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Be Healthy QC Newsletter



Welcome to the Be Healthy QC Newsletter!

With the start of the new school year quickly approaching we thought we'd tell you a little about our Safe Routes to School project!

Safe Routes to School Planning



What is it?

According to the [Safe Routes Partnership](#), Safe Routes to School is a national and international movement to create safe, convenient, and fun opportunities for children to bicycle and walk to and from school. The program was designed to reverse the decline in children walking and bicycling to schools. Safe Routes to School

can also play a critical role in reversing the nationwide trend toward childhood obesity and inactivity.

In 1969, approximately 50 percent of children in the US walked or bicycled to school, with approximately 87 percent of children living within one mile of school walking or bicycling. Today, fewer than 15 percent of schoolchildren walk or bicycle to school. In 2009, US families drove 30 billion miles to take their children to and from school, at a cost of \$5 billion in fuel. During the morning commute, driving to school represents 5-7 percent of miles driven and 10-14 percent of traffic on the road.

Safe Routes to School programs are built on collaborative partnerships that include educators, parent, students, elected officials, engineers, city planners and engineers, business and community leaders, health officials, and bicycle and pedestrian advocates. The most successful Safe Routes to School programs incorporate the Five E's: evaluation, education, encouragement, engineering and

enforcement. The goal of Safe Routes to School is to get more children bicycling and walking to schools safely on a daily basis. This improves the built environment and increases opportunities for healthy physical activity for everyone.

Developing Safe Routes to Schools in the Quad Cities Area

As part of the Be Healthy QC project funded by the CDC, Bi-State Regional Commission has hired a Planner to focus on designing and implementing Safe Routes to Schools (SRTS) programs with interested elementary schools in both Illinois and Iowa. The Planner will offer technical assistance to schools to ensure physical activity practices meet CDC or national standards by developing SRTS Travel guidelines that include identification of issues and mitigating solutions for walking and biking near schools in the Rock Island and Scott County school districts. This objective will facilitate greater access to physical activity by involving the schools, parents and community to ensure connectivity to the schools for adjoining neighborhoods and will promote physical activity through school commuting.

Project Progress

The first three SRTS plans will be developed for Earl Hanson Elementary and Eugene Field Elementary schools in Rock Island, Illinois and Buffalo Elementary in Buffalo, Iowa.

Before classes were dismissed for the summer the SRTS Planner worked with school staff to collect student travel surveys and parent input surveys. During the summer break the Planner worked with local police departments, city halls and school administration to gather information in order to create profiles for the participating schools. These profiles will help the Planner identify areas where the schools can improve in education, encouragement, engineering and enforcement - the staples of an effective SRTS program.

Once school resumes, the Planner will issue a second round of surveys to both students and parents in order to begin tracking patterns and trends in the data. At this time he will also work with school administration to begin implementation of the SRTS plans he was busy drafting over the summer.

Who is the SRTS Planner? -- Taylor Beswick

This month's team member is the SRTS Planner from Bi-State Regional Commission (BSRC). Taylor is an Urban and Regional Planner at BSRC and has been there for almost a year. Before accepting the job at BSRC, Taylor lived and studied in the Netherlands at the University of Amsterdam where he graduated with a Master's in Urban and Regional Planning.



Taylor currently lives in downtown Moline but was born and raised in Rock Island. He attended Earl Hanson and grew up in the Rock Island school system. He loves the outdoors and bikes to work often. He is excited to be back in the Quad Cities and working to make a difference.

**Want to be recognized for the work your organization or business is doing?
Take our Worksite Wellness Healthy Workplace Assessment here!**

Be Healthy QC recently unveiled a new healthy workplace recognition program. Businesses that meet at least 10 of the 20 items on the assessment found at the link below will receive a letter and certificate of recognition for their worksite wellness efforts, as well as a window cling to display at the entrance of their business. If you would like your business to be recognized for your progress in creating a healthy workplace, please download and complete the assessment linked below and return it to: quadcityhealthinitiative@gmail.com.

Take Our Assessment Here



Quad City Health Initiative
563-421-2826
plumbe@genesishealth.com
<http://www.qchealthinitiative.org>



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