Idaho
Safe Routes to School
Program Toolkit

IDAHO SMART GROWTH

IDAHO
Safe Routes
To School

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Acknowledgement

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Cover Photo Credit: Idaho Smart Growth - Boise, Idaho

This toolkit was created by Idaho Smart Growth. For official TAP funded SRTS applications, manuals and funding information please visit www.LHTAC.org or www.ITD.Idaho.gov

WHAT IS SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL?

Benefits & History of Safe Routes to School

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) is a national movement to promote safe active transportation for students to and from school. Students learn road rules and safety through classroom instruction and real-world experiences, including walking, biking, and rolling.

SRTS programs offer numerous advantages, such as enhanced student health, improved classroom conduct, increased safety throughout the community, reduced traffic congestion, and cost savings for taxpayers.

In urban settings SRTS can focus on increasing bike and pedestrian skills, and teaching students the rules of the road and how to use local infrastructure safely. Rural Idaho has different needs as students may have long commutes into school along higher speed roads and there may be limited bike and pedestrian infrastructure surrounding schools. Both rural and urban programs collaborate with schools and local governments to increase safety within walk zones and around bus stops. All programs have the goal of keeping students safe no matter what mode of transportation they use. Recently SRTS coordinators have been able to work with student drivers to emphasize Idaho's driving laws and how young drivers can more safely interact with the bicyclists and pedestrians they will encounter on the road.

SRTS started in the 1990s with a few individual projects. In 2005 Congress approved funding for SRTS programs in all 50 states. In 2012 funding was incorporated into the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)[1]

In Idaho, SRTS programs are funded through non-infrastructure TAP grants managed by the Idaho Transportation Department (ITD). These grants are monitored by the Local Highway Technical Assistance Council (LHTAC).

Idaho communities benefit from both formal and informal SRTS programming. Anyone can host informal safe routes programming in their community. In fact, there are many individuals who are doing safe routes activities as parents, volunteers, or as members of a partner group. From holding bike rodeos to supporting safe road designs these people do not receive TAP funding but are still doing the important work of getting students to and from school safely.

If you are interested in starting a TAP funded SRTS program please review this guide and then view the ITD and LHTAC websites for application information.

[1] History of Safe Routes to School | Safe Routes Partnership

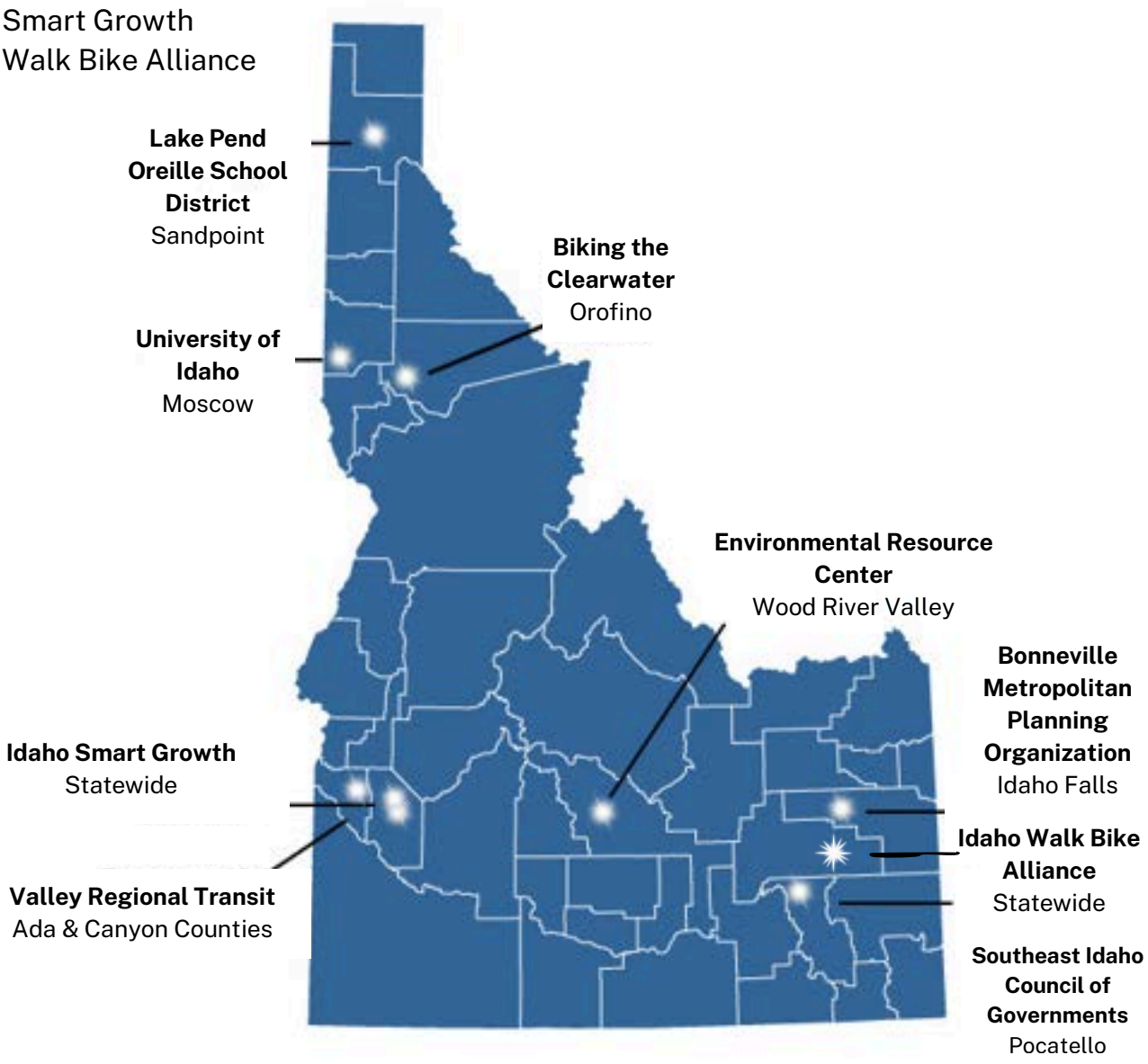
Photo Credit: Idaho Smart Growth - Fruitland, Idaho

At the time of this publication, Idaho has seven local SRTS programs hosted by the following agencies:

- Bonneville Metropolitan Planning Organization
- Environmental Resource Center
- Lake Pend Orielle School District
- City of Orofino
- Southeastern Idaho Council of Governments
- University of Idaho
- Valley Regional Transit

There are two statewide non-profits tasked with development, recruitment and support of the SRTS program:

- Idaho Smart Growth
- Idaho Walk Bike Alliance



The 5Es of Safe Routes to School

SRTS coordinators include the following components in their work with students:

Engagement: Build opportunities by reaching out to students, schools and the community.
Engineering: Improve streets to create safer routes.
Encouragement: Create enthusiasm through programs and activities.
Education: Teach skills and road rules to students.
Evaluation: Assess programs through measurable goals.

