

The National Center for Safe Routes to School is pleased to announce the release of the Safe Routes to School Travel Data: A Look at Baseline Results from Parent Surveys and Student Travel Tallies. The report is available for download at http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/resources/travel_data_reports.cfm

National Report Summarizes Local Safe Routes to School Travel Data

CHAPEL HILL, N.C. (February 4, 2010) -- The National Center for Safe Routes to School announced today the release of a new national report on Safe Routes to School (SRTS) travel data. The report, entitled Safe Routes to School Travel Data: A Look at Baseline Results from Parent Surveys and Student Travel Tallies, provides a summary of school travel data that local SRTS programs throughout the United States collected from April 2007 to May 2009.

The full report is available for download at:

http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/resources/travel_data_reports.cfm

“This report provides a snapshot of student travel and parent attitudes about the trip to and from school among elementary and middle schools included in the study,” said Lauren Marchetti, director of the National Center for Safe Routes to School. “As schools and communities begin or continue building safe walking and bicycling initiatives, these baseline results can potentially provide a benchmark for local SRTS programs.”

KEY FINDINGS OF ANALYSES INCLUDE:

- Distance to school is strongly associated with how children get to and from school. The proportion of children walking or bicycling to school is much greater among those who live closer to school.
- Across all grades, the family car and school bus were the two most frequently used options for travel to/from school. Walking was third. However, there are notable differences between how students in lower grades (K-5th) and higher grades (6th-8th) travel to school.
- Safety factors, like traffic speed and volume and street crossing safety, were frequently selected as barriers by parents who live within one half mile of school but do not allow their children to walk or bicycle to/from school.

The baseline results provide useful information about student travel for the schools in the sample, many of which likely just began their SRTS activities, and highlight issues for the national SRTS program to address and promote. Over 130,000 parent responses and almost 2.4 million student trips to or from elementary and middle schools were included in the aggregate analysis. In order to examine information most likely to reflect the starting point for schools before or soon after their SRTS activities began, the analysis only includes each school's first submission of data.

About The National Center for Safe Routes to School

Established in May 2006 through funding from the Federal Highway Administration, the National Center for Safe Routes to School assists communities in enabling and encouraging children to safely walk and bicycle to school. The Center strives to equip Safe Routes to School programs with the knowledge and technical information to implement safe and successful strategies. The National Center for Safe Routes to School is maintained by the University of North Carolina Highway Safety Research Center with funding from the U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration. For more information, visit www.saferoutesinfo.org <<http://www.saferoutesinfo.org>> .