

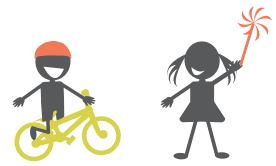
Active and Safe Routes to School Final Report | 2018



Prepared by Jaime Akiyama
on behalf of the Active and Safe
Routes to School Committee
Peterborough, Ontario
Fall 2018

Executive Summary

ASRTS Peterborough 2017-2018



In the 2017-2018 school year, Active and Safe Routes to School (ASRTS) successfully continued the Car Free Wednesdays program, Student Travel Surveys, and the Grade 8 Transit Quest. We were also happy to bring back the On The Bus program and launch a new public transit promotion program, School Trip by Transit.

We worked to strengthen relationships with the schools within the Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board, Peterborough Victoria Northumberland and Clarington Catholic District School Board, as well as the local French and private schools. Overall we reached 44 school communities with the ASRTS messaging and engaged 29 schools in ASRTS programming.

ASRTS continues to be a source of information and support to schools and the community regarding active, efficient transportation. Our strong reputation for knowledgeable support and innovative resources is leading to increased interactions with schools beyond the regular programming.

Thank you to all of our community and school partners for helping to make this year a success!

Active and Safe Routes to School Peterborough is a partnership comprised of representatives from the City of Peterborough, GreenUP, Peterborough Public Health, the Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board, Student Transportation Services of Central Ontario, and the Peterborough Police Service.

ASRTS Peterborough promotes the use of active and sustainable transportation for the daily trip to school, addressing health and traffic safety issues while taking action on air pollution and climate change.

2017-2018 Committee Members



Various - Peterborough Public Health
Jaime Akiyama - GreenUP
Kevin Forrest - Student Transportation Services of Central Ontario
Sandra Lonergan - City of Peterborough
Shawna McCurdy - Peterborough Police Service
Judy Malfara - Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board
Susan Sauvé - City of Peterborough
Lindsay Stroud - GreenUP

Kick-Off Event

International Walk to School Day (iWALK)

King George P.S. hosted of the 2017 International Walk to School Day (iWALK) event. The school promoted walking and biking as a kick off to their Car Free Wednesdays campaign. Arriving families were met on the school yard by ASRTS staff, who handed out Car Free Wednesdays buttons. Cool Captain Climate provided the musical entertainment.

Unfortunately, the weather did not cooperate and the school opted to postpone the walk. The celebration continued however with Cool Captain Climate hosting a musical assembly for grades 1-6, followed by a very appreciated musical stroll to each of the three Kindergarten rooms.

This event was very low-key with minimal disruption to the school day. It would benefit future Car Free Wednesdays and iWALK promotion if we returned to a more elaborate event with more media attention. We should also consider that Ontario Active School Travel is now promoting a Walk to School Month, and this would be a good model to promote and participate in for ASRTS Peterborough.

International Walk to School Day (iWALK) is an annual global event held on the first Wednesday in October. Schools from around the world participate in this celebration of active living and sustainable transportation. ASRTS has participated since 1999 and uses the event to kick off the



Program One Car Free Wednesdays

In the fall of 2017, Car Free Wednesdays entered its tenth year. Car Free Wednesdays information packages, containing Car Free Wednesdays and Park & Stride posters and informative invitations, were distributed to all Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board, Peterborough Victoria Northumberland and Clarington Catholic District School Board elementary schools, and Montessori schools within the city and county of Peterborough. Schools were invited to a) put up our posters and promote active transportation to school, or b) register to participate in our monthly surveys for the chance to win prizes.

A total of 10 schools registered to participate in Car Free Wednesdays (8 within the City and two from the County) and a few schools were observed to put up the posters without registering. Monthly survey data was collected from registered schools with mixed success. Most schools submitted approximately 7 out of 10 surveys, unfortunately one school did not submit any surveys and were therefore not included in the data analysis.

School Coordinators were supplied with the **School Coordinators Toolkit** to help organize their local campaign. Included in this toolkit was a Power Point presentation explaining the messaging of Car Free Wednesdays, social media resources, sample announcement scripts, sample promotional activity ideas, and other tools.

