WINTER @SR2S

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

TREASURE VALLEY FAMILY YMCA

1055 W State St Boise ID 83702

January 2015

ymcatvidaho.org

KEEP MOVING TO STAY WARM OUT THERE!

NOW IS THE TIME TO SCHEDULE YOUR IN-SCHOOL PRESENTATION

Make sure to schedule an in-school presentation for the 2015 winter or spring season. The safe routes crew of educators are currently filling slots for all of the Boise and Meridian schools. These presentations are approximately 45 minutes and provide students and teachers with the knowledge and tools to stay safe, while actively traveling to school and throughout the community. Presentations are fun and engaging while highlighting the importance of bicycle, pedestrian and vehicle safety.

Call or email the safe routes crew today and schedule your Winter/Spring presentation!

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ENJOY THIS ISSUE?

Feel free to share this newsletter with anyone who you think may find it useful.

QUESTIONS, COMMENTS, IDEAS?

QUESTIONS,
Director: Lisa Brady,
Lisa.Brady@ymcatvidaho.org

Program Coordinator: Marcus Orton,
marcus.orton@ymcatvidaho.org

Program Coordinator: Neal Kaufman,
Neal.Kaufman@ymcatvidaho.org

YOLO

Safe Routes to School is a national organization with chapters all across the country. We keep tabs on the various promotions and campaigns working to educate schools, parents, municipalities and many other groups and organizations. The Montgomery School district and Safe Routes to School helped students create their own campaign. The YOLO campaign has proven to be an effective safety campaign which truly engages and empowers the student body. The link below shows how a combined effort between city agencies, school administration, and Safe Routes to School can be effective when students take charge in program development.

Here in the Treasure Valley we are looking at ways for students to become equally aware of the issues and engage in implementing a successful strategy for encouraging safety among their peers.

Click the link to learn more about the YOLO campaign.

www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/safety

TRAFFIC AROUND YOUR SCHOOL?

We hear concerns from parents about the heavy traffic around schools on a regular basis. One of the questions we ask students in class is "How did you get here today?" Overwhelmingly the answer is "by private automobile." We ask the students if they think traffic was bad and most of the time they yell out YES! When we ask the students to look around while they are raising their hands, they see the "traffic."

When we realize that WE are the traffic, we can start to make changes. All of those other drivers are the same as you, wanting to drop off a child and get to work. How can you work with your neighbors to carpool? Is the school bus an option? Can you form a walking school bus or bike pool with kids around the neighborhood? And, can you do one of these things once or twice a week? We don't have to be perfect, we just have to try.

We encourage you to try a different approach to getting your kids to school in the month of January. Please send us a note to let us know how this went. We may feature you in a future news letter as a transportation champion!

WINTER CYCLING

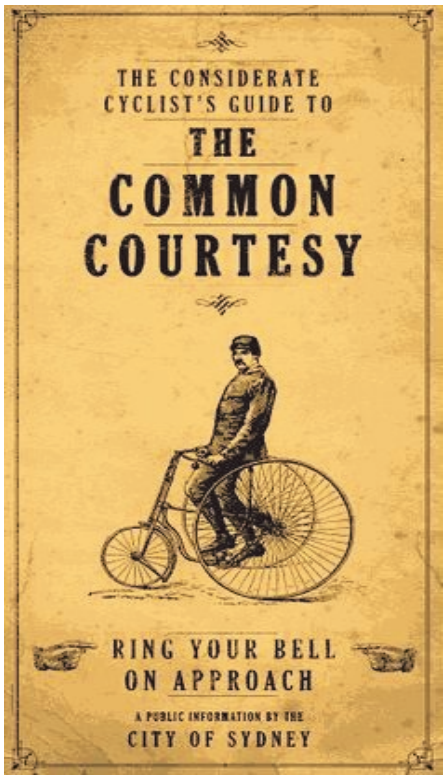
Though the days are starting to get longer, the mercury is still falling so make sure you keep these foul weather bicycle tips in the back of your mind.

- Check your tire pressure at least once a month. Bicycle tubes are porous and will leak small amounts of air during times of temperature fluctuation and cold weather use.
- Use lower air pressure for better traction in slick riding conditions. Check the sidewall of the tire for pressure ratings.
- Wear brightly colored clothing and be predictable in your actions on the road way. Visibility is always a factor when walking or cycling, especially in winter weather.
- In Idaho the law requires at least a front white light and red rear reflector on your bicycle during low light conditions.
- Dress appropriately. Using three layers is ideal: "Base" - a thin layer worn close to the skin to wick moisture; next, "Insulation" - a mid layer like a sweater or a soft jacket to keep your body warm; lastly, "Shell" - an outer layer acts as a wind/water resistant layer to shield you from the weather. Don't forget your gloves, hat, and wool socks too.

