

Champaign-Urbana Safe Routes to School Project (C-U SRTS)

Walk n' Roll to School Day – 2021 Report



Background

The C-U Safe Routes to School Project celebrated the International Walk n' Roll to School Day on Wednesday, October 6th, 2021, in partnership with Urbana School District 116 and Champaign Unit 4 School District. Additionally, University of Illinois Athletics Department student athletes, local volunteers from community organizations, and staff from local government entities joined the event. Students also welcomed celebrities Urbana Mayor Diane Marlin and Urbana City Council Members Jaya Kolisetty and Chaundra Bishop to their events. Mayor Marlin signed a proclamation declaring International Walk n' Roll to School Day in the City of Urbana at Dr. Williams Elementary. A total of eight schools participated in the event: six from Urbana and two from Champaign.

School events were held in the morning roughly between 7:30am to 9:00am. Each individual school had their own programming, but generally volunteers, along with school officials, joined students at their bus drop locations and walked with them to school. Schools were given backpack reflectors to distribute to students and were provided with educational materials and school announcements to educate students about pedestrian safety. Elementary schools in Urbana were provided packets that included walkability checklists to send home with every student in Friday folders the week before the event. The packets also included safe walking route maps for each school, safety tip sheets, and a questionnaire. This year an online survey and map were provided. Schools were provided with electronic parent surveys to send out to families. The data parent survey data is provided through the National Center for Safe Routes to School Data Collection. Efforts were made to coordinate with the Urbana School District to do classroom tallies, but we were ultimately unable to conduct this data collection this fall.

School Events

King

The event at Dr. Martin Luther King Elementary School in Urbana was held from 7:45am to 8:10am. The CUSRTS volunteer was Daniel Saphiere of MTD, and the University of Illinois women's softball team members Tori McQueen, Gabi Robles, and Sydney Sickles joined the event. King's programming involved having buses drop off students at the Dollar General store on Fairview Avenue and have them walk with volunteers. King delivered the highest walkability checklists response rate with a total of four checklists turned in. Overall, respondents believed that there is a high degree of walkability safety around King and believed that it was easy for their children to follow the safety rules. The only negative comment was

the report of “scary dogs” along the walking route, but no specific location was indicated. No participants from submitted an online parent survey.



Wiley

The event at Flossie Wiley Elementary School in Urbana was held from 7:45am to 8:10am. CUSRTS volunteer was Evan Alvarez of MTD, and the University of Illinois athletes included women’s softball players Delaney Rummell, Kelly Ryono, Kelsie Packard, and Laykn Wagner. There was also celebrity attendance from Urbana City Council Member Jaya Kolisetty. Wiley had the most comprehensive programming that involved classes watching videos on pedestrian and traffic safety, inviting parents to walk to school with their children, and offering refreshments to parents and volunteers. Wiley did not submit any walkability checklists or online parent surveys.



Urbana Early Childhood

Urbana Early Childhood School held its event in conjunction with the nearby event at Dr. Preston Williams Elementary School. The two University of Illinois athletes, Kelsey Rothas and Jess Streepy of women's track, joined the athletes and volunteers at Dr. Williams. For further event information, refer to the section on Dr. Williams. UEC did not submit any walkability checklists or online parent surveys.

Booker T. Washington

The event at Booker T. Washington STEM Academy in Champaign was held from 8:30am to 9:00am. There were no assigned CUSRTS volunteers at this event. The University of Illinois athletes included Danny Braunagel and Zac Braunagel of men's wrestling, Anna Kurzydlo and Peyton Willie of women's soccer, and Noor Abedlilatif of women's track. There was no official programming for BTW. BTW also did not submit any walkability checklists or online parent surveys.