School Coordinators and partners were also provided with an updated **Media Toolkit**.



The **Golden Shoe Challenge** was promoted again this year due to some schools feeling they would benefit from some internal competition. This was an optional challenge with 5 schools taking up the challenge. These five schools were provided with a pizza party to their winning class. All schools were very appreciative of this prize and found the internal competition to be engaging and fun for the students.

Car Free Wednesdays **Tracking Wall charts** were provided to schools, upon request, regardless of whether they were running a Golden Shoe Challenge. For those that were not running internal competitions, a year-end reward was offered in lieu of a pizza party. One school opted for money towards a school bike rack. Another school requested our bike playground to be set up for an event on the school yard. It is nice to have a flexible participation award so that schools can contribute to what they really need. Options and parameters would be important to communicate at the beginning of the year.

Cool Captain Climate was back this year to help promote Car Free Wednesdays. Previous schools provide feedback that said they liked having Cool Captain Climate greet students on the yard in the morning but questioned if it was understood why he was on the yard, and if his messages were understood. Therefore, this year, we offered schools an extended visit which included greeting students on the yard, and having a mini-assembly after the bell.

The assemblies were a great way to really talk to the students and share messages. Cool Captain Climate brought an interactive display to help reinforce some environmental messages.



Feedback and reflection indicated that Cool Captain Climate is most appreciated for the grade six and under audience. Older grades, especially those that have been Car Free Wednesdays schools for many years, enjoyed recognizing Cool Captain Climate but seemed less excited by his visit.

Highlighting Car Free Wednesdays events and successes on **social media** continues to be a goal. GreenUP Communication Specialist, Karen Halley, preprogrammed tweets as reminders and encouragement, while GreenUP staff try to post to social media on specific events. Minimal school social media regarding Car Free Wednesdays was observed. Both school boards consistently reposted our posts, when tagged. Next year a stronger push for a social media presence, specific to events is encouraged. Peterborough Moves social media should be the main site for posts, with tags to GreenUP and the school boards for further distribution. There should be a plan to have in-the-moment type posts that are fresh, minimizing repetitive posts.

Additional **media** coverage included a GreenUP column in the Peterborough Examiner and KawarthaNOW as a back to school reminder, as well as a winter article encouraging families to set New Years routines.

Radio ads were produced and played on The Oldies station in the spring to remind everyone to walk, roll, or bike now that the weather is beautiful.

Car Free Wednesdays Results

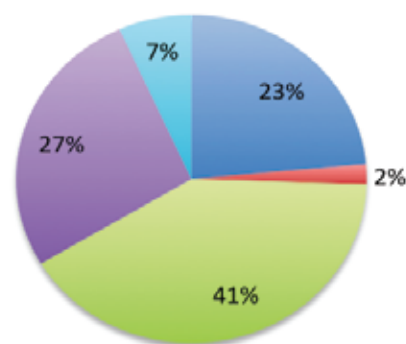


Car Free Wednesdays Participant Schools Group Yearly Average Results

Car Free Wednesdays survey results were averaged for each individual school and then grouped together to identify Peterborough trends. This data is a yearly average and does not reflect seasonal factors.

Student Transportation Services Central Ontario reported all Car Free Wednesdays schools should have a less than 10% driving-eligible population.

■ Walk ■ Bike ■ Bus ■ Car ■ Park & Stride



Winter Walk Day

A very enthusiastic grade 6/7 class from St. Anne CES, lead by a wonderful teacher, Anne Cockery, keenly agreed to host Winter Walk Day. They organized various activities to promote walking to school on the first Wednesday in February.

Students were greeted in the morning by ASRTS members, Cool Captain Climate, Peterborough Petes, and Community Police Officers. The day celebrated walking to school with hot chocolate and a very entertaining assembly. The grade 6/7s played winter trivia and preformed songs and dance routines. Peterborough Public Health Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Salvaterra, attended and gave a speech about the importance of walking and staying active.

Don't hibernate - walk to school and celebrate!



