



# ACTIVE & SUSTAINABLE SCHOOL TRAVEL TOOLKIT



For more information,  
contact [faye.parascandalo@hamilton.ca](mailto:faye.parascandalo@hamilton.ca)

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# Introduction

Active & Sustainable School Travel (ASST) emphasizes the importance of walking, rolling, and bussing. More students using active and sustainable modes to get to school means less cars on the road, less pollution, improved safety, improved academic performance, health, mental wellbeing and increased physical activity.

This toolkit is designed to equip parents and other Active School Travel Stakeholders with knowledge and ideas to engage other parents in a conversation about ASST

- Key messages
- Engagement and communication tactics explained including when and how to use them
- Engagement and communication tips based on what we have heard from other local parents

The objectives of the toolkit are to increase:

- Parental/caregivers' awareness about the importance of ASST.
- Number of parents/caregivers engaged in ASST initiatives, including encouraging their child's active travel.
- Parental/caregiver capacity to become ASST leaders/champions.

The City of Hamilton, Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB), and Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board (HWCDSB) are committed to ASST as shown in the signed 2015 ASST charters: [HWDSB ASST Charter](#) and [HWCDSB ASST Charter](#). The ASST Charter goal is to promote a safe, healthy, and sustainable community where everyone can use active and sustainable travel modes. A key initiative under the ASST Charter is School Travel Planning. This is where you come in!

Would your school like to...

- Make it easier to walk or roll to and from school?
- Reduce the number of vehicles around your school at drop-off and pick-up times?
- Increase the number of physically active students, families, and staff?
- Improve air quality and safety?

If yes, then you need check out the ASST tool kit

## Who is this toolkit for?

The ASST Action Toolkit is designed for parents, students, or community members to learn more about how they can make their school communities walking and rolling friendly. While many of the actions are collaborative, this toolkit was created because **you have the power to influence change**. Through the School Travel Plan (STP) process (Figure 1), the toolkit is used to help you increase education and awareness about ASST, improve pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure, and influence ASST supportive policy. **The toolkit is designed to help you take action.**



School Travel Planning (STP) is a 5-step, community-based approach that aims to increase ASST and to reduce car travel to and from school. The steps include:

- Setup
- Assess Conditions
- Action Planning
- Implementation
- Ongoing Monitoring and Improvement

Key community stakeholders (school boards, municipalities, police, public health professionals, parents/guardians, administrators, educators, and children) work together to identify and to solve their school transportation needs. For more information, visit <https://ontarioactiveschooltravel.ca/school-travel-planning/>

## How to Use This Toolkit

This Toolkit is made up of actions that are divided into three key themes: advocacy, infrastructure, and awareness. Each theme has several actions for you to consider. We do not expect any one person to do every action, but rather that you will choose to implement the actions that are important to you and your goals for ASST in your community. **Integrate the toolkit actions into your action plan developed through the School Travel Planning process.**

Themes	Actions	Common Goals
<b>Advocacy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Get involved in your child’s School Council</li> <li>• Volunteer with a Local Organization addressing the built environment</li> <li>• Enlist the help of your School Board Trustee or City Councillor</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve school and neighbourhood design</li> <li>• Influence policies and programs</li> </ul>
<b>Infrastructure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Request City Street Improvements</li> <li>• Request Signs and Lines on School Property</li> <li>• Add Bike Parking at your school</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve school and neighbourhood design</li> </ul>
<b>Awareness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organize a walk or bike to school group</li> <li>• Add ASST information to your school’s newsletter</li> <li>• Host an event at your school</li> <li>• Create “Slow-Down” signage with Students</li> <li>• Become an Ontario EcoSchool</li> <li>• Bring the Fresh Air for Kids Program or Ride Smart Program to your school</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote ASST activities and education in your community</li> <li>• Practice ASST through walking and rolling</li> <li>• Encourage community safety</li> </ul>

When going through the actions, each page includes a short description of what it is and how it relates to ASST.

- The “Before You Take Action” section highlights some things you should know before deciding to implement the action.
- The “Take Action” section outlines the key steps you need to take to implement the action.
- Many of the pages incorporate links to resources or useful information. Some of the pages also include blue boxes with a toolkit graphic — this indicates that there are specific resources for you to reference to implement the action. The additional resource material can be found at the end of the document following the action ideas pages.

# Tips for Success

The following sections are here to help you make the most impact when implementing the actions.

## Engagement Tips

We encourage you to get others involved in your ASST actions. Whether it is advocating, planning and event, or submitting reviews for safety about your neighbourhood streets, more people asking for the same thing is louder, and can be more effective than trying to accomplish something on your own.

Some other people you may want to engage in your actions are parents. Below is a list tips to help you get parents involved in your actions:

- Give parents flexible options to get involved in your actions (e.g., Do they have to physically be somewhere to support the action, or can they be helping over phone or email?)
- The easiest place to connect to parents who may be interested in your action is at the school! Hang around in the morning or after school and talk to other parents in the school yard and tell them about your ideas. You can do the same by attending school events.
- Most parents know about the benefits to ASST, but do not participate because it is difficult to fit into their routine. Share your story and the strategies you've implemented to practice ASST with your children without causing guilt!
- If facts and figures do not resonate with parents, try pulling at their heart strings. Talk about the safety risks, pollution, and environmental risks related with car travel.

Below are some messages you can use:

- ASST can fit any lifestyle! There are lots of ways that you can participate, like walking or biking to school once a week, parking and walking a block to the school, or taking transit together! Every small step can make a difference.
  - You do not need to always practice active transportation to support active transportation! The toolkit has actions for you to help your school community become more ASST friendly for you and other families in your community travelling to and from school, and beyond.
  - Fewer cars on the road lead to safer streets, and safer kids. We have all witnessed a close call on school property. Walking and rolling to school with your children teaches them safety skills that they will practice for life.
  - Children in Hamilton are not receiving the amount of physical activity that they need to be healthy. If more people walked, biked, or walked a block to the school, children would be happier and healthier!
  - The City of Hamilton has declared a climate emergency. Schools are the second biggest car trip generator in the morning commute, which results in higher greenhouse gas emissions. By using sustainable modes like transit, rolling, or walking, you can support a cleaner environment for your family
- Respect another parents' decision to not participate in ASST.