Yankee Ridge

The event at Yankee Ridge Elementary School in Urbana was held from 7:45am to 8:10am. The CUSRTS volunteer was intern Thomas Valencia. The University of Illinois athletes included Chase Waggoner, Johnny Mologousis, and Luke Byrd of men's wrestling. Yankee Ridge's programming consisted of staff members walking with students from the bus drop off area that was located a block away from the school and serving refreshments to parents and volunteers. Parents who drove their children were encouraged to park in the lot and walk with them to Door 1 along Mumford Drive. Yankee Ridge submitted one walkability checklist; however, this checklist had a comprehensive list of comments. There was a complaint that there was no room to walk due to blockage from shrubs along Scoville Street. Vine and Scoville was highlighted as a location where a crosswalk and other improvements are needed due to lack of visibility of oncoming traffic on Vine and the presence of big cracks on the sidewalks. The overall ranking showed that the neighborhood is doing okay in regard to walkability, but more work is needed.



Thomas Paine

The event at Thomas Paine Elementary School in Urbana was held from 7:45am to 8:10am. The CUSRTS volunteer was Chair Cynthia Hoyle. The University of Illinois athletes included Ben Bossman Verdonk and Austin Hutcherson of men's basketball. The event program consisted of having the school buses drop off students at the intersection of Florida and Kinch and then have staff and volunteers walk them to school from there. There were no walkability checklists submitted from Thomas Paine, although there were two online parent surveys. Full details are displayed in the online parent survey section.



WALK 'N ROII 2021



Westview

The event at Westview Elementary School in Champaign was held from 7:45am to 8:10am. There were no assigned CUSRTS volunteers. The University of Illinois athletes included Lauren Partridge of women's swimming and diving. There was no official programming for the event. There were no walkability checklists or online surveys submitted from Westview. Westview teachers unfortunately did not distribute backpack reflectors.

Leal

The event at Leal Elementary School in Urbana was held from 7:45am to 8:10am. The CUSRTS volunteers included Jeff Yockey and Charlie Smyth of Champaign County Bikes. The University of Illinois athletes included Delaney Rummell, Kelly Ryono, Kelsie Packard, and Laykn Wagner of women's softball. There was no official programming for the event, although Principal Adriana Ochoa did explain to the CUSRTS team she encourages teachers and parents to teach their children about pedestrian safety and encourages them to walk to school. Three walkability checklists were submitted from Leal. Each checklist had their own unique ratings and comments that differed from one another. The first survey gave the neighborhood high rating, although they did point out that it was difficult to view traffic at the corner of California and McCullough due to tree blockage. They also called for curb ramp repairs. The second survey had slightly lower rating and reported the presence of scary dogs and broken sidewalk. The third survey was the most critical focusing on cycling safety and called for the installation of

crosswalks along McCullough St at the intersections with Springfield, Main, and Illinois. The survey also reported that parked cars blocked the view of traffic. Leal submitted the most online surveys of any school with 16 submissions. More details can be found in the online parent survey section.

Dr. Williams

The event at Dr. Preston Williams Elementary School in Urbana was held from 7:45am to 8:10am. The CUSRTS volunteers included Gabriel Lewis of the Champaign County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) and UIUC urban planning graduate students Will Finkelstein and Kyoungjae Kim. The event programming had the most fanfare of all the schools and ran in conjunction with Urbana Early Childhood School (UEC). Buses dropped off students at UEC and volunteers walked with them to the Dr. Williams campus. Urbana Mayor Diane Marlin and Council Member Chaundra Bishop served as the event celebrities. Mayor Marlin livestreamed the reading of a proclamation declaring it Walk n' Roll to School Day in the City of Urbana. WCIA 3 News covered this event, and their story can be viewed on the CUSRTS website. There were no walkability checklists or online parent surveys from Dr. Williams.

