

# Safe Routes to Schools in the Inland Valleys:

*Elevating  
environmental justice  
& keeping our  
communities safe*



**Demi Espinoza,  
Safe Routes to School National Partnership**



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## About us

We are a nonprofit organization that works to advance safe walking and bicycling to and from schools, to improve the health and wellbeing of kids of all races, income levels and abilities and to foster the creation of healthy communities for everyone.

***Where do we work?***

***Who do we partner with?***

- **Introduction on Safe Routes to School**
  - What you need to know
  - What is Safe Routes to School?
  - Why it works?
  - Assessing our students' walking environment
- **Local work in Riverside/San Bernardino County:**
  - Current Policy Work
  - Challenges and Opportunities
- **Elevating EJ & SRTS data from our communities for policy change**
  - Jurupa Valley and Bloomington Case studies
  - Questions to consider?



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# What You Need to Know

## People Killed While Walking by Income



*Governing*, August 2014

## Children Killed While Walking



*Dangerous by Design*, 2011

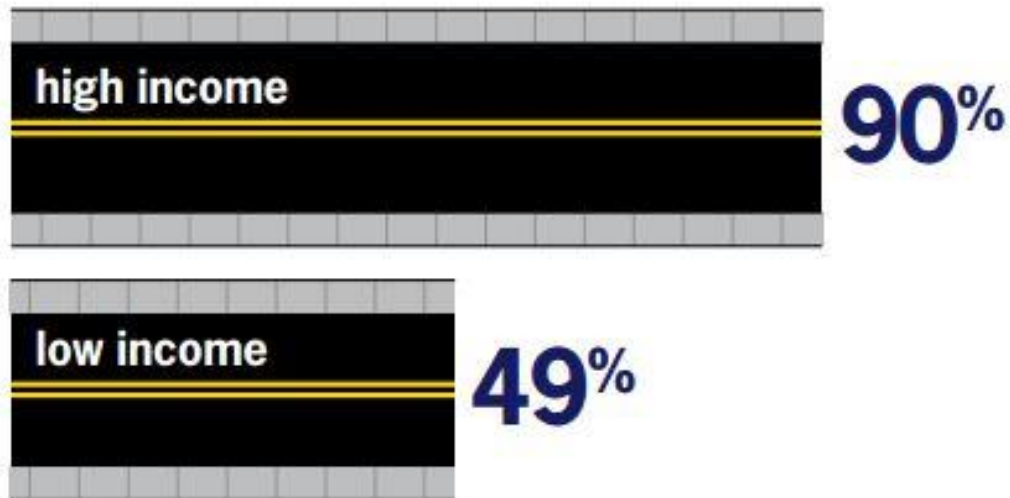


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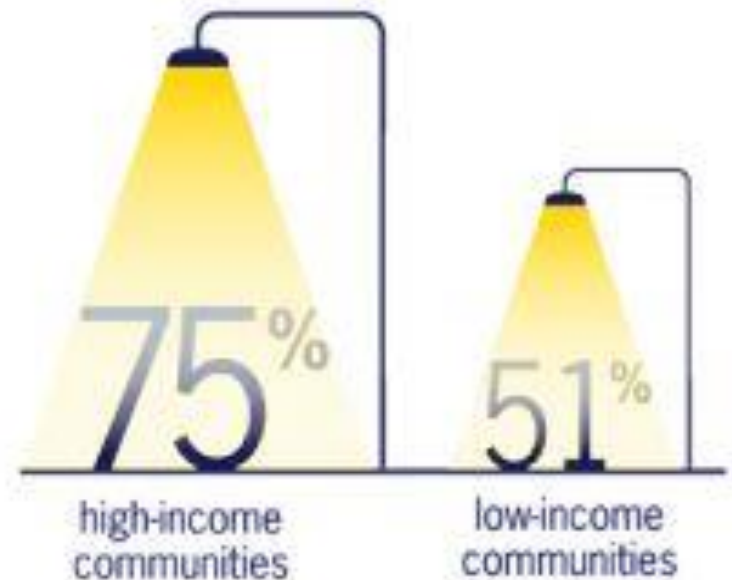
# What You Need to Know

## Communities with Sidewalks



*Bridging the Gap, Income Disparities in Street Features that Encourage Walking, 2012*

## Who Has Streets with Lighting?



*Bridging the Gap, Income Disparities in Street Features that Encourage Walking, 2012*



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# What You Need to Know

HIT BY A VEHICLE  
TRAVELING AT:

**20  
MPH**



9 out of 10 pedestrians survive

HIT BY A VEHICLE  
TRAVELING AT:

**30  
MPH**



5 out of 10 pedestrians survive

HIT BY A VEHICLE  
TRAVELING AT:

**40  
MPH**



Only 1 out of 10 pedestrians survives





# How does Safe Routes to School work?

Safe Routes to School programs incorporate the Six E's:

Evaluation,  
Education,  
Encouragement,  
Engineering,  
Enforcement  
and  
**Equity.**







