Our goal is to get more students using travel modes that are active, safe, and sustainable.

**Achieving this goal is no simple feat – it requires a societal shift in our current travel behaviours and multiple community stakeholders working together.**

Active School Travel initiatives in Ontario work towards this goal by implementing these steps to success, known as ‘the Five E’s’: Education, Encouragement, Engineering, Enforcement and Evaluation:

**Education:** Raising awareness about the benefits of active and sustainable school travel, and teaching students the skills they need to walk/wheel or ride the school bus safely.  
**Encouragement:** Creating excitement and shifting norms through events, activities, prizes and incentives.  
**Engineering:** Improving existing and/or installing new infrastructure to support active school travel.  
**Enforcement:** Monitoring traffic and enforcing traffic rules.  
**Evaluation:** Assessing conditions and monitoring progress toward school travel goals.

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**Why walk or bike to school?**

**Safer School Zones**  
- Reducing vehicular traffic volumes creates safer school zones. Improving walking and cycling routes to school also enhances the safety and quality of life for the community as a whole.

**Healthier Children**  
- Active school travel helps children meet the recommended 60 minutes per day of moderate to vigorous physical activity, which is linked with improved physical health.  
- Active school travel is associated with mental health benefits including reduced stress, depression and anxiety; as well as increased happiness.

**Less Traffic and Pollution**  
- Reducing the number of children being driven to school reduces greenhouse gas emissions and particulate air pollution around the school; this improves air quality and reduces associated risks of lung and cardiovascular disease.

**Better Academic Performance**  
- The increased physical activity associated with the school journey has been found to increase alertness and attention during the school day.  
- Physical activity supports healthy brain development, which can lead to improved learning and academic outcomes.
How it works

1. School Travel Committee is established
   Timelines are established and school profiles are completed

2. Neighbourhood conditions are assessed
   Data is collected through surveys and walkabouts

3. Action Plan is developed
   Solutions to problem areas are identified and prioritized

4. Action Plan is implemented
   Education, encouragement, engineering, enforcement, and evaluation

5. Conditions are reassessed
   Collect follow-up data to evaluate progress and share results

6. Keep it Going
   Renew sustainability

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Phase 1: Set-up

School Travel Planning (STP) is a community-based approach for increasing rates of active school travel. Having a range of stakeholders involved, including the City, public health, school boards, principals, teachers, parents and students, improves results. By establishing connections between all interested groups in the first stage, it is the aim of the project to identify the various challenges and opportunities associated with Safe Routes to School.

Phase 2: Assess

This phase involves understanding existing conditions by gathering data about barriers to creating Safe Routes to School that are unique to each neighbourhood. This is done through student hands-up surveys in the classroom, family surveys, traffic observations, and walkabouts that target problem areas.

Phase 3: Problem-solve

The third phase involves examining the challenges and producing actionable solutions. The list of problem areas and potential solutions is then prioritized and developed into a School Travel Action Plan.

Phase 4: Implement

It is critical for School Travel Plans to include diverse actions from across education, encouragement, engineering, enforcement, and evaluation to successfully influence how children travel to and from school. Implementation strategies will reflect this well-rounded approach.

Phase 5: Reassess

It’s important to continue to reassess as changes are made. This includes collecting follow-up travel data and sharing successes and next steps.

Phase 6: Keep it going

The sixth phase involves transitioning the committee and formal program elements to ‘champions’ within the school. Generally champions are school principals or teachers, but others may fill the role. This phase is key for the long-term success. It can take time to implement a well-rounded and effective Action Plan and for shifts in travel behaviour to become ingrained into the school culture.