Photo Credit: Idaho Smart Growth- Boise, Idaho

Desired Outcomes of Safe Routes to School:

Safety

- Increased bicycle, pedestrian and traffic safety.
- Improved community safety.
- Added community security – eyes on the street.

Health

- Improved childhood health.
- Reduced childhood obesity.
- Encouragement of healthy and active lifestyles.
- Improved air quality – reduced fuel consumption.

Transportation Choice

- Physical improvements, such as sidewalks, bike lanes, and crossings, that result in more students walking, biking and rolling to and from schools.
- Decreased morning peak hour traffic congestion.
- Better access to community facilities.

Build Community

- Increased opportunity for academic success.
- Develop strong community and volunteer involvement.
- Improved partnerships among schools, local municipalities, parent and other community groups, including non-profit organizations.

Roles of Safe Routes to School Coordinators

Safe Routes to School coordinators have many roles in the communities they work with. Coordinators work for non-profit organizations, government agencies, school districts and transportation agencies among others.

Coordinators are:

- **Educators** and teach students about safe walking and biking practices.
- **Event planners** and coordinate the logistics of planning SRTS activities.
- **Curriculum developers** and create or modify lessons for the students and communities they serve.
- **Advocates** for safe active transportation and may work with local governments to address safety issues.
- **Relationship builders** and work with school districts, day cares, libraries, non-profit organizations, and Parent Teacher groups and others to promote active transportation in their community.
- **Data collectors** and use surveys, observations, analysis and interviews to collect information on active transportation in their community.

Some coordinators are also the administrators for their programs and may be write applications for grants, provide budgeting services, and supervise employees.

COORDINATOR EDUCATION AND KNOWLEDGE

It is the responsibility of each SRTS program to develop education and training policies to ensure that staff are using best practice approaches to SRTS. Initial and ongoing training is recommended and there are several resources available to make sure coordinators are prepared.

Photo Credit: Biking the Clearwater SRTS, Orofino, Idaho

Ongoing Education

Ongoing education is essential for SRTS coordinators and there are opportunities for both in person and online trainings. Idaho SRTS coordinators attend monthly online meetings and meet in person once a year for training and mentorship.

Online training offerings can be found on the following sites:
Safe Routes Partnerships
National Center for Safe Routes to School
America Walks

Photo Credit: Idaho Smart Growth
-Dietrich, Idaho

League Cycling Instructor Certification

Many Idaho SRTS programs require their coordinators to become a League Cycling Instructor (LCI) through The League of American Bicyclists. This certifies instructors to teach Smart Cycling classes. LCI's teach students to ride safely and legally and increase confidence for using active transportation.

Certification is intensive and requires passing the Smart Cycling Complete Class as well as attending and passing a three-day LCI seminar. Smart Cycling Classes may be taught by a LCI local to your area but seminars often require travel out of state.

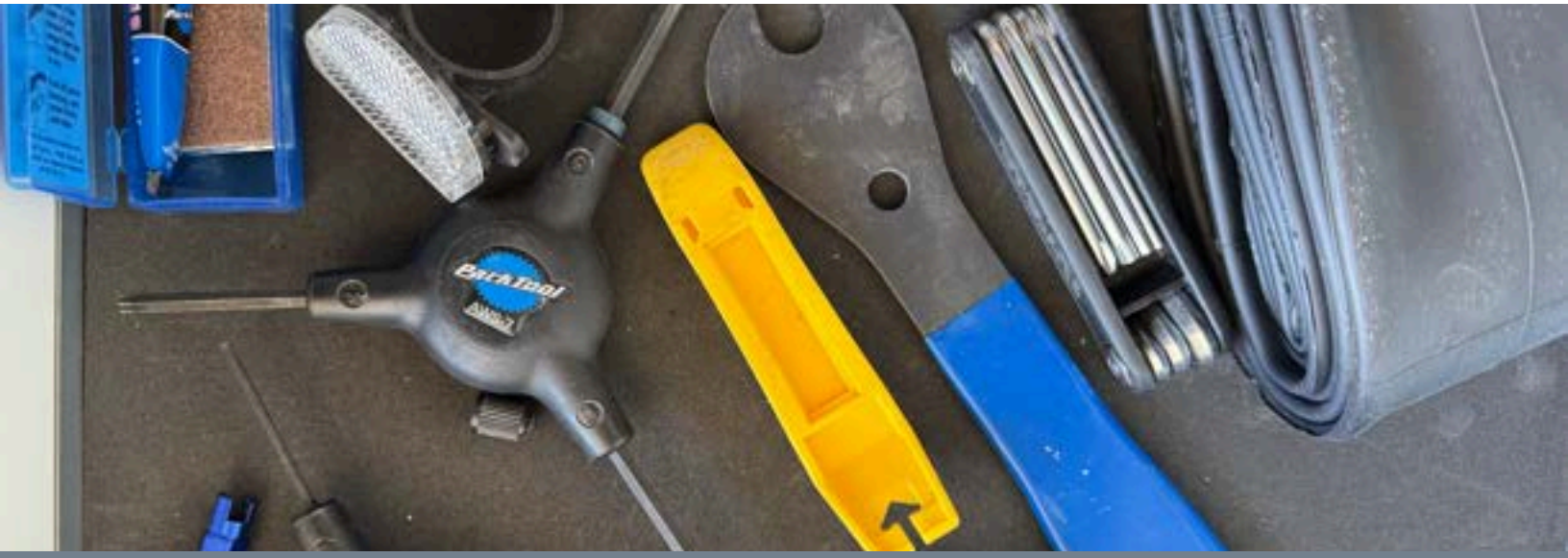
Information on LCI Certification and a list of current LCIs in Idaho can be found on The League of American Bicyclists website at Bikeleague.org.

Basic Bicycle Repair Skills

Students come to SRTS events with all types of bikes in all types of conditions. Coordinators should possess the knowledge to determine whether a bike can easily be made safe to ride, and have tools and supplies available to make quick repairs. If the repair is too complex for the SRTS coordinator, or the bike is not able to be made safe to ride, coordinators should speak to the school or parent and recommend it be taken to a bike shop.

Coordinators can learn basic bike repair skills through books or online videos, volunteering at bicycle related non-profits, or partnering with a bike mechanic.

Basic Repairs	Tools & Supplies
• Adjust seat height • Adjust brakes • Check air in tires and fill if necessary • Fix a flat tire • Reattach a slipped chain • Tighten loose bolts • Straighten handlebars • Check bike chain for wear • Clean and lubricate chain • Inspect reflectors and replace if necessary.	• Air Pump with both Schrader and Presta Valve capability and pressure gauge • Tube patch kit • Allen/Hex wrench set • Flat head and Phillips screw drivers • Bike tube valve caps • Valve core remover • Tube Sealer • Cable wire end caps • Extra reflectors or spoke reflectors • Chain lubricant • Pedal wrench



Traffic Law Knowledge

Every SRTS coordinator should be familiar with Idaho traffic laws. Traffic laws can change, and coordinators can find the latest guidance in The Idaho Driver's Handbook which can be found on the Idaho Transportation Department website or at a local DMV. Coordinators may also review Idaho Statues on the official website of the Idaho Legislature.