Follow these steps this winter for a greater level of safety and visibility in your travels.

TRAIN THE TRAINER PROGRAM

Sustainability does matter! We are in the process of developing a new program to extend the reach and services of our program. Train the Trainer is a new program that will enable other groups and organizations to provide focused education at places and times when our crew is not available. The importance of bike safety is more than simply putting a helmet on a persons head. In fact, being smart, being visible, and knowing the laws and best practices will protect a student well beyond the use of a helmet. We would like to ensure the availability of our program for years to come.



BOISE BICYCLE PROJECT CHRISTMAS BIKE WRAPUP!

Each year the Boise Bicycle Project works hard to fix hundreds of kids bikes for their Christmas Bike Giveaway. This year's event was held on December 20th and was the biggest one to date. At least 350 bikes were given away to kids from across Boise and for many it was their very first bike. Our program coordinator Marcus Orton was on hand to help with helmet fits, bike safety and helping to fit bikes to kids. We will likely see many of these students in the upcoming months at school rodeos. We are extremely grateful for the work the Boise Bicycle Project does year round to encourage everyone to get on a bike and ride.

To learn more visit www.boisebicycleproject.org.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Here at the Treasure Valley Safe Routes to School program our work doesn't stop even when school is out. We have several opportunities in 2015 for you to get involved. One is the I Can Shine Bike Camp which will be held in June. You can get more information on the program and stay updated on goings on at https://www.facebook.com/tvicanbikecamp

We also have opportunities working on bike rodeos with scout troops and after school programs. Send us a message today and we'll help you get connected.

DISTRACTED DRIVING: A BIG PROBLEM!

Can you guess the number one reason for automobile crashes? It's distracted drivers. In order, these are the largest factors for distraction according to a study from the American Automobile Association (AAA): texting, rubbernecking, driver fatigue, looking at scenery, other passengers or children in the vehicle, adjusting the radio, and reading of all sorts behind the wheel. AAA estimates that more than 85 percent of the estimated 100 million cell phone users talk on their phone regularly while driving! It's no wonder crashes happen every day.

If you are a parent or student driver, put your phone down and drive your vehicle. Too many students will volunteer a comment in class: "My _____ does that! She/he always does that," when we mention texting or using a cell phone while driving. Remember, there are students walking and riding out there. Your attention should be on the road, not on your phones!

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

The Safe Routes to School program relies on partnerships to be successful. Some of our most powerful partnerships come from individual teachers, principals and parents who believe in the Safe Routes mission of encouraging more students to walk and bicycle to and from school and in daily life. Creating a livable, walkable community is one of the greatest goals of the program as a whole.

Some of our partners for infrastructure, or the built environment, are the Ada County Highway District (ACHD) and Idaho Transportation Department(ITD.) In Ada County, approximately 2 million dollars per year are spent by ACHD on pedestrian and bicycle improvements in and around schools. One recent project to highlight is the improvement of Boise Avenue over the past few years. The addition of sidewalks and bike lanes have created a more friendly environment for active transportation.

Some of our partners in the non-infrastructure, or education and encouragement, are the Police Departments, Boise Bicycle Project, Idaho Walk Bike Alliance, and the Treasure Valley Cycling Alliance. The Boise Police Department has helped us with bike rodeos as well as handing out bike lights around schools and watching for speed violations in school zones.

All of these partners came together in October, along with many others, to help us promote walking and biking for International Walk to School Day. One of the things this achieved was a powerful vision for the amount of kids walking/riding to school and the challenges to their safety from how drivers act around those areas. We saw crosswalk improvements within a few days at North Junior High and an increase in our bookings for education in the classroom.

Education, Encouragement, Engineering, Enforcement, Evaluation and Equity. Safe Routes for Everyone!

Basketball hoop, mail boxes...where to walk?

WHAT HAVE WE BEEN UP TO?

We've been teaching 3rd and 8th grade safety classes and we've been out taking note of conditions around schools and roads. In this photo you can see common sidewalk features, but do you think how they effect a child's route to school? We're all in this together, so let's help keep those sidewalks clear.

BIKE2SCHOOL

Plan ahead for May 6, 2015! This is the day we want to see more students than ever riding their bikes to school. Get your school registered at Bike to School 2015

RIDE ON!

THANK YOU!

This past year at Safe Routes has been one of incredible growth and partnership. We want to thank you all for your part in the success of this program. Together we are stronger and we will look forward to working together even more in 2015!

Happy New Year from your Safe Routes Crew– Lisa, Neal & Marcus