



The Independent Voice for Kentucky's Children

KENTUCKY  
YOUTH  
ADVOCATES

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## **Report Shows How Safe Routes to School Makes Changes in 10 Networks through Partners and Policies**

**Louisville, KY** – On November 10, 2009 the Safe Routes to School National Partnership released a report titled -- [Safe Routes to School State Network Project: Final Report, 2007-2009, Making Change Through Partners and Policies](#). The report was prepared for the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF), a primary funder of the State Network Project.

The Safe Routes to School National Partnership (the Partnership) launched the State Network Project in 2007 to influence state-level Safe Routes to School implementation and to leverage additional resources and build a supportive environment through other state-level policies. The *2007–2009 Report* describes the approach and structure of the Partnership's State Network and Local School Projects in 10 jurisdictions (CA, DC, GA, IL, KY, LA, NY, OK, TX and VA). The networks were selected primarily based on high levels of childhood obesity, diversity and low income communities. The new report highlights the progress achieved at state and local levels over three years, including major accomplishments, lessons learned and next steps.

Kentucky's network includes many stakeholders from around the state and is currently chaired by Allison Mongiardo (Kentucky's Second Lady). Since 2007, the network has worked with the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet, the Cabinet for Health and Family Services, as well as countless communities to improve health outcomes for children and encourage bicycle and pedestrian safety concerns in policy development. The Kentucky network is currently working to incorporate complete streets policies in local communities and at the state level, and promoting joint-use schools to keep schools in the center of communities.

The efforts of the 10 networks have improved opportunities for safe physical activity for children on the route to school, and have contributed to the quality and public release of \$199

million in Safe Routes to School and related funds. One of the hallmarks of the project was its ability to bring together the state departments of transportation, health and education to improve programs and policies through a health lens. Based on the success of the 2007-2009 State Network Project, RWJF recently provided a two-year grant of nearly \$1.5 million to expand the project to 15 states during 2010 and 2011. The Safe Routes to School National Partnership is currently [accepting applications](#) from non-profit organizations in states that are interested in participating.

By making it safe, convenient, and fun for children to walk and bicycle to and from school, Safe Routes to School is helping communities find solutions to traffic concerns, poor air quality, and high rates of childhood obesity.

Congress launched the Safe Routes to School program in 2005 through the federal transportation bill and provided \$612 million for state-level implementation of programs that build sidewalks, bike lanes, and pathways, while also providing funding for education, promotion and law enforcement programs. A major impetus for the creation of federal program were Congressional concerns about the rise in childhood obesity— which has more than tripled among kids ages 6 to 19 over the past 40 years—while the number of children walking and bicycling to school has plummeted. Today, more than 23 million children in the United States –nearly 33 percent -- are overweight or obese.

The *Safe Routes to School State Network Project: Final Report, 2007-2009, Making Change Through Partners and Policies* can be found on-line at [www.saferoutespartnership.org](http://www.saferoutespartnership.org). The report includes summaries for each of the 10 networks and local communities.

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***Kentucky Youth Advocates*** is a non-partisan, non-profit, children's advocacy organization. KYA represents a voice for Kentucky's most precious asset – its youth. We believe that Kentucky's youth deserve the opportunities and resources necessary to ensure their productive development and health.

***The Safe Routes to School National Partnership***, hosted by the non-profit Bikes Belong Foundation, is a network of more than 400 nonprofit organizations, government agencies, schools, and professionals working together to advance the SRTS movement in the United States. The Partnership focuses on building partnerships, changing policies, advancing legislation, and improving the built environment.