The Car Free Wednesdays program is a school-wide, year-long campaign that encourages active and efficient transportation for the trip to school. It was first piloted with two participating schools during the year of 2008-2009, and was implemented in full the following year. In 2016, the program was reimagined as a weekly event, with new ways to play and new incentives for both schools and families.

Car Free Wednesdays schools show, on average, a 18% shift in walking rates and 5% shift in rates of riding the yellow school bus. New modifications this year aim to include more students, by inviting schools to participate in different ways, and inviting families to participate, even at non-participating schools.

Program Two

Student Travel Surveys

Student Travel Surveys were completed, in November 2017, at the following five schools;

- Armour Heights PS
- King George PS (CFW School)
- Immaculate Conception CES
- Roger Neilson PS
- St. Patrick CES (CFW School)

Five schools were included this year because of plans for Armour Heights PS and King George PS to amalgamate in the near future. This year's survey will provide pre-move student travel data.

Participating schools were provided with a digital one-page infographic report and written explanation of their results. Schools were provided with supporting tools, and encouraged to communicate these reports with their school community. ASRTS offered support to schools wishing to address active transportation with their community through Car Free Wednesdays and site specific initiatives.

All participating schools have a Student Transportation Services of Central Ontario designation for eligible to drive (outside bus zone) of less than 10%. Whereas the actual average of students driven to school, for all five schools, is 37.8%. Although Principals are aware of the travel choices that occur at their school some did communicate surprise to these results and thought it was valuable information to communicate with their community.

Since 2000, ASRTS has collected base-line travel data from local schools. Two schools that regularly participate in ASRTS programming and two that do not are surveyed in November each year. During the designated week, teachers at each school take a hands-up survey of their students' transportation choices from Monday through Friday. The collected data is compared to the Student Transportation Services of Central Ontario (STSCO) designations for each school.

The results provide valuable insight into the percentage of designated walking and biking students who are actually being driven to school on a daily basis. In turn, this informs the strategic planning and development of ASRTS programs over time.



Program Three

Grade Eight Transit Quest

The Grade 8 Transit Quest program had another successful year with over 914 Grade 8 students (46 classes from 18 schools) receiving a free Peterborough transit pass for the period from March 9th to 18th.

ASRTS was successful with a Healthy Kids Community Challenge grant. This grant allowed the Grade Eight Transit Quest program to:

- Deliver education to more grade 8 students (17 class presentations were delivered).
- Increase the number of local destinations promoted to the students
- Improve educational/promotion material
- Provide class/individual prizes
- Expand feedback opportunities



Funding was also planned for the development of a 'how-to' ride Peterborough Transit educational video. The City of Peterborough released a video that was appropriate for our use, therefore funding was redirected to an active transportation photo library project. The city's video was used in our classroom education presentations and promoted to teachers. The city's video and the active transportation photos will be used for future active transportation and transit promotions.

The Grade Eight Transit Quest aims to increase the familiarity of city youth with the Peterborough Transit system as they begin to travel independently in the city.

Every Grade Eight student in the City of Peterborough is provided with a free transit pass and transit map from Peterborough Transit.

Packages are delivered in the week leading up to March Break with a short presentation to explain the program and address any questions and concerns students have about using transit.

Local destinations offered free and discounted passes to encourage students to travel around town by bus during March Break.

Participating destinations:

Peterborough Sports & Wellness
The Canadian Canoe Museum
Busy Brushes
YMCA
Art Gallery of Peterborough
Peterborough Museum and Archive
Peterborough Public Library
Zap Attack
Bowlerama
The Athletics Centre
Riverview Park and Zoo





914 Grade Eight Transit Quest passes were distributed ~ 200 passes were activated (22% activated)

New this year, we included a feedback form on the back of the information booklet that holds the pass for each student. One student, who returned feedback form, from each class was drawn to win a prize (gift card from one of our local destinations). Summary of feedback suggests that the program is well-liked but that more education on how to use transit is necessary.

Grand prizes (\$250 put towards the grade eight end of year celebrations) was awarded to three classes that showed high participation and spirit towards active transportation.

Card identification numbers that are distributed to specific schools can be tracked by Peterborough Transit. This data can determine the number of cards activated per school.