Understanding the Ages and Stages of Students

SRTS Coordinators work with students from kindergarten through high school. Student abilities and stages of child development should help determine the curriculum presented, your expectations and the amount of supervision required. Students of all abilities should be included in SRTS programming with adaptations and accommodations as necessary.

A student's age and development will impact their ability to understand and implement safety messaging. Their cognitive skills may impact their ability to understand directions and physical limitations may impact their ability to walk or ride a traditional bicycle. Language skills, including whether they are a native English speaker may impact communication. Below is a list of developmental domains and short definition of each.

Fine Motor Skills: use small muscles of the hands and fingers to perform tasks. Can they hold a string, manipulate knobs, hold a crayon?

Gross Motor Skills: large muscle movements such as walking, running, jumping and climbing. Can they kick a ball, walk up stairs or throw an object?

Language/Communication: ability to interact through words, gestures and body language. Can they answer simple questions, hold a conversation and tell a story?

Cognitive: ability to think and solve problems. Can they count, pay attention to tasks for periods of time, name letters or read?

Social/Emotional: express their emotions effectively, follow rules and directions, form positive relationships with others. Can they calm themselves when angry, build friendships or express emotions appropriately?

For information on age specific developmental milestones search online or visit:
www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones/index.
hopkinsmedicine.org/health/wellness-and-prevention/kids-and-teens-developmental-milestones

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS WITH COMMUNITIES

Building relationships with schools and communities is essential for fostering a supportive and enriching environment for SRTS success. This process begins with communication, where SRTS coordinators, educators, parents, and community members engage in dialogue to understand the mission of SRTS and how it will benefit students. Collaborative initiatives, involving the community and school can bridge gaps and create opportunities for safe walking and biking education as well as increase support for projects that support active transportation.

Photo Credit: Idaho Smart Growth

Schools and Day Care Facilities

Many SRTS coordinators are already affiliated with a school district. For those who are not, it can be challenging to convince schools who are not familiar with SRTS programming to allow coordinators into the classroom. Coordinators can promote SRTS by building relationships with school employees and volunteers including teachers, Parent Teacher groups, principals, board members and superintendents. Coordinators can attend school district meetings, offer to host SRTS activities during field days and school carnivals and hold SRTS programming outside of school hours but still on school property with permission.

The demands on classroom learning time are significant and convincing schools to allow SRTS programming during their instructional hours can be difficult. SRTS supports educational curriculum and can be integrated into classroom instruction hours. SRTS naturally fits with physical education, especially bike rodeos, neighborhood walks and other activities that get students moving. SRTS may be incorporated into additional courses in accordance with Idaho's Education Standards. More information on Idaho Standards can be found on the Idaho Department of Education website.

Coordinators may partner with after school and summer programs such as camps and daycares. These may be easier to initiate SRTS programming with since they do not have the same time constraints as schools.

Photo Credit: Idaho Smart Growth

Community Wide Approach to SRTS

Involve the community in SRTS by creating an incentive program that promotes safe walking and biking behaviors. These 'Caught You Being Good' initiatives partner with local police departments, city employees, businesses, and libraries to create a program for students who are modeling safe behaviors. This can include wearing a helmet, crossing a street safely, alerting a pedestrian that a bicycle rider is passing on the left, and other desired behaviors. Students earn a 'Caught You Being Good' ticket which can be exchanged at a local business for an incentive. Programs can partner with local ice cream shops, bike shops, libraries, and other businesses to give away a small treat, stickers, bike safety gear, and other items children would like.

Coordinators can host independent events in the community such as bike rodeos, bicycle and pedestrian counts, walk audits, and social bike rides where the community can see and experience SRTS programming. These events can be on your own or held in tandem with other events and festivals already happening in your area.

Volunteers

Volunteers are crucial to the success of SRTS events. These can be parents, guardians, or other family members, siblings, high school students, teachers, employees of local businesses or members of the public interested in SRTS activities.

If sufficient advance notice is given, schools may distribute volunteer requests to families through their students. Volunteers can also be recruited through word of mouth, using your own or the school's network and social media postings. Local businesses or agencies can also be a source of volunteers, particularly those that are affiliated with activities related to SRTS, such as bike shops, sporting goods stores, highway districts, and engineering firms. Each school district has their own volunteer policies and system of volunteer sign in. Most schools ask volunteers to sign in at the office and may request a copy of their identification card. Coordinators should learn each school's requirements and share them with volunteers.

If you are hosting an event independently, create a volunteer sign in and have participants sign a release of liability. This will allow you to collect data on volunteers, call on them in the future, and help protect you and your SRTS program from any claims that may arise from injuries, damages, or losses.

Provide volunteers with a list of items to bring such as a bicycle, helmet, sunscreen, drinking water, etc. Before students arrive, hold a quick volunteer orientation meeting to discuss the curriculum and objectives, assign tasks, and distribute safety vests if needed. Document the number of volunteers for your data collection.



Photo Credit: Idaho Smart Growth - Weiser, Boise, Dietrich, Idaho

DATA IN SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

It is important to keep accurate and comprehensive data for your program. Data demonstrates your program's relevance, the effectiveness of SRTS in Idaho as a whole, and provides a record of activities for invoicing purposes. Data is required to be provided to LHTAC which writes and publishes the SRTS Annual Report.

Photo Credit: Idaho Smart Growth, Filer, Idaho

Existing Data

SRTS coordinators who are compiling data to support a SRTS program or infrastructure project already have access to existing data. The Local Highway Technical Assistance Council maintains an Interactive Crash Map, and the Idaho Transportation Department's website has links to a Crash Data Dashboard and the yearly Idaho Traffic Crash Report. Coordinators can connect with or send a public records request to their local law enforcement agencies for information on traffic stops and traffic ticket information which can help to identify unsafe roads.

Coordinators should seek information on near misses. A near miss is a crash that almost happens, but is avoided, and therefore not typically reported. If there is data on near misses it is often only a fraction of the true number. Coordinators can seek anecdotal evidence from student interviews, online forums, and discussions with crossing guards, police, teachers and parents.

Data Collection

Each program should collect data on their own program including but not limited to:

- Number of schools and students served
- Bike rodeos and number of participants
- Classroom and on bike instruction days
- Number of students participating in events such as walk, bike, roll to school days
- Number of volunteers at each event
- Partnerships with other organizations such as libraries or bike shops.
- The number of bike helmets and other encouragement incentives given to students
- Bicyclist and Pedestrian counts to and from school
- School Safety Assessments -observing bicyclist, pedestrian and driver behavior around schools
- Pictures of activities *

*Before you take pictures at a school or at a school event check with the school to ensure you are following their policies. Many schools include media release forms in their back-to-school documentation, and some parents may choose not to grant permission for photographs or video recordings to be taken. If you are holding an independent event, consider asking parents and guardians to sign a media release especially if the pictures might be posted on social media or websites or appear in printed materials. You can further protect student privacy by framing or cropping pictures in a way that students' faces are not visible or are not recognizable.

