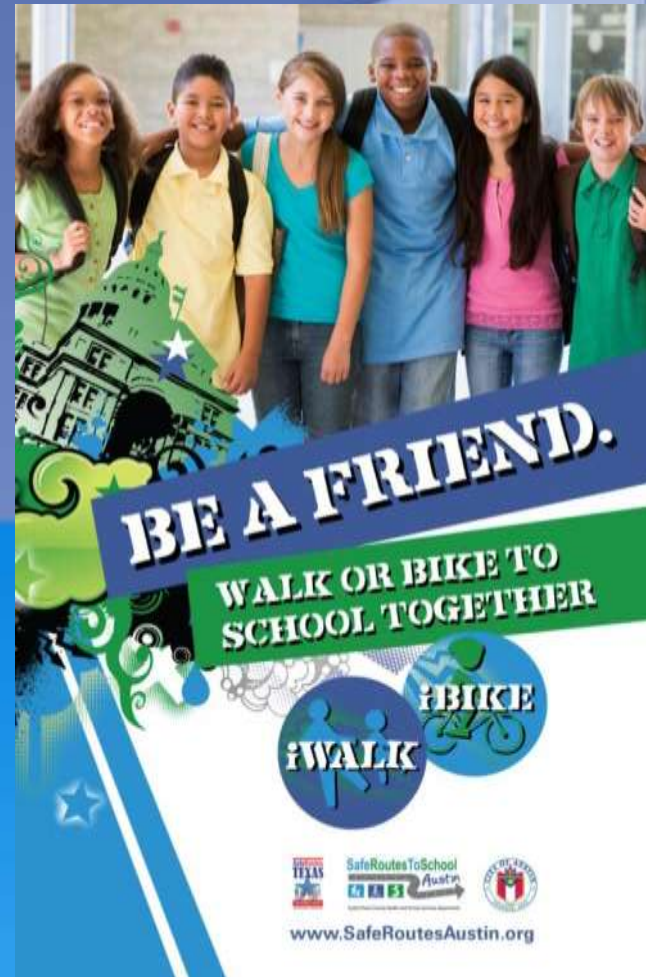
Walk or bike to school *together.*

www.SafeRoutesAustin.org



Other Strategies

- Eyes on the street
- Media campaign & events
- Be consistent
- Integrate with school activities/ initiatives





Challenges

- Leadership Roles/ Responsibility
- Undocumented immigrant population
- Fear of police
- Over-burdened schools
- Time commitment



Results



- Zavala Elementary showed increase in children walking to school
- The real numbers
 - How many kids are walking **together**
 - Are kids getting to school **on time**?
 - Benefits of walking/ biking to school aren't easy to measure
- Students LOVE it!
- Champions have taken over project- strong potential for success/ sustainability



Thank You!!

Nikki Treviño, CHES

512-972-5121

Nikki.Trevino@ci.austin.tx.us

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