



Children's Mobility, Health and Happiness: A Canadian School Travel Planning Model

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COALITIONS LINKING ACTION
& SCIENCE FOR PREVENTION

School Travel Planning



Green Communities Canada



- National association of local non-profit organizations
- Practical environmental programs & services targeting individuals, households, communities
- Ontario lead for Active & Safe Routes to School (ASRTS) program since 1996
- National lead for School Travel Planning since 2005
- Canada Walks: centre of excellence, showcase best practices, promote walkable communities

www.greencommunitiescanada.org

www.canadawalks.ca

www.saferoutestoschool.ca



School Travel Planning is ...

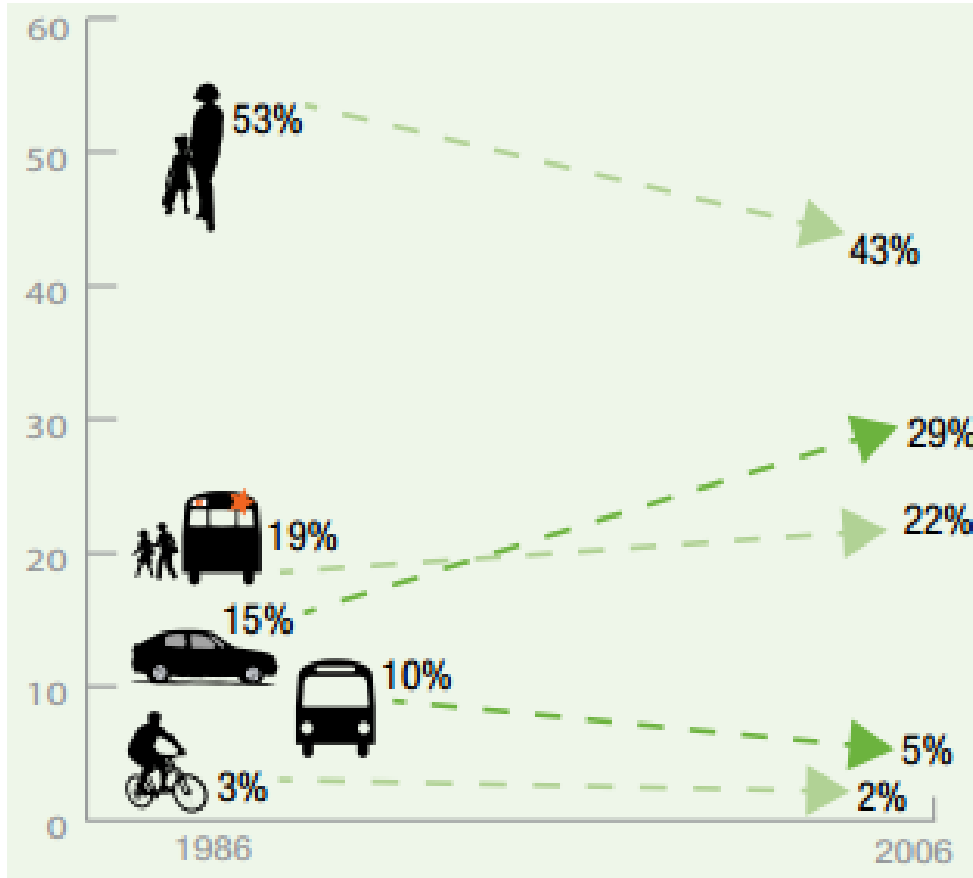


a community-based collaborative approach to encourage more families to use active travel to school, and other local destinations, as well as supporting improvements for other school travel modes

School Travel Planning



The Issue: Trends and Action



Transportation Tomorrow Surveys: School Travel in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area

2005 – 2007: Research International Best Practices – report produced and recommendations for Canada prepared

2007 – 2009: Creation/pilot of Canadian STP model framework in 4 provinces (NS, ON, AB, BC)

2009: Expansion to MB, SK, YT

2010 – 2012: Metrolinx SIU in Hamilton/Peel

2010 – 2012: National dissemination – every P/T

2012 - ?: Making the case for AST in Canada

2009 - 2012: BEAT Project, UofT, <http://physical.utoronto.ca/Beat.aspx>



Benefits

- Health:
 - Physical activity: 60 mins/day
 - Mental fitness: *"Best part of my day"*
- Environment: air and GHG emissions:
 - 1100 families drive less for 1 year would eliminate 365,837 tonnes GHG
- Community:
 - Infrastructure upgrades benefit all
- Cost:
 - Leverages resources of health, transportation, education
 - ON cost benefit study under way with UofT and Metrolinx