## Key Contacts

As you may have noticed by now, creating a culture towards active school travel cannot happen alone! Below are a list of key people and groups you may need to contact to help implement actions, and how to reach them. **Start with the ASST – School Travel Planning Team.**

Information about School Travel Planning can be found on [the City of Hamilton's Smart Commute website](#). For more information, you can contact the City's school travel planners by emailing them at [schooltravelplanning@hamilton.ca](mailto:schooltravelplanning@hamilton.ca)

More key contacts, like school principals, trustees and your City Councillor, and how to find them can be found in **Appendix A**.

## Funding Resources

Some actions related to promoting walking and rolling may have costs associated with them (e.g., events, bike racks, signs). School Councils do have a budget for parent engagement and events, but if your action has not been budgeted for, or is more than the \$500 they have, then you will need to consider other resources. Other funding options and fundraising ideas are outlined in **Appendix B**.

## Action Ideas: Advocacy



# Volunteer with a Community Organization Related to Active and Sustainable School Travel (ASST)



There are many groups working on projects related to active and sustainable school travel. By volunteering with other groups, you can be more involved in these projects, and expand your network for potential partnerships for later!

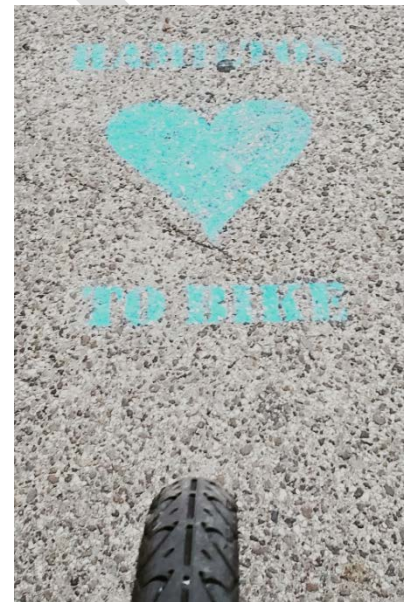


## Before You Take Action

Take some time and reflect on what aspect of active and sustainable school travel you are most passionate about, and how you want to contribute. Some questions to consider include:

- What skills do you have to offer to an organization?
- How often do you want to volunteer? i.e. Monthly, weekly, occasionally, etc.
- What experience do you want to gain from volunteering? i.e. Doing hands-on work, meeting to discuss strategies, planning events, etc.

If you do not have a lot of time to volunteer, there are likely other ways you can support local groups doing active and sustainable transportation work. Check out the list of local organizations (Appendix A) and see if you can become a member, subscribe to an e-newsletter, donate or follow them on social media!



## Take Action!

Review the list of active and sustainable school travel-related organizations and look through their websites, programs, and mandates. Once you see something that you may be interested in, contact them and let them know you're interested in volunteering! You can either be specific about what program or event you would like to volunteer for or let them know what you care about and ask how you can help!



**A list of organizations** you may consider volunteering with or joining, as well as a **list of neighbourhood groups** that you can get involved with can be found in Appendix C!

# Get Involved in Your Child's School Council

Each school in Hamilton has a School Council/Catholic School Council for parents to share ideas, concerns, and work together to give students the best possible school experience. Joining your child's School Council will give you the chance to meet other parents, share your concerns about active and sustainable school travel, and talk about how you can work together to make walking and rolling a safer option to get your child to school.



## Before You Get Started

School Councils meet about once a month at the school. To get involved, you can do one of three things:

1. Attend a meeting and listen
2. Ask to present an idea or issue at a meeting
3. Join the Council as a member



More information on the role of School Councils can be found on the [HWDSB website](#) and [HWCDSB website](#).

## Take Action!

To learn more about getting involved in any of the three ways above, you will need to contact your School Council. Instructions on how to do this can be found at the end of the toolkit (**Appendix A**).

Anyone can attend a School Council meeting to listen and learn more. To present an idea or share an issue at a meeting, you will need to ask to be added to the meeting agenda (the list of topics they are planning to discuss at the meeting).

To formally join the Council and vote on things that come up at meetings, you will need to be elected to the Council. Elections for School Councils happen within the first 30 calendar days of the school year. You can find out more about elections from your school's principal.



A **sample presentation** about ASST can be used for a meeting discussion (**Appendix D**).

# Speak with your City Councillor



Your City Councillor is available to represent the interests of the people who live, work, and play in their Ward, or the section of the City that they govern. City Councillors have an influence over the decisions made in the City through meetings with staff, City Council, and committees by advocating for your interests.



## Before You Get Started

Think about what you want to ask your Councillor to do, and how you can get them to agree with your point of view. Are there others who may be interested in the same things you want to ask for?

## Take Action:

It is the City Councillor's job to meet with community members and listen to their concerns. First, you will need to find out who your City Councillor is and find their contact information. There are a few ways that you can speak with your City Councillor. In order of most impactful to least impactful, you may:



1. Request a meeting with your City Councillor
2. Call and ask to speak to your City Councillor
3. Email or send a letter to your City Councillor



A sample email template has been provided to you in **Appendix E**. Use this as a guide for how you want the conversation to go or to request a meeting.

Remember, advocating to your City Councillor, or anyone else, takes time. It is often an on-going conversation and will depend on what you are asking for. If you think other parents, community members, businesses or students would be interested in what you are advocating for, consider teaming up with others to build critical mass for your cause.



**An email template**, which you can use for contacting your City Councillor, featuring **prompts and talking points** may be found in **Appendix E!**

# Speak with your School Board Trustee

School Board Trustees are elected officials who are responsible for student achievement, community engagement, and fulfilling the education policies of the provincial government. Part of their job includes consulting with parents in their community. School Board Trustees have an influence on the School Board's strategy, policy development and implementation, and overseeing the School Board's budget.

