

Safe Routes to School



Greetings from the Park High Green Initiative's Severn, Stella and Annika!

During our summer internship with Park County Environmental Council, we researched communities similar to Livingston to learn about making our streets safer, more accessible and more fun for walking, biking and rolling.

We discovered how lucky we are to live in a place where most residents live less than 2 miles from any school in the district - the perfect distance for biking, walking, and any other mode of transport that does not involve gasoline or batteries. Yet, many people choose a car to drive the short distance.

We want to learn why and how students and families get around Livingston. In partnership with the Active Transportation Coalition and Livingston School District, we put together a Safe Routes to School parent survey.

Your input is of great value to the kids in our community.
Please take a few minutes to fill out the survey:
Safe Routes to School Parent Survey

And keep reading for some great tips to get our families moving!

Fill out the Safe Routes to School Parent Survey



BACK 2 SCHOOL TIPS!

The transition back to school is a great time to incorporate walking, rolling and biking into your daily routine and enjoy the lovely fall days outside our cars!

Here are some tips to make your commute to school fun, easy, and convenient.

PICK A SAFE ROUTE

- The safest routes are not necessarily the shortest
- Separated bike paths are the safest, such as the O-Street Connector and 89-South Bike Path
- Avoid busy thoroughfares like Geysler, Front and H Street. These streets have fewer stop signs, faster moving traffic and a lot more cars.
- Choose safer parallel streets like Clark, Lewis, Montana, or Chinook.
- Head towards South E Street connecting directly to Sleeping Giant, Eastside, St. Mary's and Park High.
- Travel in groups when crossing the railroad tracks. B Street is a safer crossing because it is separated from traffic. Please walk your bike through the tunnel to avoid a collision.
- Get creative! Try to link together trails, using calmer, natural areas and parks like River Drive and Sacajawea Park.
- Use the [city's trail map](#) to determine your route near parks and on trails.
- Go scout the route beforehand or travel with someone who's more experienced.
- Contact the Active Transportation Coalition and chat with someone who walks and bikes everyday.

NOW YOU ARE READY TO RIDE! CONSIDER THESE BICYCLE SAFETY TIPS

Do the 'A, B, C Quick Check' for your bike: Check that your bike is in good operating order. A is for Air, B is for Brakes, C is for Cranks and Chain, and Quick is for quick releases.

Helmet: Wear a properly fitted and adjusted helmet. The front of your helmet should be level and two-fingers width above your eyebrows. Shake your head from side to side: there should only be a little movement.

Bike right: Ride your bike on the right side of the road and stay out of the curb. Don't give drivers the impression they can squeeze by you.

Be predictable: Travel in a straight line, don't weave in and out of parked cars and [use hand signals](#) when turning. Ride far enough left you won't get hit by an opening car door. Act like a car, take the lane and be visible! [Avoid getting hit.](#)

Be visible: Wear brightly colored clothing, have reflectors and use lights at night.

Avoid riding your bike on sidewalks: Drivers are looking for other cars, not people on the sidewalk, so bicyclists are hard to see especially when riding on the wrong side of the road. When the sidewalk is the only safe option, assume drivers do not see you, make eye contact, wave and ride at a slower speed.

Look both ways and yield when entering and crossing: Look and yield every single time you enter or exit a roadway or alley.

Be courteous: Respect all people on the move. Yield to slower users. Wave, smile, and be a positive ambassador for active transportation!

Bike with a buddy: Riding your bike is even more fun with a friend or two!



ORGANIZE A WALKING BUS WITH NEIGHBORS



If your child is not old or confident enough to walk or ride on their own yet, consider organizing a group 'walking bus' or 'bicycle train' with other classmates from your neighborhood.

- Start simple
- Invite families who live nearby
- Pick a route and do a test walk or ride
- Develop a walking, biking "bus" stop schedule
- Use open source tools to help organize:

[Walking School Bus.org](http://WalkingSchoolBus.org)

[Walking School Bus Guide](#)

[Walking School Bus Resources](#)

- Remember to make it fun

ALTERNATIVE DROP OFF/PICK UP POINTS

If it is not feasible for you and your family to walk, bike or roll the entire distance, incorporate healthy activity into your pickup and drop off routines.

- Use a school bus stop location - times and locations shown [HERE](#)
- Anywhere along South E St.
- Lewis and B Street
- Main and Clark St.
- Yellowstone and Butte St.
- 9th St. and River Dr.
- Near the swimming pool parking lot

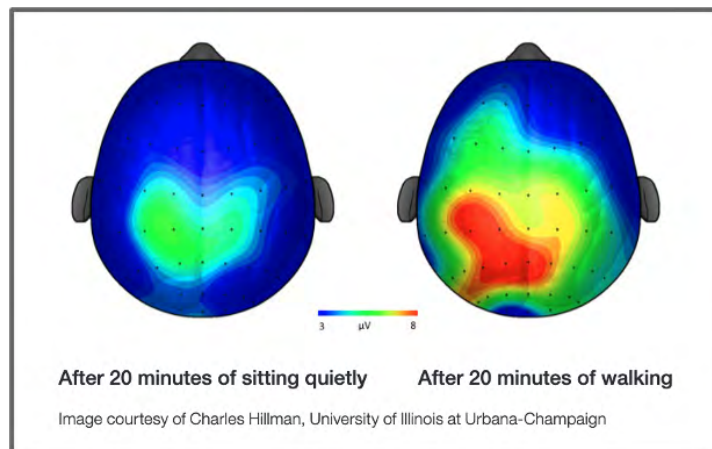




If you still choose to drive your child to school, please be cautious and aware of those choosing to walk, roll or bike. Give them plenty of space and yield to anyone outside a car. Our kids are no match for a vehicle and their lives depend on driver diligence. Read the tips above, and help educate other drivers to slow down, avoid passing bicyclists and be extra cautious near alleyways and crossings. Thank you for helping us create a safe and healthy community!

NEED MORE REASONS TO WALK, BIKE AND ROLL TO SCHOOL?

Using human propelled modes of transportation not only maintains physical health, it also improves mental health, emotional health and general well-being, especially in school-aged children. Children who walk and bike to school are proven to have higher academic performance and reasoning abilities than those who do not (check out the cool image of the brain after only 20 mins of walking). Biking and walking to school at a young age builds healthy habits and connections that will benefit kids throughout life.



Average amount of students' neural activity during a test following 20 mins of sitting versus a 20 mins walk. Red indicates high activity and blue lower activity.

A community that relies on active transportation rather than vehicles is a healthy, thriving community.

If you have any questions, you can email

annika@pcecmt.org

severn@pcecmt.org

stella@pcecmt.org

sarah@pcecmt.org

todd.wester@livingston.k12.mt.us

**Fill out the Safe Routes
to School Parent Survey**

Happy walking, rolling and biking!