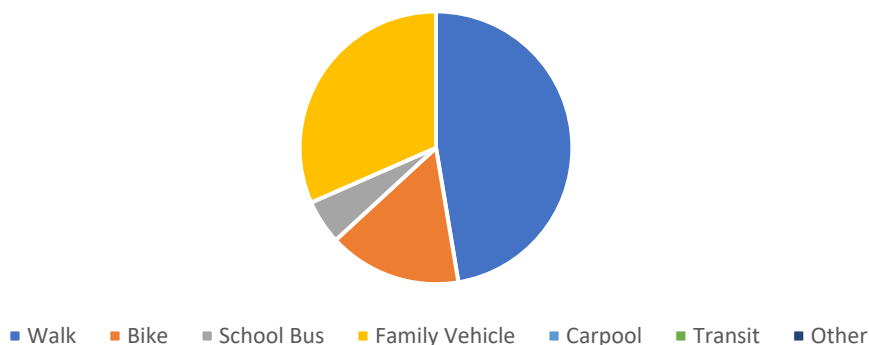


Online Parent Survey Report

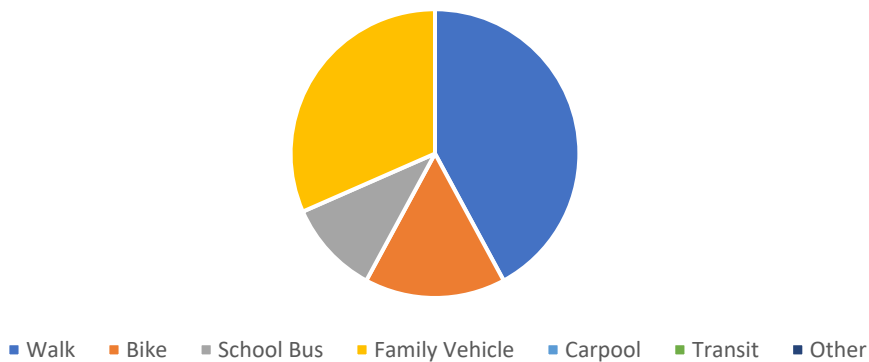
A total of three of the eight participating schools submitted online surveys to the national Safe Routes to School database. They include Leal, Thomas Paine, and Yankee Ridge. Leal had the highest response rate with 16 total surveys submitted. Thomas Paine submitted two and Yankee Ridge submitted one for a total of 19 responses. 12 of the responses represented children who were in kindergarten, or first grade and the remaining seven responses represented children second through fourth grade.

Typical Travel Mode by Time of Day

Typical Mode of Travel - Morning



Typical Mode of Travel - Afternoon



Issues reported that affect the decision to allow a child to walk or bike to/from school by parents of children who already walk or bike to/from school

Issue	Child does not walk/bike to school	Child walks/bikes to school
Amount of Traffic Along Route	10	3
Safety of Intersections and Crossings	9	3
Distance	7	3
Speed of Traffic Along Route	7	3
Weather or climate	6	2
Time	5	3
Adults to Bike/Walk With	5	3
Sidewalks or Pathways	5	3
Convenience of Driving	4	2
Crossing Guards	4	2
Violence or Crime	4	2
Child's Participation in After School Programs	2	2
Number of Respondents per Category	12	3

No response: 4

Parent Estimate of Distance from Child's Home to School

Distance between home and school	Number of children
Less than 1/4 mile	4
1/4 mile up to 1/2 mile	4
1/2 mile up to 1 mile	7
1 mile up to 2 miles	3
More than 2 miles	1