Level of Effort



## Before You Get Started

The [HWDSB](#) and [HWCDSB](#) each signed an ASST Charter. Some things that you can discuss with your Trustee include:

- The School Board's commitment to the ASST Charter
- School infrastructure and safety
- Staff resources
- Funding for projects at the school

## Take Action!

Similar to City Councillors, your School Board Trustee will represent the Ward that you live in. You can find your School Board Trustee's contact information in the "Key Contacts" in **Appendix A**.

Using the actions in the HWDSB/HWCDSB ASST Charter for reference, think about what you want to ask your Trustee to do, and how you can get them to agree with your point of view.

Keep in mind that while Trustees have a responsibility to consult with parents, it is not their full-time job, and they do so while balancing other commitments. Be mindful of their availability, and do not lose hope if action takes time!



An email template you can use for contacting your School Board Trustee featuring prompts and talking points can be found in **Appendix F**.

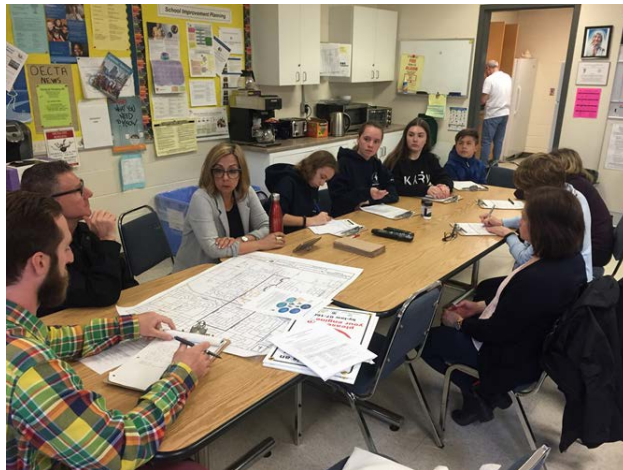
## Action Ideas: Infrastructure

# Request a School Zone Review to Assess Street Design to Improve Safety

Are you concerned for your child's safety when walking or biking to school because of traffic? You can try to influence traffic safety in your child's school neighbourhood through the **School Travel Plan** process. **Note** – this is not for signs on school property!



## Before You Get Started



Think about how you want to make your school's neighbourhood safer for your child and other students who want to walk or bike. Traffic Engineering can change the following after a school zone review if it is warranted:

- New traffic signs
- Pavement markings
- Crosswalks
- Speed limit changes
- Dynamic speed signs
- Other safety improvements

## Take Action!

Ensure this recommendation is captured in the action plan for your school's School Travel Plan (STP). Check in with the School Travel Planning Team to ensure this action is addressed.

For areas of concern, document the following information and see if it's possible to add to you school's School Travel Plan:

1. A description of the location (either a street name or intersection name);
2. A summary of the nature and reason(s) of your concern(s) (for example, excessive speeds, your child's safety, limited visibility, etc.);
3. The time of day that the problem(s) happens most; and
4. The type of infrastructure that you are requesting to address your concern(s).

City Staff are responsible for writing your STP. If possible, take photos to document you concern and send it to your school travel planner so that they can attach them to your STP!



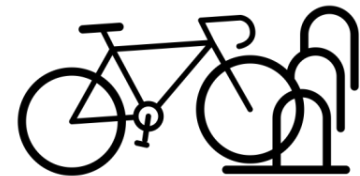
# Add Bike Parking on School Property

Is there is a lack of bike parking at your child’s school? If you have a School Travel Plan, you are eligible for some seed funding to help with the cost!



## Before You Get Started

Schools may apply for the [Bike Rack Seed Funding](#) of up to \$600 from the City of Hamilton. Schools must (1) have completed Step-3 of your STP, (2) read and agreed to the requirements, and (3) completed the application form. Schools may require additional funds for this project. You may need to investigate potential fundraising opportunities or request funds from the School Council’s budget.



## Take Action:

1. It is recommended that you connect with your School Council and/or principal before implementing this action.
2. Think about where the best place is to put a bike rack at the school.
3. Complete the application process. As part of the application a City of Hamilton staff will visit the school to complete a site assessment and advise on the type of rack to order.
4. Get a quote on what it would cost to order a bike rack based on where it would be installed. To get an accurate quote, try to find cost of the rack, potential delivery costs, and taxes. Try to do this for 2-4 bike rack options/suppliers.
5. Report back to your principal/School Council and select which bike rack best fits your needs and your budget. You should also discuss where the remaining funding will come from (the School’s budget, School Council Budget, fundraising, or corporate sponsorship).
6. Bike rack installed – celebrate and use!
7. Submit the invoice and a letter on school letterhead from the principal requesting funding from the City of Hamilton for \$600

# Request Additional Signs and Lines on School Property



If you would like signs to address parking, idling, and other traffic concerns on school property, you will need to go through your school.

## Before You Get Started

Think about what safety concern you want to address, and what type of infrastructure change would best address your concern. Some examples include stop signs or anti-idling signs, changing traffic flow, adding crosswalks, or eliminating or distancing vehicle drop-off locations. Remember, this is specifically for school property only!

## Take Action!

First, you should propose the idea to the school’s principal. You can get in touch with them by calling the school and requesting to speak to the principal. See the “Key Contacts” section of the toolkit to find this information.

The principal may require School Board permission to address your concern. This type of action may require additional time to complete.

Continue to follow progress about this action through regular STP meetings or addressing the issue during School Council meetings.





Action Ideas: Awareness

# Organize a Walk or Bike to School Group for Children Going to Your Child’s School

Are you interested in having your child walk or bike to school, but cannot commit the time to walk them to or from school every day? Consider organizing a “walking school bus” or “bicycle train”. A walking school bus is a group of children walking to school with one or more adults, and a bicycle train is the same idea, but everyone is on a bike. This can also work for getting students to the bus stop.



## Before You Get Started

Organizing a group can be as structured as you want it to be - an agreement with your neighbours to take turns walking the children to school at a specific time, or a clear meeting point with a regularly rotating schedule of parents and/or other volunteers (older siblings, grandparents, etc.) who are responsible for walking the children to and from school.

This action does not need to be big or complicated. Try starting with a small group, and/or trying to walk or bike together once a week. It may also help to start by reaching out to the parents of your child’s friends in the neighbourhood and other people you already know (For example, the school’s parents’ Facebook group).