Healthy Kids Panel

- **Healthy Kids Panel's: 20% reduction in childhood obesity by 2018**
- **Joint submission: Metrolinx, GCC, STR, and 37 other organizations**
- **We've been heard: active transportation/walking and biking to school mentioned several times**
- **'Kids live, play and learn in their communities. Everyone has a role to play in supporting parents' efforts to ensure their children grow and thrive. We need action everywhere – from parents, caregivers and kids themselves, child care settings and schools, health care providers, non-governmental organizations, researchers, the food industry, the media, and municipal and provincial governments – and a willingness to take risks.'**
- **www.health.gov.on.ca/en/public/programs/obesity/default.aspx**

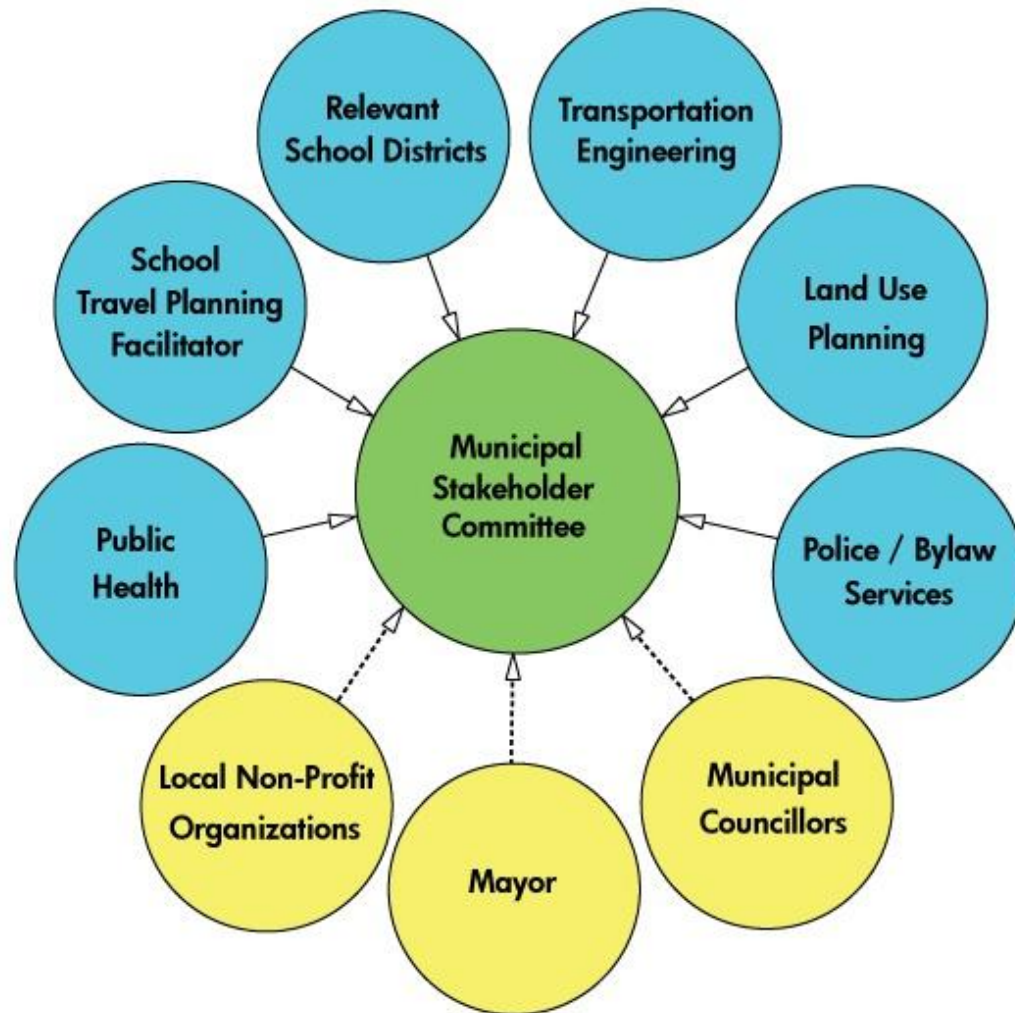


How does STP work?