Program Four

On the Bus



The popular On The Bus program returned this year, taking advantage of the available buses and drivers due to Trent University and Fleming College reading weeks. We were able to offer two weeks of the program - Feb. 20th to 23rd and March 5th to 9th, 2018. Seventeen classes quickly registered (one cancelled) and we had several classes on a wait list.

Since we ran this program in the winter we opted to not have a stop at the Ecology Park. Although it is nice to have an outdoor, active experience this part was not missed and allowed more time for the bus ride and lessons.

Next year, we are running the program during both fall and winter reading weeks.

On the Bus is a popular Grade 3 transit-focused field trip. The tour begins when a Peterborough Transit bus pulls up to the front doors of the school. As we travel through Peterborough, we pause at significant community locations, such as the police station, the fire station, city hall, and the hospital. Then it's on to our last stop, the Bus Barn, for a ride through the bus wash and an interview with our bus driver. Throughout, we focus on many topics, including the Peterborough Transit system, map reading, community helpers, community places, energy production and use, and, of course, active and sustainable transportation.

Program Five

School Trip by Transit

Promotion of this new pilot program was quietly launched late in the school year. Communication with teachers suggests the idea is popular but there are barriers to action. Six teachers contacted us eager to engage in this program but only three were able to organize in tight deadlines. All three classes were provided with transit Day Passes.

Teacher feedback indicated that the trip worked great and the students had a valuable experience.



School Trip by Transit encourages the use of public transit for class trips. Peterborough Transit's regular routes and schedule provide a transportation option that is inexpensive, convenient, and a valuable experience. By using transit you can expand the learning experience beyond the destination.

ASRTS supports this opportunity by offering assistance with route planning, preparation, supplies transit maps and when possible supplements Day Passes. This model of support prior to the trip proves to be helpful and might be a nice option beyond the On the Bus program.

Program Six

Bike Education



GreenUP and BIKE entered their third of a 3-year Ontario Trillium Foundation grant for the implementation of school-based bike safety and skills programming.



Two cycling instructors were hired for ten weeks to instruct Pedal Power and contribute to other school and community bike programs delivered by GreenUP and BIKE. Cycling instructors, coordinators, volunteers and managers participated in an intensive **one-week training** session. Training covered health & safety policies & practices, teaching strategies, and program orientation.



This year **program manuals** were updated and finalized for Pedal Power, Bike Rodeos, Group Rides, Events, and Bike Playground Pop-ups.

Manuals include program specific health & safety information with emergency response guidelines, best practices for program coordination, staff ratio requirements, set-up guides, and program messaging and implementation considerations.

These manuals guide instructors and volunteers in the coordination and implementation of cycling events, ensuring safe, quality, high-level programs and events that have consistent messaging and skill transfers. Our manuals are an excellent resource for current staff and help transfer program knowledge to future staff.

Bike Rodeos

Bike Rodeos were held at four schools during Police Week in May. Over 350 students at St. John CES, Highland Heights PS, Immaculate Conception CES, and Queen Elizabeth PS learned about proper helmet fit, bike registration, and ways to stay safe when riding a bike.

School staff were enthusiastic about providing students with safe riding skills, commenting that the skills and information provided in this half-day event assisted the school in promotion cycling as a mode to travel to school.



Since 2013, ASRTS has supported the development of school-based bike education programming in Peterborough. Programs are currently offered to students at city and county elementary schools.

Pedal Power is a Health and Physical Education unit offered to Grade 5 classes by GreenUP and BIKE. Students develop bike handling skills and road safety knowledge by participating in a series of on-bike drills in their school yard. The five 75-minute lessons with trained instructors allow students to practice their skills and problem-solve real life scenarios in a safe learning environment.

Bike Rodeos are half-day bike education and celebration events. The Peterborough Police and ASRTS partners invite Grade 2-8 students into the school yard to learn about bike safety and rules of the road. Students move through stations, including bike registration, bike tune-ups, helmet fit and bike handling drills.

