

When you think about healthy schools, what comes to mind? Good academics, maybe—challenging classes led by teachers who care. Balanced cafeteria choices with lots of fruits and vegetables. Playground equipment that gives kids ample space to play and grow. And, of course, well-planned routes for students to travel to and from school. After all, isn't a healthy learning environment less valuable if kids can't get there safely?

The schools in [STATE] are working hard to offer the best curriculum, facilities, and food they can. However, ensuring safe routes to school is the community's job—and unfortunately, when it comes to [STATE], we're not doing everything we can for our kids.

The lack of safe routes to school isn't just an inconvenience; it's a huge issue that impacts every child's health. From 2000 to 2006, 30% of traffic-related deaths among children between ages 5 and 15 happened while walking or bicycling. That's a scary statistic.

Speaking of scary statistics, here's another fact we need to pay attention to: one out of every three kids is at an increased risk for developing chronic diseases such as type 2 diabetes, heart disease and certain cancers. [STATE]'s kids would be happier and healthier with more physical activity in their lives, and one of the easiest ways to help kids get active is by encouraging them to walk or ride bikes to school.

The percentage of students regularly walking or biking to school has declined from 50% in 1969 to just 13% today. In order to improve those numbers, we must address safety concerns before parents can feel comfortable allowing their children to walk or bike to school. Safe Routes to School programs keep our kids safer by improving the safety of streets and sidewalks, and by providing instruction that teach our kids important traffic rules.

While doing this for [STATE]'s kids is enough of a reason to take action, students aren't the only ones who would benefit from safer routes to schools. New crosswalks, bike paths, and sidewalks are things that anyone can enjoy. And with these improvements in place, we'll all have a better reason than ever to get out of our cars and up on our feet.

Together we can help everyone in [STATE] lead better, safer, healthier lives. All it takes is a commitment to improving the streets and sidewalks that lead to our schools. It's our job as parents, as neighbors, as people who care about our area. Please join me in telling our local leaders to support safe routes to schools by visiting [URL].

Thank you,

[ORGANIZATION LEADER OR MAIN POINT OF CONTACT]