Surveys

Surveys serve as a tool to learn the needs of the students, school and community and are an effective method for collecting data. Surveys can inform coordinators about the number of students who are walking or biking to school, the average distance and route students are traveling, barriers to safe travel and trouble spots along the routes.

Coordinators should seek permission from the school principal and in some cases the school board before surveys are sent home. SRTS coordinators may have opportunities to give out the survey and directly engage with parents at school events and Parent Teacher Association and Parent Teacher Organization meetings.

Beyond paper surveys there are several online tools available that coordinators can use to create and distribute surveys to parents. Adding hyperlinks and QR codes to emails, newsletters and social media posts will make it easier for people to respond. Using social media for survey distribution may reach a broader audience but your respondents may not as accurately reflect your target community.

A parent survey can be found on the Idaho Safe Routes to School website.

Teacher Tally

Teacher tallies use non-identifying data to document how individual students are arriving to and leaving school. Data can be sorted by school, classroom, grade level, AM and PM, and even by the weather. Tallies are completed Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday over one week and can be repeated in the fall, winter and spring to track how transportation choices change over the school year.

Teachers can record data themselves or assign students this task at the start of every day. Tallies can be incorporated into circle time for younger students and older students can use the data in other academic courses.

A Teacher Tally sheet can be found on the Idaho Safe Routes to School website

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

The following pages contain events and activities SRTS coordinators might implement depending on the age and abilities of the students served, the characteristics of the urban or rural environment and the needs of the community. These can be broken down into classroom instruction, on foot instruction and on bike instruction. Many Idaho programs deal with inclement weather for most of the school year and may spend a majority of time on in classroom education. All content presented to students in a school environment must be approved by the school administration.

Photo Credit: Lake Pend Oreille SRTS

Indoor Practice Course

Ages: K-5th

A safety course similar to a bike rodeo layout can be set up inside the classroom or gym. Students can walk or run the course to practice hand signals and obey traffic laws and signs.

If there is enough space and if the school or venue gives permission, you may be able to use bicycles or scooters indoors. Some facilities have concerns about the damage wheels will do to floors so be sure to check with the facility beforehand. This activity is more appropriate for younger students, older students may find this activity too simple.

Photo Credit: Above, Treasure Valley SRTS - Boise, Idaho Inset: Biking the Clearwater SRTS

Parts of a Bike

Age: K-High School

Is it a seat or a saddle? Students may not know the parts of a bike beyond the basics, and some may call parts by different names. Get everyone speaking the same language by teaching the parts of the bike and then teaching what the parts of the bike do. This knowledge will be helpful to students if you include bike repair stations in your SRTS programming.

Bicycle Repair Clinic

Ages: 3rd-High School

Students practice bicycle repairs and maintenance that they can do by themselves at their homes. Coordinators can teach repairs over multiple sessions and set up stations that focus on a few repairs at a time. This will allow the student to become competent in those skills before moving onto the next repair on the list.

Basic Repairs Taught to Students

Check air and use pump to inflate tires - Discuss different valve types and have students identify which they have on their bike. Provide examples of Presta and Schrader valves and demonstrate how to use both. Coordinator provides gauge and pump that is appropriate for both valve types.

Flat tire repair - Students can practice patching tubes on their own bike or coordinator can provide practice tubes. Coordinator provides patch kit materials.

Bike wash - Coordinator provides soap, rags and brushes and monitors students as they wash bikes.

Chain cleaning and lubrication- Chain cleaning can be done during a complete bike wash or on its own. Coordinators provide chain lubrication and rags.

Brake adjustments - Coordinators assist students to identify which type of brakes they have. Students learn to inspect and adjust brake pads, adjust cable tension and place end caps on cables if needed.

Adjusting saddle height - Students learn and practice how to adjust the saddle height to fit their bodies. Some bikes may require a bolt be loosened to raise or lower saddle height.

Fix a slipped chain - Students learn how to fix a slipped chain and inspect the chain, chain ring and cassette. If the bike has a derailleur this will be a more complicated lesson for the student and coordinator may refer them to a local bike shop if the repair is more than a simple adjustment.

Adjust handlebars - Students learn how to raise and align handlebars.

Check reflectors- If students are bringing their own bikes this is a good time to check that the reflectors are present and are adjusted properly. Reflectors are easily broken and sometimes intentionally removed by students who don't like how they make their bike look.

Traffic Sign/Traffic Law Trivia

Ages: 4th - High School

Coordinators quiz students on traffic sign recognition and traffic laws to increase knowledge and safety. Students can work independently or as a team. Coordinators can use a variety of educational materials such as flash cards, slides, worksheets or online games to engage students.

Map Your Route

Ages: 3rd – High School

Students use satellite images either on the computer or printed on paper to map the route they take from their home to school. Students can identify safety issues or areas of concern on their route. Students can include things such as aggressive dogs, sprinklers crossing onto sidewalks, or low hanging branches or bushes encroaching on sidewalk and add stickers or draw pictures on their map to represent them.

If a student rides the bus or is driven to school, they can map areas in their neighborhood where they walk or bike.

Coordinators can assist students to identify additional routes to school and other popular destinations which may be a safer alternative than the route the student is utilizing. Coordinators can discuss safety issues with local municipalities and work towards finding remedies.