## Take Action!

First, invite families who live close to you to walk or bike together.

Next, pick a route and take a test journey together. To help you pick a route that you are all comfortable with, ask yourself the following questions:

- Is there room to walk or bike? Are there clear sidewalks or paths?
- Is it easy to cross the street? Is there too much traffic?
- Do drivers behave well? Are they yielding to walkers/cyclists and obeying the speed limit?
- Does the route feel safe? Are there loose dogs around?



Once you’ve determined a route, decide how often the group will travel together and when/where to meet each other. Then start walking or biking to school!



This is a great opportunity to teach your children about street safety. Check out the City of Hamilton’s [Walking and Biking Safety Sheet](#), and [Walk Safely Sheet](#)!

# Add Active and Sustainable School Travel Information in the School Newsletter

Think about how your school shares information with you. Is it a printed newsletter every month? Do you go online to check posts or emails? Whatever it may be, there may be a way to add information in this channel about walking and biking to school.



## Before You Get Started

First, think about how often you want to share information. Is it a one-time message, or do you want to share different information in every newsletter? This is an opportunity to promote fundraisers, remind parents who drive not to idle in front of the school, or let parents know about an upcoming Walk and Roll Day! If capacity is a concern, consider joining forces with your child's School Council.

## Take Action!

To find out who manages the school's newsletter, contact the school's principal. You can either call them by calling the school and requesting to speak to the principal or sending them an email.

Create a schedule for the messages you would like to feature in the newsletter that aligns with how often it is posted. This should be presented to the school principal, and you should specify who will be writing the messages, and how far in advance you will need to submit them to the principal.

When drafting the text for your ASST messages, make sure they are clear messages. The text will need to be approved by the principal.



# Host an Event Promoting Active and Sustainable School Travel at Your Child's School

Events are a great way to share information and get others involved in active and sustainable school travel in a fun way. Popular events in Hamilton include: Walk n' Roll Wednesdays, Wear Yellow Days, and Bike Days.



## Before You Get Started

Hosting an event at your school is a great idea to get momentum on active and sustainable school travel, especially if it is a new conversation for your school community. This event will require lots of time and coordination with the school, and it is recommended that you contact the school's Parent Council to share your idea and seek their support with planning. Think about the kind of event you want to host, when it would take place (before or after school, what month, etc.) and what it may cost. The Parent Council has a budget, but it is likely that some fundraising or sponsorship may be needed.

## Take Action!

Once you have an idea of the type of event you want to plan, call the school and ask to speak to the principal. The **event planning checklist** (Appendix G) will have conversation tips to help you share the importance of the event. Note, you will need the principal's permission to plan the event.

You may also reach out to the Parent Council or other parents who may be interested in either participating in or planning your event. You can also talk to your child's teacher(s) and see if they are supportive of the event, and perhaps they can advocate for you. If you still do not get support for your event, start asking how you can get the event to be part of the next school year's schedule, and continue to talk to parents about your idea so that you have lots of support for the next time you try to plan the event!

Once you have approval for the event, follow the steps in the event planning checklist to plan your event.



In the toolkit you will find **examples of past school events** hosted by different parents from other Hamilton Schools! You'll also find a **detailed event planning checklist (Appendix G)** to guide you through planning.

# Bring Green Venture's Fresh Air for Kids Program to Your Child's School

Are you interested in raising awareness about the importance of active and sustainable school travel? Green Venture's Fresh Air for Kids (FAFK) program is a great way to get your school community talking about the need for active ways of getting students to school.



The FAFK program is a free, in-class program, delivered over 4 sessions. Two champion classes (in grades 5-8) will learn about the causes and impacts of air quality in the neighbourhood of their school. They will then develop and implement a campaign to educate about the negative impacts of idling car engines (at school drop off/pick up times) on student health. Students will develop social prompts (i.e. rear-view mirror hangers, keychains, etc.) to remind drivers of this message.

## Before You Get Started

Fresh Air for Kids runs each Spring and Fall and delivers the program to up-to four different schools each season. Before you take action, find two teachers who teach Grade 5, 6, 7 or 8 who want to do the program together. It may be helpful to involve the principal or to join forces with your School's Parent Council on this action.

## Take Action!

1. Contact Green Venture to express your interest and ask when the next available FAFK session will run. You can email [education@greenventure.ca](mailto:education@greenventure.ca) or call 905-540-8882.
2. Identify two teachers in Grades 5-8 who would be interested in participating in the program together.
3. Ask for permission from the school's principal and have the principal and two teachers sign a Letter of Agreement.
4. Submit the signed Letter of Agreement to Green Venture ([education@greenventure.ca](mailto:education@greenventure.ca)).
5. Depending on availability, Green Venture will either schedule the first session, or put your school on a waiting list.



The **Appendix H** has an **information poster for teachers** that you can share to get Fresh Air for Kids at your child's school.

# Create “Slow Down” Signs with Students



Do you want to empower students to take traffic safety into their own hands? Consider speaking to your school’s principal about starting a street art project – to create “slow down” signs. This is a fun and interactive way to get students involved in improving the safety of the area surrounding the school.

Handmade signs remind drivers to slow down, making it safer for those who walk, bike or roll.

## Before You Get Started

Consider what type of project you would like to propose to your school’s principal (i.e. Which grades will be involved? Will it be a group or individual project? Will there be a contest involved? What should be included on the signs?). You might also want to consider how/where the art will be displayed, the number of signs, how they will be mounted, etc. It might make sense to get students to design their signs on 11x17 paper, with selected signs being enlarged and printed for display.

It might be helpful to provide recommendations to the principal on how the signs would be funded (i.e. Can you approach your child’s School Council? Is there a local printer that would provide a donation?). Considering these types of questions ahead of time will make it more likely that your school’s principal will be onboard!



*Students from Queen Victoria School designed this safety sign, advising students to stay off train tracks.*

## Take Action!

1. Contact your school’s principal about starting a street art project. If you cannot post the art anywhere, consider continuing with the project but having students hold the signs during school pick-up and drop-off times.
2. Contact local printers for quotes. (Printers can also advise on the best size and material for the signs).
3. Investigate potential funding sources.
4. Work with school staff to organize the logistics of the project. (Consider when/where the students will design their signs, what supplies they will use, etc.).
5. Work with school staff to print the selected sign(s).
6. Consider having an assembly to unveil the sign(s) once posted.