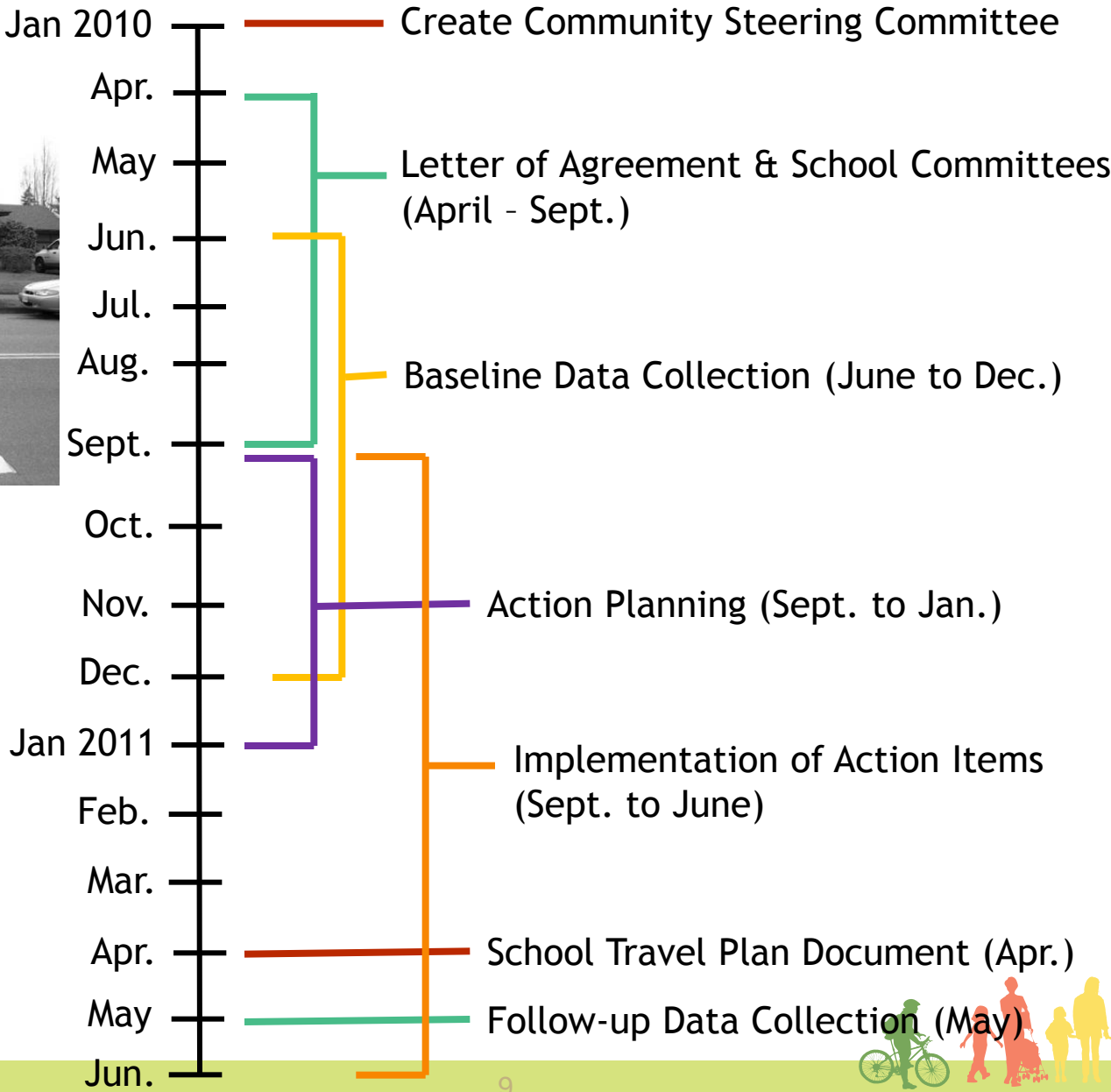
- Proven toolkit
- Stakeholder engagement
- Data collection - pre/post:
 - School Walkabouts
 - Surveys
- Unique Action Plan for each school
- National unity strengthens policy rationale



Municipal stakeholders



The STP Process



A few results

- National average: 1% shift to active travel
- Some provinces: 6% shift to active travel
- Some schools: 20%+ shift to active travel
- What worked:
 - Infrastructure improvements: 25%
 - Safety education: 21%
 - Special events: 15%
 - Active travel groups: 10%
- What would make them change:
 - Children were older
 - Live within 1 km of school
 - Children did not travel actively alone
 - Designated or best routes identified

<http://www.saferoutestoschool.ca/blog/clasp-results-2012>





STP and Infrastructure



STP and Rural Communities



STP and Small or Rural Communities

- **Fort Erie: STP 10% increase in walking at one school:**

June 2010 35% parents agreed or strongly agreed that neighbourhoods were safe for active travel; June 2011 84% agreed or strongly agreed they were safe

- **A pedestrian walkthrough and bollard installed to improve safety**
- **Timer at traffic light extended to allow more time to cross**
- **No idling signs installed**
- **Bike racks purchased**
- **Bike rodeos held**
- **Speed radar board used in front of the school**



" As an elementary school principal, the initial benefits of the School Travel Plan are obvious. By encouraging children to walk to school, we provide needed daily physical activity, improved health and nutrition, and take a major step towards reducing the pollution and traffic congestion that none of our schools were ever intended to accommodate.....Through the simple act of taking the time to encourage your child to walk to school, you are helping to build the safe, caring and confident community that every school is trying to achieve – one step at a time. Who would have thought it was that easy?"