Image to Right:
Red - Student Route

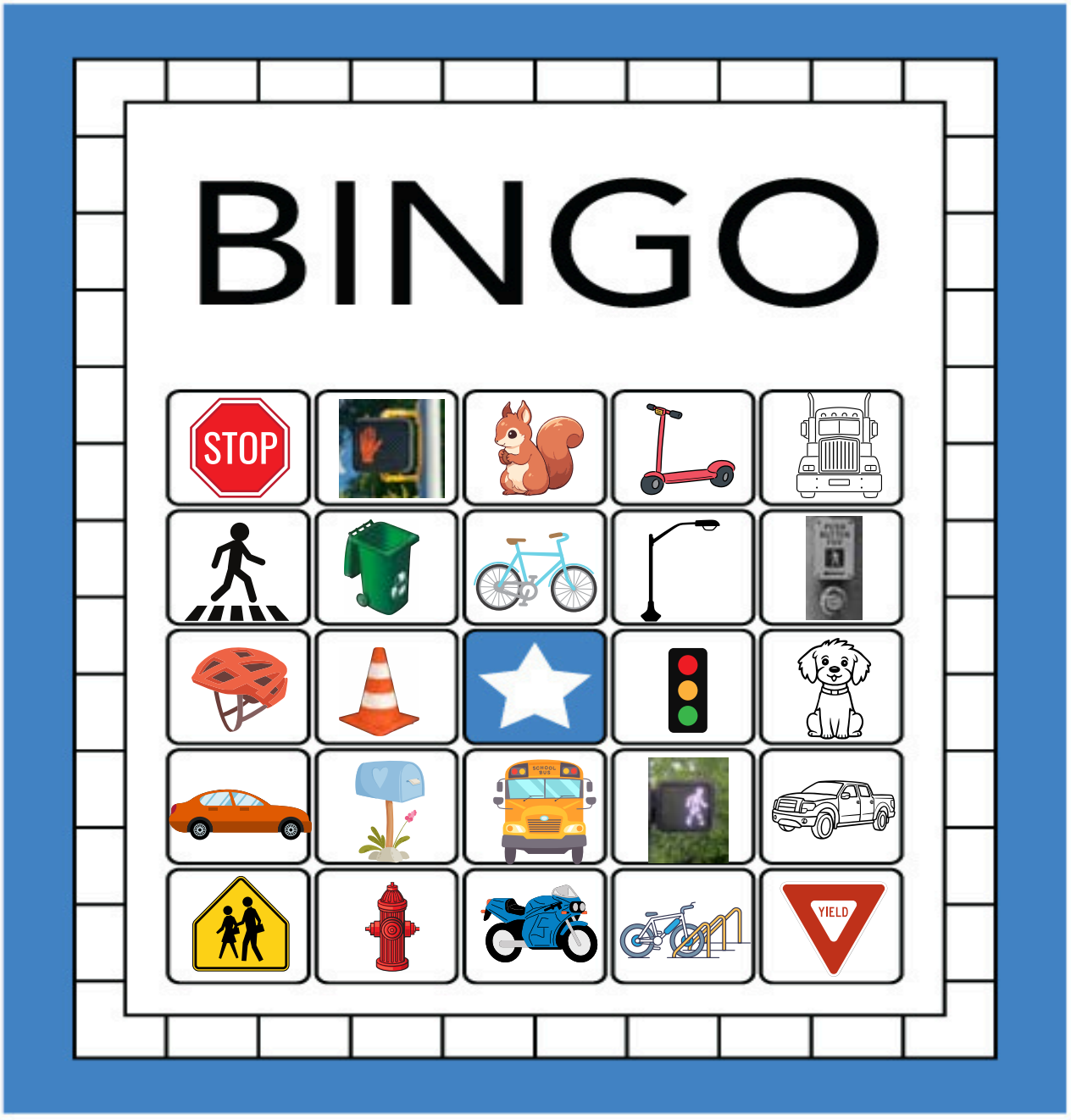
Yellow - Safety Concerns

Stickers - Barking Dog and Ambulance

SRTS BINGO

Ages: 2nd - High School

BINGO can be utilized during presentations, films and neighborhood walks to increase attention and spark discussion. BINGO sheets can be tailored to the lesson objective, and the grid size can be adjusted based on the age and ability of the student. BINGO sheets can be found on the Idaho Safe Routes to School website or created using online programs.



Indoor/Outdoor Practice Route

Ages: K - High School

Students walk a course through the school building or school grounds and practice hand signals and obey signage. The course can be laid out in advance with signs, cones and other obstacles. The coordinator can lead the students giving instruction at each obstacle or students can take turns leading their peers and demonstrate their knowledge as the leader.

Slide Show Presentations

Ages: K - High School

Slide show presentations can be used to teach lessons in inclement weather or before practicing the skills learned in the community. It is recommended to update the presentation every time with information, safety concerns and pictures of relevant and familiar road infrastructure that that is found in the community and near the school you are working with. To increase engagement and attention presentations should be kept short. Coordinators can also have students create slides, using their own photos or those they found online and have students present and discuss with the class.

Photo Credit: Treasure Valley SRTS

Coloring Books, Worksheets & Story Books

Ages: K - High School

There are many free coloring sheets and worksheets about active transportation available by searching online. Coordinators should review them for accuracy, age appropriateness, and compliance with Idaho laws before using them.

For younger students, hold a story time and read books about biking and walking. Discuss if the characters did or did not display safe walking and biking behaviors and review any road hazards encountered.

Worksheets and coloring sheets can be found on the Idaho Safe Routes to School website.

Photo Credit: Biking the Clearwater SRTS - Orofino, Idaho

Videos

Ages K-High School

Numerous instructional videos and cartoons regarding road safety available through curriculum sites or online video sites. Coordinators should watch the entire video before presenting to students to ensure accuracy and compliance with Idaho laws. Some videos are filmed in locations where traffic laws and infrastructure are different, and others may give incorrect or outdated information.

Coordinators can encourage student engagement by pairing a video with a worksheet or BINGO sheet. Once the video is finished coordinators should discuss the content with students. If you are presenting a video during school hours check with the teacher or administration about school video policies and any parent permissions that might be needed.

On Foot Instruction

Neighborhood Walk

Ages K-High School

One of the best ways to identify areas of concern and observe students' knowledge is by walking the neighborhood surrounding the school. These walks allow coordinators the opportunity to watch as students navigate the infrastructure and provide real time education. Coordinators should review school policies, consult with school administrators and obtain permission slips if required for walks held during school hours. Volunteers may be needed to act as chaperones, especially for younger students or large classes that will spread out over the route.

During this walk coordinators and students can discuss and practice utilizing the various bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. Driver behavior can be observed and discussed with the group. Students can identify issues such as overgrown vegetation, aggressive dogs, vehicles blocking sidewalks, and crossings that might make active transportation less safe. The coordinator can address these safety concerns with local partners and municipalities and attempt to resolve them.

Crossing Practice

Ages K-High School

Students practice using crossings in their neighborhood with the coordinator. Coordinators can discuss the type of crossing and whether it is signalized, unsignalized, or unmarked. Coordinators should teach how signalized crossings such as the Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB) and Pedestrian Hybrid Beacons (PHBs) operate and how students can safety navigate these facilities. Coordinators should teach students how the crossing is activated, expectations of drivers once crossing is activated and address any safety concerns while crossing. Unmarked or unsignalized crossings should be addressed and students should be taught how to use these more safely.

Older students may be able to practice with supervision. Younger elementary students may be taught to cross only if a crossing guard is present, but they should still understand the type of crosswalk they are using and what safety concerns to watch for.

Photo Credit: Lake Pend Orielle School District SRTS

Walk Audits and Pedestrian and Bicycle Counts

Ages 3rd-High School

Coordinators can engage students in completing walk audits, pedestrian and bicycle counts. The data that is collected can be used in academic courses for student projects and also utilized by the SRTS coordinator to assess routes and develop potential SRTS projects. Students can audit the safety of school bus stops, and the routes students take to and from the stops. Students can also count pedestrians and bicyclists arriving and leaving school at each access point on campus. This can be completed over multiple days to increase the reliability of the data.

A walk audit can include:

A review of the sidewalk, street, crossing signals and pedestrian ramps.
Assessment of infrastructure for people with mobility limitations or who may be hearing or vision impaired.
Documentation of shade trees, benches, trash cans, and landscaping.
Public transportation available and assessment of transit stop area.
Repairs needed to roads and sidewalks.
Safety of the area including graffiti, streetlights, safety barriers, or aggressive animals.
Weather specific concerns such as pooling water, snow and ice.