## The Evidence is In: Safe Routes to School Works

- Safe Routes to School programs lead to a **35-45% increase in walking and bicycling** to school
- Safe Routes to School programs result in a **45-75% decrease in pedestrian injuries** near school
- Kids who walk and bike are **more physically active, fitter and have lower BMIs** than kids who don't



# How to incorporate EJ issues in SRTS programming

- Work with environmental justice community groups
- Coordination with local health departments
- Buy in from local officials/find champions
- Urge governmental jurisdictions to prioritize meaningful public engagement from diverse communities
- Social media promotion
- Walk audits and complete streets assessments
  - EJ hazards check-list



*Demi's mom at a town hall event in  
Riverside, CA 2015*



# Assessing our student's walking environment

A **walk audit** is an assessment of a route, documenting barriers, behaviors, perceptions, and opportunities for improvements to the walking environment.

- Identify walking and biking barriers
- Bring community members together and gather input directly from users
- Identify improvements to address in plans, projects, and programs
- Identify current and new routes
- Document the current environment for use in future evaluation\*\*\*\*



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# Walk Audit Example

Take a walk and use this checklist to rate your neighborhood's walkability.

## How walkable is your community?

### Location of walk

### Rating Scale:



#### 1. Did you have room to walk?

- ☐ Yes ☐ Some problems:
- ☐ Sidewalks or paths started and stopped
  - ☐ Sidewalks were broken or cracked
  - ☐ Sidewalks were blocked with poles, signs, shrubbery, dumpsters, etc.
  - ☐ No sidewalks, paths, or shoulders
  - ☐ Too much traffic
  - ☐ Something else \_\_\_\_\_

Rating: (circle one)

1 2 3 4 5 6

Locations of problems:

\_\_\_\_\_

#### 4. Was it easy to follow safety rules? Could you and your child...

- ☐ Yes ☐ No Cross at crosswalks or where you could see and be seen by drivers?
- ☐ Yes ☐ No Stop and look left, right and then left again before crossing streets?
- ☐ Yes ☐ No Walk on sidewalks or shoulders facing traffic where there were no sidewalks?
- ☐ Yes ☐ No Cross with the light?

Rating: (circle one)

1 2 3 4 5 6

Locations of problems:

\_\_\_\_\_



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# Walk Audit Example

## 2. Was it easy to cross streets?

☐ Yes

☐ Some problems:

- ☐ Road was too wide
- ☐ Traffic signals made us wait too long or did not give us enough time to cross
- ☐ Needed striped crosswalks or traffic signals
- ☐ Parked cars blocked our view of traffic
- ☐ Trees or plants blocked our view of traffic
- ☐ Needed curb ramps or ramps needed repair
- Something else \_\_\_\_\_

Rating: (circle one)

1 2 3 4 5 6

Locations of problems:

\_\_\_\_\_

## 3. Did drivers behave well?

☐ Yes

☐ Some problems: Drivers ...

- ☐ Backed out of driveways without looking
- ☐ Did not yield to people crossing the street
- ☐ Turned into people crossing the street
- ☐ Drove too fast
- ☐ Sped up to make it through traffic lights or drove through traffic lights?
- Something else \_\_\_\_\_

Rating: (circle one)

1 2 3 4 5 6

Locations of problems:

\_\_\_\_\_

## 5. Was your walk pleasant?

☐ Yes

☐ Some problems:

- ☐ Needed more grass, flowers, or trees
- ☐ Scary dogs
- ☐ Scary people
- ☐ Not well lighted
- ☐ Dirty, lots of litter or trash
- ☐ Dirty air due to automobile exhaust
- Something else \_\_\_\_\_

Rating: (circle one)

1 2 3 4 5 6

Locations of problems:

\_\_\_\_\_

How does your neighborhood stack up?  
Add up your ratings and decide.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

Total: \_\_\_\_\_

**26-30** Celebrate! You have a great neighborhood for walking.

**21-25** Celebrate a little. Your neighborhood is pretty good.

**16-20** Okay, but it needs work.

**11-15** It needs lots of work. You deserve better than that.

**5-10** It's a disaster for walking!





# Local work in Riverside and San Bernardino Counties

- Local and regional transportation commissions
  - EJ appendix
- Riverside and San Bernardino Active Transportation Networks
  - Other partners?



# Coachella Valley concerns

- Sidewalk infrastructure
- Air quality
- Pesticide regulation near schools
  - Letter for Department of Pesticide Regulation application regulation near schools with LCJA



# Challenges and Opportunities





# Elevating EJ & SRTS data from our communities for policy change

## Questions to consider:

- What type of questions should be added to a walk audit questionnaire to address EJ concerns?
- Is there data that we are missing?
- How can we start addressing EJ concerns in active transportation policies/programming?  
*(for example: Active Transportation Plan and Environmental Justice Element coordination)*
- Case studies and factsheets:
  - Jurupa Valley and Bloomington





# Contact

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