Pedal Power



This increasingly popular cycling skills course had no trouble filling the 12 available class sessions. Several teachers eagerly contacted GreenUP prior to the registration opening, they were informed of the registration date. Pedal Power registration was officially opened with communication going out to all Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board and Peterborough Victoria Northumberland Clarington Catholic District School Board principals through the school boards. Only one social media post was placed as, due to the immediate response of teachers, it was not necessary to expand promotion.

Twenty-one classes, from 10 schools, quickly registered for the available 12 sessions. Schools were selected based on registration date and schedule coordination. Three schools were able to combine classes to fill sessions, while keeping under our session size criteria. Unfortunately 7 classes were not able to participate due to our current level of capacity. Even after the registration deadline at least three additional teachers tried to register, but were told the program was filled. Apsley Centennial PS wished to participate but due to travel times this was not possible for a five-day course (we accommodated Apsley's interest with a condensed one-day session but this was not possible this year due to cycling instructor and school schedules).

The 12 sessions were from six schools. All grade five classes in these schools received the course!

- St. Anne CES [4 classes combined into 3 sessions],
- Westmount PS [4 classes combined into 3 sessions],
- King George PS [3 classes combined into 2 sessions],
- Roger Neilson PS [1 sessions],
- Kawartha Heights PS [2 sessions],

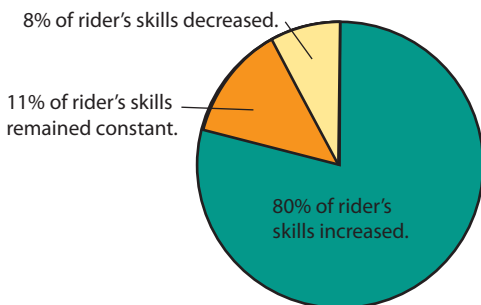


Figure 1: Riding Skills Evaluation



From the six participating schools, over 245 students were registered. While all participants benefited from the curriculum, due to absences, only 187 were included in the final skills evaluation (participants complete the course with a better knowledge of the rules of the road and an appreciation for concepts of being prepared to cycle). Riding skills evaluations showed that 80% of the participants evaluated had improved their riding skills throughout the course, improving on average by 20%.

Since 2013, Pedal Power frequently has teachers wanting to participate year after year. There is no guarantee for repeat teachers, but it indicates the quality of the program when teachers eagerly register repeatedly. In 2018, 12 of the 21 interested classes were from schools that have participated in Pedal Power in previous years.

Teacher feedback includes comments valuing the structure of the program “Well organized and delivered”, “I enjoyed the number of instructors and small group setup”. There is also several comments reflecting teachers feedback regarding the impact that the program has on students, “The students really benefited from the content and will hopefully be safe cyclists in future!”

Enthusiasm for the program, as stated by one teacher, “This was fantastic! The kids are still talking about it” was also reflected by parents. Although not formally assessed anecdotal information indicated that enthusiasm, opportunity, and confidence lead to an increase in the number of students cycling to school on Pedal Power days, as well as other days. Three families from St. Anne CES approached us to communicate that their children started to cycle to school for this program and are continuing to do so. This information was also observed at other participating schools. In the future it would be interesting to follow-up post Pedal Power to see if active transportation increased at participating schools.

Recognized cycling education practitioners, B!KE and GreenUP are active participants in the province wide discussions concerning the evolution of cycling education in Ontario. #CycleON Action Plan 2.0, released by the previous Ontario government, includes an action to promote cycling awareness and behavioural shifts. Sharing of our experience and knowledge is important to the progression of cycling education, with efforts benefiting the health, safety and well-being of people and the environment of Ontario.



Previous provincial discussions lead to enthusiasm for a roll-out of Pedal Power to all grade five students in Peterborough. Unfortunately this enthusiasm is not currently funded. It would be wonderful to provide this program to all grade five classes, but for 2019, sustaining the program at current levels will continue to provide quality education to a large population of Peterborough’s youth.

B!KE and GreenUP’s management team is currently exploring funding models and opportunities that will sustain quality cycling education, ensuring youth have opportunities to safely cycle and live active lifestyles.



KAWARTHA PINE RIDGE
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