# Bring New Hope Community Bikes' Ride Smart Program to Your Child's School

Are you interested in raising awareness about the importance of active and sustainable school travel? New Hope Community Bikes offers the Ride Smart program as a way for kids to develop practical life-long skills through safe cycling. Using the Ontario physical health and education curriculum, their program is engaging and interactive, equipping students with new skills and cycling abilities. Ride Smart skills create safer riders and safer future drivers.



Ride Smart Program has been designed to be completely self contained: they provide the bikes, helmets, instructors, resource materials and even the obstacles needed to set up different scenarios. A full class set of new bikes means that each student will use the same bike and helmet for the week. This format makes it very easy, even for teachers with little, to no cycling experience, to enrol their class in the program. They also provide a helmet and bicycle for the teacher too if they want to participate.

Ride Smart programming is designed for Grade 4 through 7 students. Pilot programs have shown that this age group engages well with the material and excels at learning new cycling skills. Curriculum resources to support the cycling program from Physical Health and Education Canada are available for Grades 4-6.

## Before You Get Started

The Ride Smart Program requires a week-long commitment. To build required skills both inside and outside the classroom the program requires 4-5 class periods over the course of a week. This amount of time ensures that students can understand concepts and develop skills to a high level of competency. Up to six classes per school can participate over the one-week time period. The cost of the program is \$15 per student for the whole week and includes after-school tune-up and repairs.



## Take Action!

Talk to your child's teacher, School Council and/or the Principal about bringing the program to your child's school, especially the cost. You may need to fundraise for this. Then contact New Hope to express your interest through the [form](#) on their website and they will let you know what else you need!

## Become an EcoSchool

[EcoSchools Canada](#) is a voluntary certification program, which recognizes and celebrates schools for their environmental learning and action. The EcoSchools program has tangible impacts – leading to positive changes in individual environmental behaviour at school and at home.



Each year, certified EcoSchools are asked to share their insights on the program. “Active transportation” was identified as the #1 school board priority that connects to the EcoSchools program.

### Before You Get Started

Visit the EcoSchools website to see if your child’s school is certified. All certified EcoSchools are shown on this [map](#). While parents can advocate for their school to become a certified EcoSchool, remember that certification must be led and completed by school staff. More information on certification is available [here](#).



EcoSchool certification goes far beyond active transportation, and provides resources for energy conservation, waste minimization, school ground greening, and more.

### Take Action!

Talk to the school administration (principal and/or vice-principal) to share your interest in becoming an EcoSchool. Once you have support from the school principal, you can let your School Council know.

With the help of the school administration, identify and meet with a teacher or school staff member who will act as a champion. You can have one or more champions! If you as a parent want to be more actively involved, talk to the champion(s) about how you can support the EcoTeam.

Once you have confirmed your school’s champion(s), follow the [Steps to Certify](#) section of the Ontario EcoSchools website to get your school certified!





# Appendix



## Appendix A: Key Contacts

### School Council

To find the contact information for your school’s council, follow the steps outlined **Table 1** below.

**Table 1:** How to Find School Councils’ Contact Information

For HWDSB Schools	For HWCDSB Schools
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The school board website has a <a href="#">web page dedicated to School Councils</a> with additional background and resources.</li> <li>To contact your child’s School Council, you will need to submit a membership form. The form can be found on the left of the page, by clicking the “Membership Submission” tab.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Go to the <a href="#">school board’s website</a>.</li> <li>Select your child’s school under the “Schools” tab.</li> <li>Once you are on your child’s school’s web page, click on the “School” tab again, and select “Catholic School Council”.</li> <li>On this page, some School Council’s will have contact information for parents.</li> <li>If there is no contact information, call your child’s school to ask for more information, or ask at reception the next time you go in.</li> </ul>

### School Principal

To find the contact information for your school’s principal, please follow the steps outlined in **Table 2** below.

**Table 2:** How to Find School Principal’s Contact Information

For HWDSB Schools	For HWCDSB Schools
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Your school’s/principal’s contact information can be found by clicking on your child’s school in the School Board’s online <a href="#">list of elementary schools</a> or <a href="#">list of high-schools</a>.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Go to the <a href="#">school board’s website</a>.</li> <li>Select your child’s school under the “Schools” tab.</li> </ul>



### **School Board Trustee**

First, identify what Ward you live in by typing in the address of your child's school into the map pop-up on the [City's website](#). Trustees represent one or more Wards, and the various schools within that Ward. Next, you will need to find the contact information of your School Board Trustee. Follow the steps in **Table 3** below based on your child's School Board.

**Table 3:** How to find School Board Trustee Contact Information

For HWDSB Schools	For HWCDSB Schools
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Check out the <a href="#">online directory of the Hamilton Wentworth District School Board's Trustees</a>.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Hamilton Wentworth Catholic District School Board has a list of their School Board Trustees at the bottom of the <a href="#">Trustees and Committees page of their website</a>.</li></ul>

### **City Councillor**

First, identify what Ward you live in by typing in your address into the map pop-up on the [City's website](#). Once you know which Ward you live in, click on the name of your City Councillor on the [online councillor directory](#), and you will find all their contact information including phone, address, and email.



## **Appendix B: Funding Resources**

### **Ward Funding**

Ward funding can be accessed through your City Councillor's office. Each Councillor has a budget to do projects within their Ward Boundary. To access the funding, you will need to schedule a meeting with your Councillor to discuss what you would like to see happen and see if it fits within their budget.

### **Neighbourhood or Community Association Funding**

Some neighbourhood or community associations may be able to support or co-sponsor events if they have funding available. Search online or talk to friends and family to find out if your neighbourhood has a community organization.

