



Southwestern Ontario Student Transportation Services

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Active School Travel Activities Well Underway at Student Transportation Services

Student Transportation Services (STS) launched its Active School Travel Planning Program at a media kick-off event in October at St. Nicholas Catholic Elementary in London. Since the launch, the School Travel Planners at STS have worked with St. Nicholas and recently added a second pilot school, St. Pius X Catholic Elementary, promoting the many benefits of active school travel for students. Great strides have been made with these pilot sites through engagement with incredible community partners, school staff, parents and the students themselves.

STS received funding through the Ontario Active School Travel Fund to bolster program uptake in the region. Through its participation in the Elgin, London, Middlesex and Oxford Active and Safe Routes to School Committee, STS and the partner network of agencies have been able to reach new audiences.

The School Travel Planners have been working diligently on baseline data collection through traffic counts and observations, along with family and student surveys. This baseline data allows the school communities to identify potential areas of concern that may be barriers to safe and active transportation. Potential solutions and next steps are identified and an individualized School Action Plan is created. Currently, action plans at both school sites have been created and changes are already being implemented at St. Nicholas.

The School Travel Planners note it is really the enthusiasm and interest from the students themselves that have the most significant impact on program success. From Winter Walk Day events, to participating in “hands up surveys” and upcoming “Spring into Spring” classroom competitions, student engagement has been an invaluable part of program thus far.

The benefits of active school travel are many: improved physical and mental health, increased academic success, better safety in school zones through decreased traffic congestion and an overall positive environmental impact. Interest in active travel continues to grow and the School Travel Planners look forward to adding additional school sites later this spring.

The aim of active travel is to get kids outside and moving more. This includes walking, wheeling or biking to school. Bussed students can enjoy active travel time while walking to and from their school bus stops each day. With the warmer weather upon us, STS encourages all students to incorporate safe and active travel into their day.