Gary King, Principal, General Vanier



STP and Small or Rural Communities

- **Haldimand County: 2 schools – Cayuga and Caledonia:**

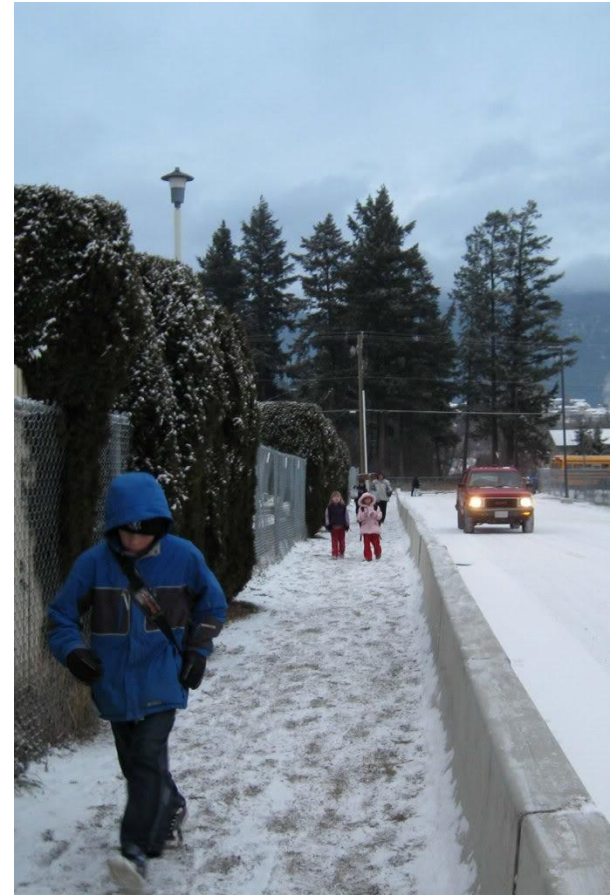


- Encouragement activities and tracking kilometres walked
- Student led group walks around the school neighbourhood to create awareness; motivated students to talk to their parents about walking
- Bike rodeos for safety and create enthusiasm about cycling
- New stopping/parking by-law signs installed; letter to parents from County
- Parents park 25 sidewalk slabs from school to improve access for school buses

"I think School Travel Planning has the potential to have a big impact in Haldimand County because our communities are rural. In these small communities, I see some of the students out and about, and they know me as the safety lady. Everybody talks. Kids go to the same school, play sports together... You see the same people everywhere you go. I am hopeful that behaviour change will be easier in such tightknit communities." Karin Marks, Health Promoter, Child Injury Prevention



STP and walking in winter



STP and Cycling



STP and Celebration Events

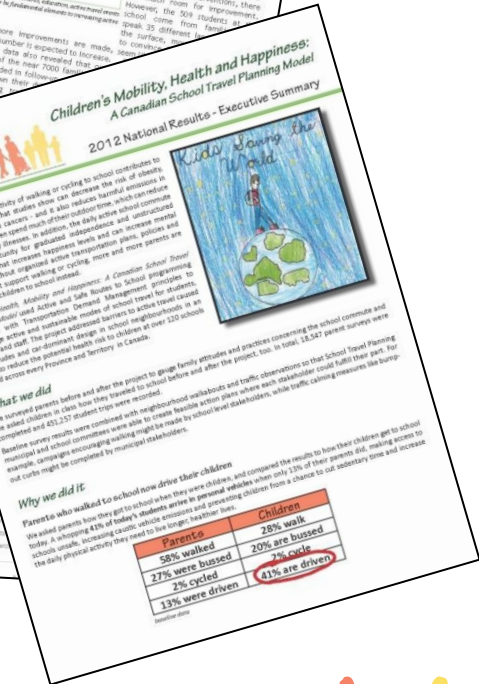
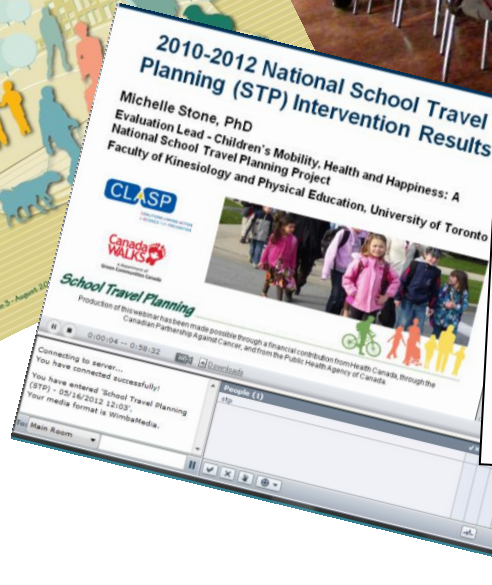


Photo credit: Ottawa Citizen

School Travel Planning



National support



www.saferoutestoschool.ca/school-travel-planning

School Travel Planning



Thank you!



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