Parent Comments

School	SurveyID	Comment
Leal Elementary School	1713979	I'm fine with him walking to school alone at a young age, but I feel as though it is not culturally acceptable and other parents would judge me. But, when I was a kid you would do more things on your own without parent supervision. Even in elementary school.
Leal Elementary School	1713981	In my hometown, the school set up a walking school bus, where some of the school staff walk by each student's house picking each one up, and the students all walk together. But it allows students who live close to the school who don't have great parental support to get to school safely.
Leal Elementary School	1713986	I witnessed a shooting outside of our home less than two months ago and I am concerned for my children's safety. Additionally, Illinois Street has no stop sign at the intersection of Illinois and Birch and drivers drive way too fast down Illinois street for me to feel comfortable
Leal Elementary School	1714038	Walking/biking is very important in our house. It's not an option-it's a way to combat climate change. This is a value that is critical for us to instill in our child.
Thomas Paine Elementary School	1713808	Having two special needs children who struggle or have struggled with safety and elopement is the biggest factor.
Thomas Paine Elementary School	1713867	Another reason that makes walking or biking to school harder or not possible is having working parents and younger siblings.
Yankee Ridge Elementary School	1714582	I bike to school with my daughter most days. The intersection of Vine and Scovill is not safe for elementary school children to cross. There is no stop sign or cross walk. Visibility is poor and drivers sometimes speed. The ramps to the sidewalks are also difficult to navigate with a stroller. I have filled out this survey every year since 2016 but nothing has changed - maybe this will be the year :0)

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Appendix

Take a walk and use this checklist to rate your neighborhood's walkability. How walkable is your community?

Location of walk

Rating Scale:



1. Did you have room to walk?

- ☐ Yes ☐ Some problems:
- ☐ Sidewalks or paths started and stopped
 - ☐ Sidewalks were broken or cracked
 - ☐ Sidewalks were blocked with poles, signs, shrubbery, dumpsters, etc.
 - ☐ No sidewalks, paths, or shoulders
 - ☐ Too much traffic
 - ☐ Something else _____

Rating: (circle one)

1 2 3 4 5 6

Locations of problems:

4. Was it easy to follow safety rules?

Could you and your child...

- ☐ Yes ☐ No Cross at crosswalks or where you could see and be seen by drivers?
- ☐ Yes ☐ No Stop and look left, right and then left again before crossing streets?
- ☐ Yes ☐ No Walk on sidewalks or shoulders facing traffic where there were no sidewalks?
- ☐ Yes ☐ No Cross with the light?

Rating: (circle one)

1 2 3 4 5 6

Locations of problems:

2. Was it easy to cross streets?

- ☐ Yes ☐ Some problems:
- ☐ Road was too wide
 - ☐ Traffic signals made us wait too long or did not give us enough time to cross
 - ☐ Needed striped crosswalks or traffic signals
 - ☐ Parked cars blocked our view of traffic
 - ☐ Trees or plants blocked our view of traffic
 - ☐ Needed curb ramps or ramps needed repair
 - ☐ Something else _____

Rating: (circle one)

1 2 3 4 5 6

Locations of problems:

5. Was your walk pleasant?

- ☐ Yes ☐ Some problems:
- ☐ Needed more grass, flowers, or trees
 - ☐ Scary dogs
 - ☐ Scary people
 - ☐ Not well lighted
 - ☐ Dirty, lots of litter or trash
 - ☐ Dirty air due to automobile exhaust
 - ☐ Something else _____

Rating: (circle one)

1 2 3 4 5 6

Locations of problems:

3. Did drivers behave well?

- ☐ Yes ☐ Some problems: Drivers ...
- ☐ Backed out of driveways without looking
 - ☐ Did not yield to people crossing the street
 - ☐ Turned into people crossing the street
 - ☐ Drove too fast
 - ☐ Sped up to make it through traffic lights or drove through traffic lights?
 - ☐ Something else _____

Rating: (circle one)

1 2 3 4 5 6

Locations of problems:

How does your neighborhood stack up? Add up your ratings and decide.

- | | | |
|--------------|--------------|---|
| 1. _____ | 26-30 | Celebrate! You have a great neighborhood for walking. |
| 2. _____ | 21-25 | Celebrate a little. Your neighborhood is pretty good. |
| 3. _____ | 16-20 | Okay, but it needs work. |
| 4. _____ | 11-15 | It needs lots of work. You deserve better than that. |
| 5. _____ | 5-10 | It's a disaster for walking! |
| Total: _____ | | |

Now that you've identified the problems,
go to the next page to find out how to fix them.