



Sound Steps

Education Engineering Enforcement for Montgomery County Communities

Montgomery County Department of Transportation
www.montgomerycountymd.gov/walk

Safe Routes to School News

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Another Successful Walk to School Day!

Record number of schools nationwide registered to celebrate International Walk to School Day!

Montgomery County schools joined with over 4,700 schools nationwide to celebrate Walk to School Day 2014. At Rolling Terrace Elementary School, elected officials joined students and parents walking to school from Long Branch Garland Park. Dignitaries spoke about the importance of following safe walking practices and keeping our children safe and healthy. At the event, Principal Connors talked about the day being the kick-off to Rolling Terrace's Frequent Walker/Roller Club. The Club encourages students to choose walking or rolling to school more frequently with a reward-based punch card program that tracks a student's trips to school. More frequent walking means more chances to win. Students also participated in an assembly sponsored by AAA Mid-Atlantic featuring Otto the Auto. Congratulations to all those who participated.



Walk to School Day 2014 at Rolling Terrace Elementary School



Students and Parents had the chance to visit with the National Capital Park Police and their horses!

More inside!

Reminders

Now that everyone is in their back to school routine, it is particularly important to remember and obey traffic laws, and drive safely especially in school zones. If you drive to school, follow these safety tips to keep all students safe this school year!

- Be patient during drop-off and pick-up, the roadways surrounding schools are congested during these times. All drivers do have the same goal – to safely transport their students.
- Obey the speed limit in all school zones.
- Obey parking signs; they are purposefully placed and provide visibility for students to cross streets safely.
- Yield to pedestrians at all intersections, whether marked with a crosswalk or not, it's the law!
- Look both ways for pedestrians and bicyclists when turning right on a red light.
- Be aware of students where there are no sidewalks along the road, when backing out of driveways and in parking lots.
- Watch for younger and less predictable children darting into the road or cutting through parking lots.
- Stop and wait for school buses when red lights are flashing.

Thanks for doing your part to provide safe student travel near your school!

Start your own Frequent Walker/Roller Club!

Help students see that walking and riding a bike, scooter or skateboard to school can be rewarding. Starting a club will encourage students to choose walking or rolling to school more frequently. More frequent walking and riding means more chances to win. And even those that ride the bus can participate!

One way to easily track student's trips is to create a simple punch card. Frequent Walker/Roller cards are punched once for:

- walking or rolling to school. Students who ride a bike, scooter or skateboard must wear a helmet in order to receive a hole punch on their card.
- walking or running four laps around the field. Students who ride the bus can participate by walking/running at recess.

Trips can earn the student a small prize (i.e. pencil or sticker). Then after a certain number of trips are attained the card can be entered into a monthly drawing for a bigger prize (gift card, bike, helmet, etc.).

This initiative promotes daily physical activity, encourages active travel to school and reduces traffic congestion and pollution, which earns points toward a "Green School" Certification.

For more information and ideas contact Nadji Kirby at nadji.kirby@montgomerycountymd.gov or by phone at 240-777-7169.



Welcome!

This newsletter will contain information regarding the Safe Routes to School program, pedestrian and bicycle safety topics, engineering highlights, enforcement, etc. This newsletter will be sent to school administrators, teachers, parents, volunteers, and other interested parties. Please feel free to forward this newsletter to anyone you feel would be interested or email me their address and I can add them to the list, nadji.kirby@montgomerycountymd.gov.

Nadji Kirby, Editor
MCDOT Division of Traffic Engineering & Operations



Middle School Students Can Take Action Against Distraction and win a \$50 Amazon Gift Card!

Safe Kids observed 34,000 students crossing the street last year and found that one in eight middle school students crossed the street distracted. These distracted teens were most often texting or wearing headphones.

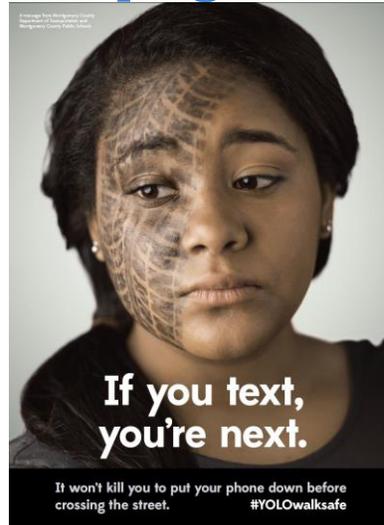
The “Take Action Against Distraction” contest gives middle school teens the words and practice with using them to talk to their friends about the dangers of distracted walking. They get to do this creatively by making a video or storyboard that will be judged for content and skill at delivering the message using their own creativity by asking “How would you tell your friends to put down their phone when crossing the street?”

We’re looking for fun and active demonstrations of walking safely to school and in neighborhoods. This activity can easily be led during an art, health, English class or after-school club. Students are asked to make a video that demonstrates their knowledge of distracted walking and the dangers it poses as they alert their friends to the dangers. We want energy, creativity and skill as they perform a rap, cheer, dress up in costumes, act out characters, or create a storyboard. They are limited only by their imaginations.

Visit the [Action Against Distraction](#) website for more details and an instructional video!

For more information or questions contact Nadji Kirby, SRTS Coordinator at 240-777-7169 or at nadji.kirby@montgomerycountymd.gov.

YOLO High School Pedestrian Safety Campaign



According to Safe Kids Worldwide, about half of students ages 15 to 19 say they use a cell phone when walking to school. And in Montgomery County, when pedestrians are found at fault in collisions, they are most often teens in this age group.

In an effort to address this concern, the Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) developed the YOLO (You Only Live Once) campaign which includes a toolkit that was distributed to every County high school.

YOLO expands on a program that began last school year called “Walk Your Way” that encouraged teens to apply for \$2,000 grants to create, design and implement their own pedestrian safety campaign at their school. Schools are now able to use the toolkit for ideas and inspiration and they are still able to apply for a grant again this school year.

“We want to prevent the tragic consequences of distracted teen walking and driving, and one of the best ways to reach teens is by involving them in educating their peers,” says County Executive Leggett. “The YOLO campaign empowers students to use their creativity to convince their friends that crossing the street or driving while texting, playing handheld games, listening to music or engaging in phone conversations is not only a bad idea – it could mean the difference between life and death”.

For more information on the YOLO campaign and toolkit visit www.montgomeryschoolmd.org/safety. For questions about the campaign and how your high school can apply for a grant please contact Nadji Kirby, nadji.kirby@montgomerycountymd.gov or 240-777-7169.

Safe Routes to School in Montgomery County Targeted Education and Outreach Programs

Montgomery County's Safe Routes to School program provides safe and active walking and bicycling to and from school. It provides an opportunity to make walking and bicycling safer and more accessible for children, including those with disabilities, as well as to increase the number of children who chose to walk and bike. On a broader level Safe Routes to School can enhance children's health and well-being, ease traffic congestion near schools, improve air quality, and improve community member's overall quality of life.



Montgomery County's Safe Routes to School program is led by the Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) and is supported by the Montgomery County Police Department, Montgomery County Fire Rescue Service, the Maryland Highway Safety Office, and other County and State agencies working to improve student safety. We work collaboratively with schools to develop creative solutions for school related traffic problems.

Montgomery County Department of Transportation – Safe Routes to School

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