### **Parents Reaching Out Grants**

Parents Reaching Out (PRO) Grants are offered by the Ontario Ministry of Education and are valued at up to \$1000. The PRO Grant specifically supports School Councils who are trying to help more parents get involved in their child's success at the school. To learn more about the grants, check out the [MINISTRY OF EDUCATION Pro Grant Flyer](#)

### **Other Provincial Parent Engagement Funding**

The Ontario Association of Parents in Catholic Education (Ontario), Federation of Home and School Associations, Parents Partenaires en éducation, and People for Education receive annual funding to enhance parent involvement. Depending on the school, you may be able to apply for funding from one or more of these groups!

Remember you don't need to go it alone. Although the ASST-Parent Engagement Strategy & Action Toolkit are designed to increase parental ownership regarding school travel, the STP process and STP Team are in place to help.

Email: [SchoolTravelPlanning@Hamilton.ca](mailto:SchoolTravelPlanning@Hamilton.ca)



## Appendix C: Local Community Organizations

The following list of local organizations has been compiled for you to consider as a starting point for volunteering with active and sustainable school travel in mind. The name of each organization is linked to their website.

Organization Name	Contact Information	Relevant Programs/Campaigns
<a href="#">Environment Hamilton</a>	<b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:contactus@environmenthamilton.org">contactus@environmenthamilton.org</a> <b>Phone:</b> 905-549-0900	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Friendly Streets</li> <li>• Truck Route Reboot</li> <li>• General environmental advocacy</li> <li>• Annual Youth Eco-Summit</li> </ul>
<a href="#">Cycle Hamilton</a>	<b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:info@cyclehamont.ca">info@cyclehamont.ca</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bike Day</li> <li>• General cycling advocacy</li> </ul>
<a href="#">Green Venture</a>	<b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:contact@greenventure.ca">contact@greenventure.ca</a> <b>Phone:</b> 905-540-8787	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fresh Air for Kids</li> <li>• General schools environmental programming</li> </ul>
<a href="#">New Hope Community Bikes</a>	<b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:info@newhopecommunitybikes.com">info@newhopecommunitybikes.com</a> <b>Phone:</b> 905-545-1991	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ride Smart Cycling Education Program</li> </ul>
<a href="#">Bike for Mike</a>	<b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:info@bikeformike.org">info@bikeformike.org</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mike Bikes</li> </ul>
<a href="#">Home and School Association</a> (Public School Parents Only)	<b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:hwccouncil@gmail.com">hwccouncil@gmail.com</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Similar to a Parent Council, comprised of parents and family members of students at <a href="#">select HWDSB schools</a></li> </ul>

### Neighbourhood Community Groups

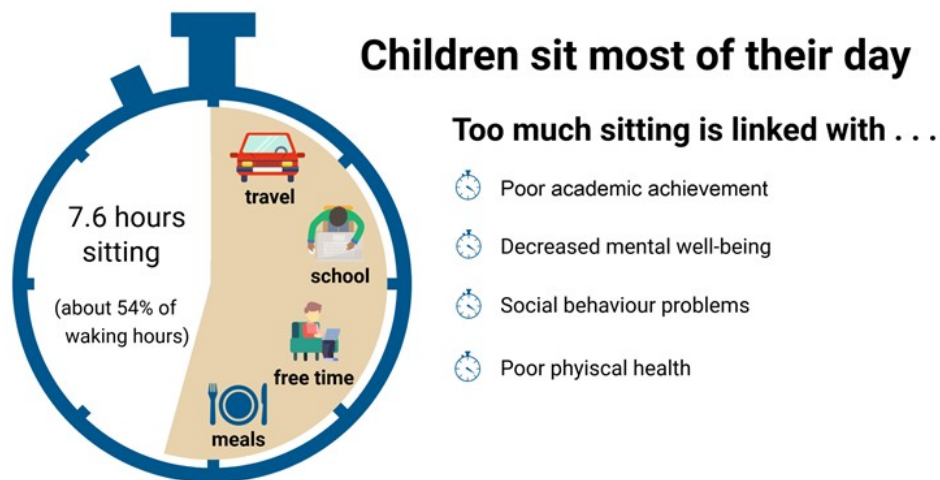
Some neighbourhoods in Hamilton have organized themselves into community associations or hubs. It may be relevant to get in touch especially if you have concerns about traffic and safety, and it's always a good idea to get to know your neighbours!



## Appendix D: Sample Presentation Slides for School Council

The following pages create a presentation that can be used to share why you care about ASST with your School Council, Neighbourhood Association, or anyone else! Just copy and paste the images below into a slideshow, or print a copy. The presentation includes 5 key actions to take to support ASST.






### Parents – Encourage Children’s Active Travel





## 5 Ways to Support Children's Active Travel

**1 Get and stay informed**

-   
**Know the health risks**
-   
**Walk or wheel in your area**
-   
**Map best routes to school**
-   
**Attend sessions**
-   
**Stay connected**



## 5 Ways to Support Children's Active Travel

2

### Be a partner



Get trained



Work on school  
travel plan actions



Pursue recognition  
and awards



Fund raise for  
supportive amenities



Ask by-law enforcement  
for road infractions





## 5 Ways to Support Children's Active Travel

### 3 Create a culture of active travel



Be a role model



Take part in events



Encourage independence



Form walking buddies




For those driving, walk a block



## 5 Ways to Support Children's Active Travel

**4 Improve school and neighbourhood design**

 <b>Assess conditions</b>	 <b>Ask for cross walks, traffic calming</b>	 <b>Reduce speed limits</b>
 <b>Ask for racks for bikes, scooters</b>	 <b>Attend pupil accommodation review</b>	 <b>Ensure seasonal maintenance</b>



## 5 Ways to Support Children's Active Travel

**5** **Make policy changes**

 Support car free school zone	 Make school travel part of curriculum	 Have a school travel plan
 Move bus funding to active travel	 Limit parking lot access to only staff	 Limit courtesy bus rides



## Appendix E: Sample Letter/Email to Your City Councillor

The template below follows the scenario of a parent who wants to request action related to improving cycling infrastructure on their way to their child's school. If this issue resonates with you, feel free to use it as a template and fill in the highlighted boxes based on the prompts in the brackets. Otherwise, feel free to adapt it to address your own concern(s).