Online resources for walk audits:
AARP Walk Audit Tool Kit
Safe Routes Partnership - Let's Go for a Walk
NCHPAD - Conducting a Walk Audit

On Bike or Foot Instruction

Walking School Bus & Bicycle Bus

Ages K - 8th

A walking school bus or bicycle bus is a group of students walking or riding to school under adult supervision. These busses can be as small as two families taking turns walking or biking children to school or on a larger scale can be an organized group with departure and arrival times, scheduled volunteers, and 'bus stops' for picking up or dropping off students.

When coordinating a bus consider the following:

Is it safe for students to walk or bike? Not all neighborhoods have safe routes to school. Many parents are concerned with certain areas of the route such as crosswalks and intersections. Parent concerns may be relieved by knowing that one or more adults will be present to supervise and instruct students.

Routes should first be tested by SRTS coordinators and if significant safety issues are identified they should be addressed before a walking school bus or bicycle bus is implemented. Coordinators should observe the road infrastructure along the route students will travel. Coordinators should take into consideration whether sidewalks are present or if there are sidewalk gaps. Coordinators should observe the street crossings and try to minimize the number of times students need to cross the street. When crossing the street is necessary students should be directed to use marked and signalized crosswalks. Coordinators should be aware of the speed limits on routes and available bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. If students are traveling in low light situations coordinators should ensure that streetlights are present and working. Once the route is identified, provide a map to parents and the school.

How often does the bus run? The schedule is dependent on the availability of the adult supervisors. If a volunteer is unable to fulfill their shift it is important to communicate that to parents and the SRTS coordinator, so students are not left unattended. Contact information for each volunteer and student on the route should be obtained by the SRTS coordinator so changes in schedule or emergency situations can be alerted to parents.

Who are the adults who will volunteer? SRTS coordinators, parents, neighbors, teachers, principals or anyone else who is able to commit to the schedule. Coordinators should check with school administrators and verify which school policies might affect volunteers.

Photo Credit: Idaho Smart Growth. Boise, Idaho

Walk to School Day &
Walk, Bike, Roll to School Day

Ages K-High School

These events, held in the fall and spring promote the use of active transportation to and from school. Alternative dates may be chosen depending on weather or school calendars.

Events can be as simple as a group of students walking together or more elaborate with a formal walking school bus or bike bus. They can include school officials, elected officials, local police, parents and others. Often the local media is invited to attend and participate. To increase student participation and create an engaging atmosphere coordinators can include music, breakfast at school, costumes, encouragement incentives, and other activities students might enjoy.

If the distance to school is too far or unsafe for students to walk, bike, or roll to school, groups can meet at an alternative start location such as a park and travel from there. Schools can also direct their school buses stop a few blocks away from the school so that everyone can walk, bike and roll in together.

Walk, bike & roll to school events can be registered at www.walkbiketoschool.org. Coordinators should collect data on the number of schools, students and volunteers participating.

Photo Credit: Lake Pend Orielle School District SRTS - Sandpoint, Idaho

On Bike Instruction

Route Ride

Ages 3rd-High School

During a route ride all students tour the neighborhood near the school on bike to learn road safety and put those skills into practice. The route should be determined beforehand with safety concerns identified.

Coordinators should provide bicycles for students who do not have one and conduct a pre-ride ABC and helmet check with all students before starting out. There may be students who do not ride bicycles. They can ride as a passenger on a cargo bike or stay near the school and practice learning to ride skills and pedestrian skills.

Several SRTS coordinators or volunteers are needed for supervision and a line leader, middle, and sweep or end position should be assigned for the safety of everyone.

The group should stay together as much as possible. Students can practice hand signals, alert pedestrians before they pass, navigate road crossings and interact with drivers. It can be useful for SRTS coordinators to have two-way communication between themselves and other adults in the group which can include hand signals, cell phones or handheld or helmet radios.

SRTS Coordinators should ensure parent permission slips have been received for all students before taking them off school property.

Bike Rodeo

Ages K-8th

Bike rodeos are a fun way of teaching the rules of the road and increasing students' safety and biking skills. Volunteers play a critical role in bike rodeos by providing education, monitoring for safety and repairing the course as needed.

Students may use their own bikes or coordinators can supply bikes or scooters. Bike rodeos provide an opportunity to teach correct helmet fitting and assist students to adjust their helmets to fit better. Helmets may be given to students in need for participating in the bike rodeo. When safety enhancing items are given to students for their bikes or scooters, coordinators can assist students to install these items onsite to ensure they are property attached and will be utilized.

Bike Rodeo Supplies can include:
First aid kit
Bikes and scooters
Helmets
Helmet sanitizer
Safety vests for volunteers
Release of liability and media release if needed
Cones of all sizes, rope
Sidewalk chalk
Traffic signs
Rolled magazines or newspapers and a tub or bucket
Rubber ducks, sponges or foam balls cut in half for obstacle dodge
Encouragement incentives such as bike lights, pencils, spoke reflectors, bells, reflective charms.

Skills to be taught
Hand Signaling
Braking-Stopping
Balancing
Weaving - Object Avoidance
Turning
Checking for Traffic
Obeying Traffic Signs

BIKE RODEO CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION

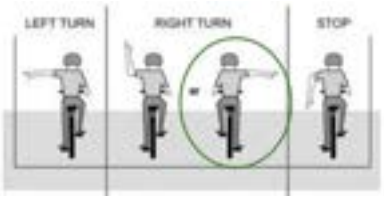
If possible, schedule classroom time prior to the rodeo to give instructions to students, otherwise schedule time before each group starts the course.

- **THE PARTS OF A BICYCLE:** Go over basic parts of the bike, do not assume that all students are familiar with terms.

- **RULES OF THE ROAD - ROAD SIGNS:** Explain to students how traffic works. Bicycle riders obey the same rules as cars in a bike rodeo. Teach them about yielding, passing, predicting traffic flow and the traffic laws that relate to cyclists. Teach the importance of riding with traffic to be more visible to drivers turning left at parking lot accesses and side streets. Talk about what different road signs mean, show examples of road signs, have the stuents identify them.

- **HAND SIGNALS:** Teach children the hand signals they should use to alert drivers of their actions:

1. **Left turn** – extend left arm out straight from your side and point in the direction turning.
2. **Right turn** – extend left arm out from your side, bend elbow at 90-degree angle, hand pointing up – **or preferred** – extend right arm out straight from your side and point in the direction turning.
3. **Stopping or slowing** – extend your left arm out from your side, bend elbow at 90-degree angle, hand pointing down.



- **HELMET FIT:** Talk about how to fit helmets using “2V1” (see below) Note: Helmets may be fitted in class if they are available then.