Do not worry about being formal or sounding professional to your Councillor. Feel free to add statistics if you have some good examples you want to share. You may also consider attaching photos of concerning areas/situations that you have seen that you would like to see addressed.

Dear Councillor (last name here),

My name is (your name here) and my children are currently students at (insert school name here). I am contacting you today to share my concerns with the lack of safe cycling infrastructure on the route from my home to my children's school. I choose to bike with my children to school because it is faster than driving, allows us to stay healthy, and is an enjoyable family experience for us.

The City of Hamilton's vision is to be the best place to raise a child and age successfully, however, the lack of safe cycling infrastructure, high traffic speeds and wide roads are making it very hard for this vision to be achieved. (Insert specific examples of infrastructure/traffic/road concerns on your bike to school).

The City of Hamilton recognizes the [key principles of Vision Zero for Road Safety](#), which includes safe speeds and safe roads. **I would like to request a meeting to discuss how the principles of Vision Zero can be applied in my neighbourhood so that the City's vision can be closer to reality.**

Sincerely,

(Your full name)

(Your address)



## Appendix F: Sample Letter/Email to Your School Board Trustee

The below email template follows the scenario of a parent who wants to request action related to improving infrastructure on their way to their child's school. If this issue resonates with you, feel free to use it as a template, address the prompts in the yellow boxes. Otherwise, feel free to adapt it for your own concern(s). Do not worry about being formal or sounding professional to your School Board Trustee. Feel free to add statistics if you have some good examples you want to share.

Dear (School Board Trustee's name),

My name is (your name here) and my children are currently students at (insert school name here). I am contacting you today to share my concerns with the sidewalk/cycling infrastructure from my home to my children's school. I choose to walk/bike with my children to school because it is faster than driving, allows us to stay healthy, and is an enjoyable family experience for us.

In 2015, the School Board signed the Hamilton Active and Sustainable School Transportation Charter that committed to five key principles, including safe and convenient street design for all users, to enhance personal and community safety. **I would like to request a meeting to discuss how the principles of the Hamilton Active and Sustainable School Transportation Charter can be applied in my school's neighbourhood to address my challenges to using active and sustainable transportation to and from school.**

Sincerely,

(Your full name)

(Your address)



## Appendix G: Event Planning Checklist

Events are a fun way to raise awareness about the benefits of walking, rolling, biking or taking the bus to school. Events can also help strengthen school and community spirit. This event planning checklist has been created to help guide you while you plan your event. Feel free to use what you like and use your own creativity to guide other aspects.

### Timeline

Timing	Tasks
8 weeks before the event	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Meet with the Principal</li><li>• Set a date</li><li>• Invite others to help plan (teachers, parents, students, community members, etc.)</li></ul>
7 weeks before the event	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Host the team brainstorming meeting</li><li>• Begin planning the event</li></ul>
6 weeks before the event	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Invite community members or other special guests to be involved</li><li>• Continue planning</li></ul>
5 weeks before the event	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Create promotional items for your event</li><li>• Continue planning</li></ul>
4 weeks before the event	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Print promotional items for your event</li><li>• Continue planning</li></ul>
3 weeks before the event	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Start promoting!</li><li>• Continue planning</li></ul>
2 weeks before the event	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Continue planning</li></ul>
1 week before the event	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Continue promoting</li><li>• Confirm any bookings</li><li>• Confirm roles for the day of</li></ul>
Event Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Take lots of photos!</li></ul>
After the event	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Celebrate with your team</li><li>• Promote the event's success</li><li>• Thank everyone who was involved</li></ul>



## **8 Weeks Before the Event**

1. **Meet with the Principal** – make sure you have the school principal's permission to host an event. They may ask what the benefits are to an active school travel event, and there are so many you can share! Such as:
  - reduces congestion and parking problems
  - increases physical activity to improve student health, concentration and learning in class
  - develops children's' independence, road safety skills and decision-making ability
  - increases safety by reducing congestion and improving road safety skills
  - creates closer communities as students are given the opportunity to expand friendships and develop an awareness of their neighbourhoods and local streets and,
  - improves air quality and reduces greenhouse gas emissions by reducing the number of cars on the road,
  - saves money on school traffic management and road/parking lot infrastructure.
2. **Set a date** – ask the principal what date and time would work best for the event so that it does not conflict with other school events. When choosing a date, remember to give yourself enough time to plan and promote the event!
3. **Invite others to plan** – Getting the school community involved from the start will give everyone a sense of ownership and responsibility and will help you by sharing the workload. Students are key players in changing social norms, so make sure to include them in any event planning. Invite teachers, parents, students and any others from the school community to participate in a brainstorming session and later planning meetings for the event.
  - Try to meet at a time and place that works best for everyone
  - Take down everyone's contact information
  - Decide early on how to keep each other in the loop on planning (i.e. email, Facebook group, etc.)

## **7 Weeks Before the Event**

1. **Host a Planning Team Meeting** – The goal of the meeting will be to decide on the goal of your event, event activities, and some housekeeping/administrative items. You will need to bring this checklist, pens, paper, and a laptop to take notes of the conversation.
  - **Event Goals** – The goal of the event should be measurable and specific. You will continue to reference the goal throughout the planning process to make sure you are staying on the right track. An example of a goal include having 70% of students use active transportation on the event day.



- **Event Activities** – Based on your goal, brainstorm different activities to run on the event day. After you are done brainstorming, consider the following to make your final decisions:
  - How long will the event last?
  - What is your budget? What other resources do you have available? Will you need to fundraise or seek sponsorship from local businesses?
  - Do you need volunteers to help run the activities or is your planning team large enough?
- **Administrative Items** – Once you've determined the event activities, create a list of the different tasks that will need to be done, or roles that need to be filled. Try to have a role assigned to each team member, or each task assigned to one or two team members. Keep in mind the amount of time that each team member has to offer to plan the event!

### **6 Weeks Before the Event**

1. **Invite local community members and special guests** – events work best when everyone knows what is going on and what to do. The more people who know about it and the more reminders they have, the more likely it is to be a success. Some ideas of who to invite include:
  - Your City Councillor, the Mayor, Member of Parliament and/or Member of Provincial Parliament to present awards or participate in other ways
  - Local businesses – request food sponsorship or prize donations
  - Local bike shops to provide bike maintenance and teach students how to care for their bikes

### **5 Weeks Before the Event**

1. **Create promotional items for your event** – Consider who your audience is and how you can best reach them through promotional tools. Remember to include the date, time and location of the event on your poster, and any other information you want to include. Some examples of promotional items include:
  - Printed posters
  - Digital posters for TV or computer screens
  - Postcards
  - Newsletters
  - Newspaper advertisements

### **4 Weeks Before the Event**

1. **Print promotional items** – once you have considered a couple designs for your promotional items and know your budget, consider where you want to use them and how many you will need. This will help you determine how much to print of the different items. Once you have your number, send them off to the printers!





### **3 Weeks Before the Event**

1. **Start promoting** – While your planning team may have a promotion lead, promoting your event will be more successful if everyone helps spread the word. Some ideas to promote the event include:
  - Promoting the event at staff meetings or to all staff via email
  - Sharing the event and some extra posters/postcards with your School Council members
  - Drafting a media release for your local newspaper
  - Hanging posters around the school and in local businesses, libraries or community centres
  - Sending reminders home in the form of newsletters or notes in agendas

### **2 Weeks Before the Event**

1. **Continue planning** – hopefully by now you have most activities coming together for the event. If it helps, create a final checklist of everything that needs to be done before the event day. If some tasks do not have a lead, recruit some help from other Planning Team members!

### **1 Week Before the Event**

1. **Continue promoting** – keep spreading the word about the event and throw in some social media posts as well if you think it will help! Ask a student to promote the event on the school announcements and share why it is important for students to participate.
2. **Confirm any bookings** – check-in with any special guests and vendors you have invited to remind them of their commitment to attend the event. If you have made any reservations or other bookings, check in with those vendors now!
3. **Check the weather** – consider what the rain plan may be if the weather is not cooperating. Are you able to host the event in the school gymnasium? Ask your principal and make sure everyone on the planning team is familiar with the back-up plan!
4. **Confirm roles for the day of** – connect with your planning team members and make sure everyone is aware of what they are bringing on the event day, and what they are doing. Include any additional volunteers in this communication as well.



## Event Day

1. **Set-up** – Arrive early to set up and give yourselves time to manage any issues that may come-up! When planning team members and volunteers arrive, clarify their roles and duties.
2. **Record your success** – Remember to take lots of photos and videos of the event, and to have someone counting the number of students participating in the event!
3. **Clean-up** – When the event is over, be sure to pack-up and leave the space as you found it.

## After the Event

1. **Measure your success** - Compare the photos of the day of the event to a normal day at the school.
2. **Promote your success** – Share the results of the event with members of the school community, key messages, and any photos or media links that you have from the day of. Make sure to thank everyone for participating and being a part of the success!
3. **Celebrate your success** – Enjoy a break after the event and celebrate what you accomplished together as a planning and volunteer team. Debrief the event and talk about what went well, and what to change for next time – you can also do this through an anonymous feedback form.
4. **Thank local partners** – If you had special guests, sponsors or vendors participate in the event, follow-up with a thank you card or email (including the school's principal!)



## Appendix H: Fresh Air for Kids Resources

Below is a poster you can share with teachers at your child's school to see if they are interested in bringing the Fresh Air for Kids program to your school.

**Fresh Air for Kids**

# FRESH AIR FOR KIDS IS BACK FOR 2022

Let's help make the world a better place by reducing idling at our schools. Sign up for Green Venture's free air quality education program for grades 3-9.

1. Learn about air quality, pollution, and how air quality affects human health.
2. Meet an air quality scientist and graph air quality data from your school's neighbourhood.
3. Create your own anti-idling campaign, and share it with your school community.
4. Reduce idling at your school, and help to protect young lungs.

**Register Your Class Today!**

Visit <https://greenventure.ca/for-educators/> for more information & to register your class.

Questions? Contact us at [freshairforkids@greenventure.ca](mailto:freshairforkids@greenventure.ca)

**Green Venture**



## Fresh Air for Kids Program Delivery Schedule

Through a series of 4 - 5 free visits, two of which may be in person, Fresh Air for Kids will enable students to make informed decisions about how they can help reduce our impact on local air quality through education, scientific inquiry, and community engagement by developing their own anti-idling campaign!



\*With optional Fresh Air For Kids themed filmmaking workshop.

<b>Part 1: Air Quality Education</b>	<b>Part 2: Air Quality Monitoring</b>	<b>Part 3: Creating a Campaign</b>	<b>Part 4: Wrap Up</b>
<p><b>Overview:</b> 60 minute video call <b>OR</b> in person visit.</p>	<p><b>Overview:</b> 60 minute in person <b>OR</b> virtual presentation.  Afterwards (on another day) an in-person 30-45 minute walkabout. <b>OR</b> 5 minute video</p>	<p><b>Overview:</b> 60 minute video call <b>OR</b> in person visit &amp; optional in-person campaign delivery.</p>	<p><b>Overview:</b> Video call <b>OR</b> in person visit to wrap up the program, length is up to teacher discretion.</p>
<p><b>Description:</b>  Green Venture staff will introduce air quality, pollutant sources, how air quality affects human health and playing air quality true or false.</p>	<p><b>Description:</b>  Students join Dr. Corr in person or via live video. Dr. Corr will discuss local air quality issues, share the air quality data from the school's neighbourhood, and help students find the safest route to school.  Afterwards, students join us outdoors for a neighbourhood walkabout to monitor air quality. <b>OR</b> Students view a pre-recorded video of Dr. Corr explaining air quality monitoring equipment</p>	<p><b>Description:</b>  Green Venture staff will introduce the idea and structure of a campaign. Together the group will workshop ideas for their campaign.  After the call, during class time, students will create campaign materials and display them in their community on their own <b>OR</b> with in person assistance from a Green Venture staff member on the day of the campaign.</p>	<p><b>Description:</b>  Students will share the results of their campaigns and Green Venture staff will talk to students about their favourite parts of the program, the results of their campaign and share their Certificates of Completion.  Following this, students complete the program survey &amp; return pledge forms.</p>