PREPARATION: Volunteers should be trained on basic bicycle skills, laws, and rodeo procedures. They should have an understanding of the skill they will monitor and know how to they are supposed to teach the skill. One person may monitor no more than two skill stations. Volunteers and coordinators should wear safety vests to improve visibility when on the course.

BIKE RODEO PRE-RIDE STATIONS

Allow for helmet and bike checks and basic instruction on rules of the road and on hand signaling (if not covered in classroom) before the ride starts:

HELMETS:

Helmets are required to be on and worn correctly to ride the course. If the student does not have a helmet they may borrow or be given one. Helmets should be level on top of the head and be fitted with "2V1" – two fingers between helmet and top of brow, V under ears with snug fit, one finger under the chin strap so students can open mouth without pinching but strap does not come over chin. Sanitize helmets between users.

BICYCLES

The bike should be the right size: have the child straddle the bike seat, feet should touch the ground flat. When seated with feet on pedals, the knee should have a slight bend. Adjust the seat and handlebars and secure and clean reflectors, mirrors, and lights if needed. Teach students when stopped, to have one foot on the ground and one foot resting on the pedal in the 2 o'clock position. This is the Power Pedal Position. When on the road, the foot nearest traffic should be on the ground.

ABC Check

- **AIR:** Check for tires that need air. Check for damage to tire tread and sidewall.
- **BRAKES:** Coaster Brakes check – spin the back wheel and apply the brake. Hand Brakes check – lift one tire up at a time and spin; squeeze the levers to see if tire stops, adjust set screw if necessary; ensure levers don't hit fingers when squeezed; check brake pads, they should be clean, straight and contact the rims evenly, adjust if necessary.
- **CHAIN & CRANKS**: Try to wiggle the crank arms side to side - there should be no movement. Check the chain to be sure it is secure. Spin the cranks to see if the chain drives the rear wheel. Clean chain if necessary. If the bike has gears, check to make sure the gear levers and derailleurs are aligned correctly and gears change smoothly.

Photo Credit: Idaho Smart Growth - Dietrich, Idaho

BIKE RODEO SKILLS

Each element of a course can be an individual station or set up for continuous flow.

PRE-RIDE INSTRUCTION: Before starting students should understand exactly what is expected of them. Explain the course set up or walk the course. Explain each skill and its purpose. If you were unable to do classroom instruction, demonstrate hand signals and have the students practice with you. Explain the basic rules of the road and meaning of traffic signs (yield, stop, one-way, etc.).

SKILL #1- BALANCE: Turtle Race - Teach balance and control while riding at low speeds. Have students ride at slow speed and try to stay between the lines without touching feet to the ground or crossing over a line. The slowest rider to finish without touching the ground wins. Encourage children to look straight ahead.

SKILL #2 – ZIG ZAG CONTROL: Teach control, coordination, and ability to maneuver. Students weave around mini cones (or other obstacles) in a zigzag fashion without touching them.
Vary the pace and have students practice the skill faster and slower.

Photo Credit: Idaho Smart Growth - Weiser, Idaho

SKILL #3 – BRAKING / STOPPING: Teach how to stop quickly and how to judge stopping distance. Have students ride straight at a normal speed, apply brakes at the first line to stop with their front tire ending at the second line. Neither foot can touch the ground until they stop, and they should not skid or wobble. Encourage straight-line riding to increase predictability for other users of the course. Teach students to apply their brakes harder if they pass the line, or lighter if they stop short of the line. If time permits, have them try it again if they missed the mark.

SKILL #4 – CIRCLING / TURNING: Teach balance, ability to turn and change of direction. Students ride at slow speed between the double lines in the circles or figure eight without stopping or touching the lines.

Photo Credit: Idaho Smart Growth - Dietrich, Idaho

SKILL #5 – SCANNING /ONE HAND CONTROL: Practice student's ability to scan and control a bike with one hand while riding in a straight line. Students ride straight and look back at you without swerving. Students can practice tossing a rolled-up newspaper with one hand into a bin situated on the course to teach one-handed control for turn signaling. For extra practice have students switch up which hand throws the newspaper.

SKILL #6 – OBSTACLE DODGE: Practice ability to avoid obstacles without losing balance or veering into the travel lane. Tell riders to travel straight in the narrow lane toward the "obstacles" (rubber ducks, sponges) and steer around them at the last minute. They must remain in the narrow space. Student should steer by turning their handlebars one way (to avoid the object), turning back the other way (to keep from falling) and then turning straight ahead (to continue).

SKILL #7 – SAFETYVILLE STREETS: Teach the use of hand signals and safe behavior at intersections and teach stopping and yielding. Pre-station instruction: Explain yielding – they do not have to stop if there are no cars coming, but they must stop if they see any cars. Remind them to scan for traffic and use the signals they learned. Have students ride to the first intersection and stop, then look left, right, and left for cars before proceeding. Have them repeat the skill again, have 'cars' in the intersection (a volunteer can pretend to be an automobile.) Make student stop and wait for cars before crossing or get off and walk bikes across in crosswalk if they are less skilled.

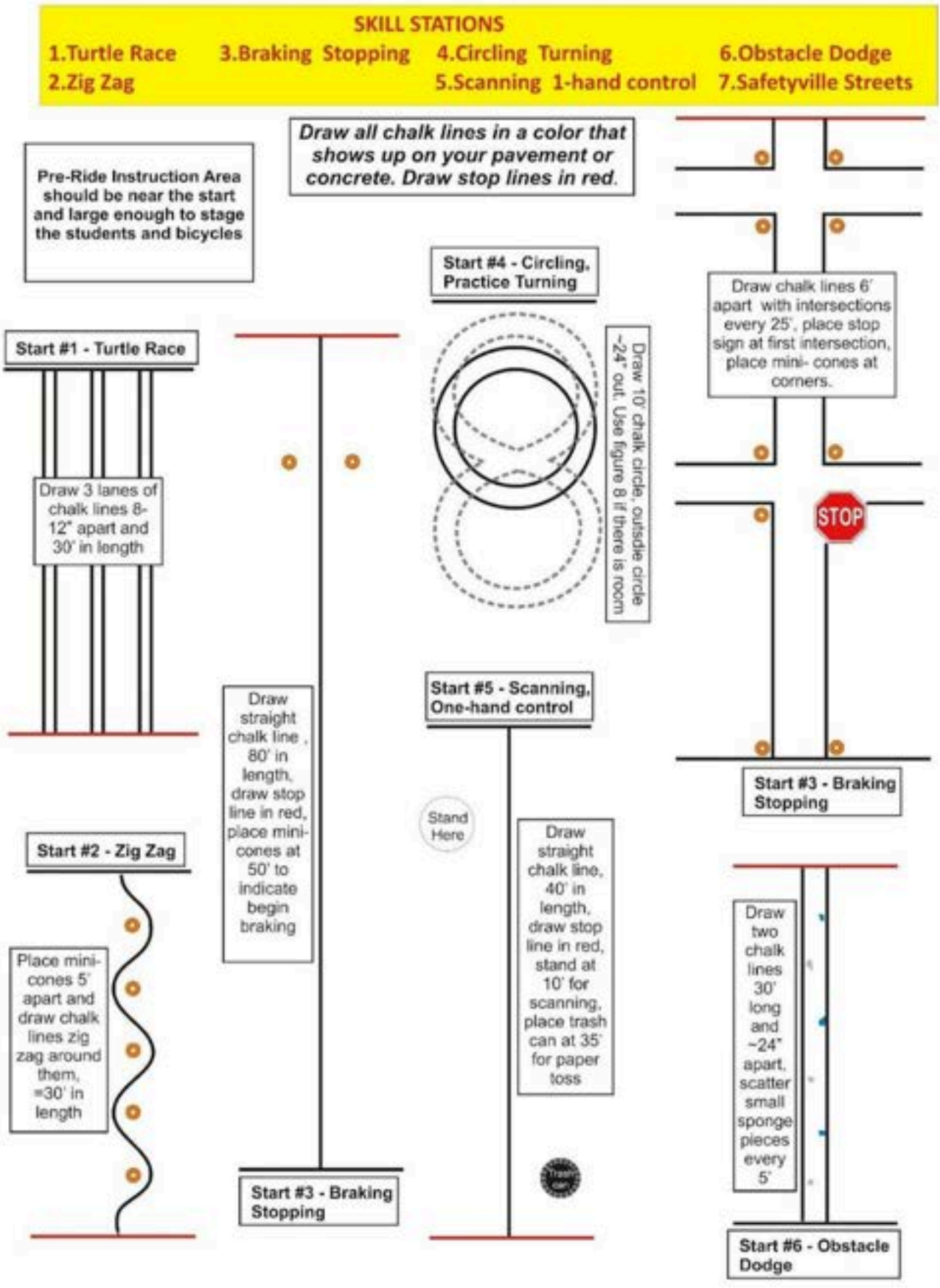
Other Skills to Teach:

Alerting on a Pass: Students yell out 'passing', or 'on your left', or ring their bike bell when passing another user of the course.

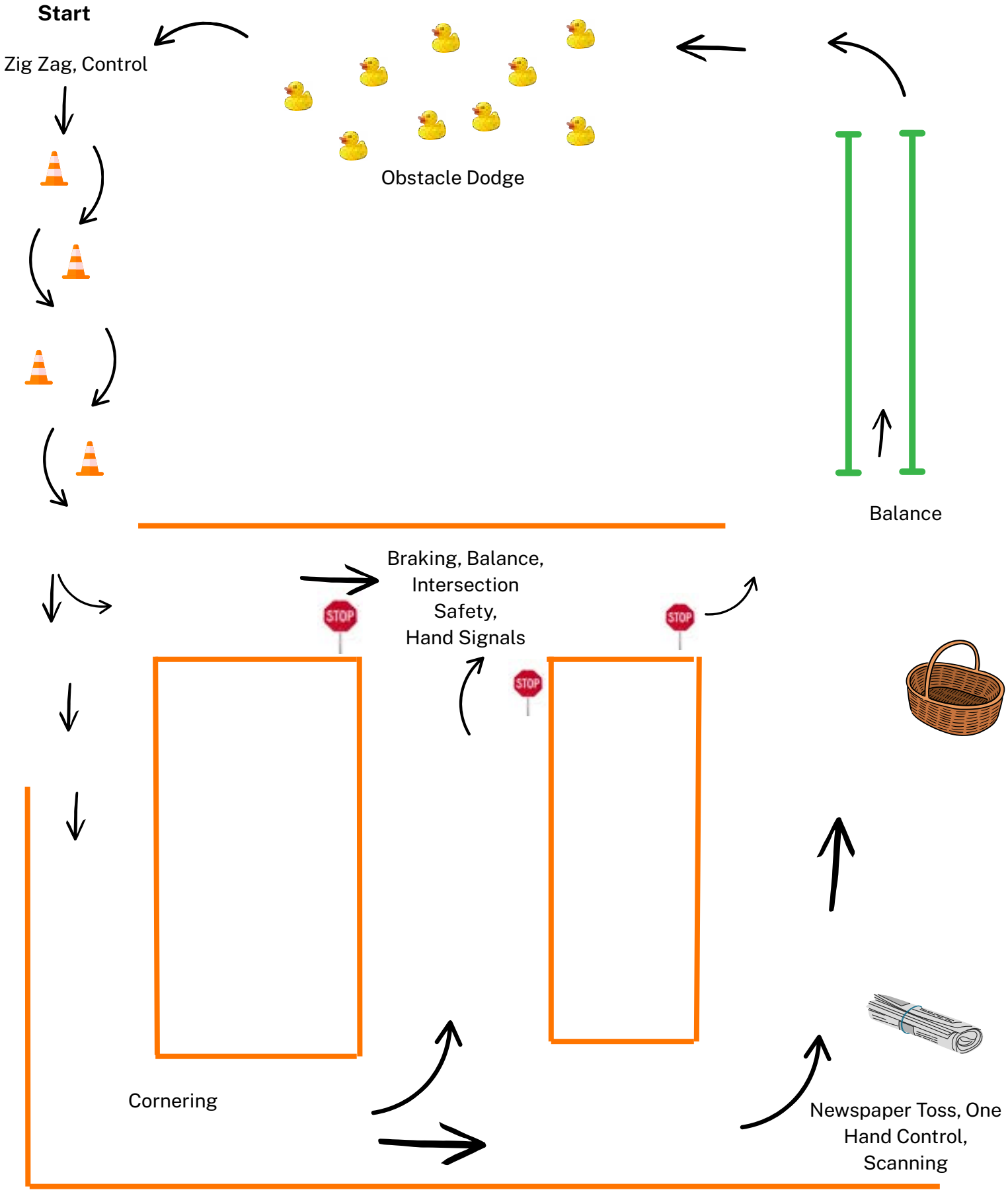
Roundabout Practice: This requires control of the bike as well as the ability to understand the concept of yielding. A volunteer must be assigned to the roundabout if this is an element in the bike rodeo.

Photo Credit: Idaho Smart Growth, Boise, Idaho

Sample Course Stations



Sample Course Continuous Flow



Resource Page

Idaho Smart Growth

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Idaho Transportation Department

11331 W. Chinden Blvd,
Boise, ID 83707
www.itd.idaho.gov

Local Highway Technical Assistance Council (LHTAC)

3330 W. Grace Street
Boise, ID 83703
https://lhtac.org/

Questions or Assistance

If you are interested in starting a SRTS program in your area please reach out to LHTAC or Idaho Smart Growth with questions.

Idaho Smart Growth was awarded a TAP grant to provide training, mentorship and support to existing and emerging SRTS programs in Idaho. ISG is also available to demonstrate SRTS programming in your community or with your students.

LHTAC provides oversight of grant applications and can answer questions about invoicing, reimbursement, and contracts.

Please visit IdahoSafeRoutestoSchool.org for additional information on SRTS programming in Idaho.