Instructions for Using the Student Travel Tally Sheet and Parent Survey *(updated November 2007)*

Specific instructions on how to administer each tool are below:

If you have any questions, please contact your State SRTS Coordinator or Austin Brown, Program Manager, National Center for Safe Routes to School, at brown@hsrc.unc.edu.

Student Travel Tally Sheet

The Student Travel Tally Sheet is intended to help track the number of children walking and biking to and from school at participating schools. The information will have many applications, including evaluating overall program success, estimating traffic congestion and environmental effects, learning travel patterns, and many more.

This information, when gathered before and after the SRTS activity or project, can help local SRTS programs measure any changes in walking, biking, and other forms of travel to and from school, which are frequently expected measures.

The tally sheet is designed so that teachers or volunteers involved with the Safe Routes program can ask students in each classroom how they got to school each morning, and how they will get home after school. It should take less than five minutes each morning for two days.

[NOTE: The Student Travel Tally Sheet was revised in October 2007 to only require data collection for a two-day period instead of the previous five-day data collection requirement. This change was based on analysis of initial raw data using the five-day process and is intended to further ease the overall data collection process. The revised form also better facilitates scanner-based data entry.]

Administration Instructions:

1. The Tally Sheet form can be downloaded from www.saferoutesinfo.org/resources under the "Evaluation" tab.
2. Forms should be printed at the highest resolution possible. A minimum resolution of 400 dots per inch should be used; most laser and inkjet printers meet this standard. Resolution under 300 dots per inch may prevent the forms from being readable by scanning systems.
3. The form should be given to all K-8 classrooms in the school, so that as complete a count as possible is achieved.
4. It is intended to be used on two days in the middle of a single week. By gathering travel information for two days in the middle of the week, an accurate average of student travel can be determined.

a. Counts should be conducted on any two days from Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday. Counts conducted on Mondays or Fridays will distort the results. The following combinations of days are acceptable:
    i. Tuesday and Wednesday
    ii. Wednesday and Thursday
    iii. Tuesday and Thursday
b. Weather conditions can be identified after counts are collected. We have found that internet-based weather reporting (for example, on www.weatherunderground.com) is normally more accurate than personal observations.
    i. Local coordinators can find this information online by time of day and Zip Code at www.weatherunderground.com. (Other weather-related Web sites may also provide this information.)
c. For national reporting purposes, counts are needed regardless of weather conditions.
d. In order to know how many students walk when it is not raining, local programs may choose to collect counts on an additional day if there were adverse weather conditions for both days of planned counts.
    i. Use the additional day field provided on the tally sheet and, in the comments field at the bottom of the tally sheet, indicate that the third day is an alternate count due to adverse weather.

5. The Student Travel Tally Sheet should be administered at least twice during the school year:
    a. First, counts should be taken at some point during the second, third, or fourth weeks of the school year. This count establishes the baseline measure for that school.
        i. Please do not conduct counts during weeks with special walking or biking-related events, such as Walk to School Day.
        ii. If your SRTS program is conducting any events during the first three weeks of the school year, please attempt to conduct travel counts before the SRTS event.
    b. A count should also be conducted during the last three weeks of the school year (i.e., during May). This count measures the change in travel behavior during the school year. If a mid-year count (see below) was conducted, this end-of-year count can also be used to evaluate the sustained effect of activities.
    c. Mid-year counts are not required, but might also be useful:
        i. A count conducted within 2-3 weeks of the completion of educational events or encouragement and enforcement campaigns can be used to measure immediate effects of these activities.
        ii. A mid-year count can also be used to understand the seasonal variation in levels of walking and biking to and from school.

Tally Sheet Data Entry Options

1. Raw counts from paper forms can be converted to useful data in three ways:
    a. Centralized Data Entry – Users can collect their paper forms and send them, along with the Local Program Data Information Sheet ("cover sheet"), to the National Center for Safe Routes to School. The National Center processes the forms and provides the data to users through an online data viewing system.
        i. The Local Program Data Information Sheet ("cover sheet") can be downloaded from www.saferoutesinfo.org/resources under the "Evaluation" column. [*Note: this form will be available for download by November 9, 2007.*]
        ii. Users send the cover sheet and their completed tally sheets to:
            National Center for Safe Routes to School
            SRTS Data Entry
            730 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.
            Suite 300
            Chapel Hill, NC 27599
        iii. The National Center will scan the forms, validate the data, and transfer the data to the National SRTS Program Tracking Database.
        iv. The data entry process will take approximately 2 to 4 weeks, depending on workload.
        v. Users will be sent an email as soon as their data has been processed. The email will contain information on how to login and access their data using the online "DataTools" system described below. Users will have access to summary reports and basic analysis tools, and will be able to download their data for any other applications they may have.
    b. Online "DataTools" – Users can use the National Center's online "DataTools" to enter their data directly into a system that provides immediate access to their data, the ability to generate some basic summary information in table and graphical forms. Users can also download their data in Excel format.
        vi. User creates account with the DataTools system at www.saferoutesinfo.org/tracking.
        vii. User provides some basic background information about their SRTS program.
        viii. User accesses data entry form. Online form replicates the basic appearance of the paper tally sheet to better facilitate data entry.
        ix. When data entry is complete, user can view data and summary reports. Charts and tables can be copied and pasted into other documents such as program or progress reports.
    c. [NOTE: The following option will be phased out during spring 2008 and is no longer recommended.] Data from the old (5-day) paper forms can be

entered into the Student Travel Behavior Report Excel spreadsheet available at for download from the National Center's FTP site. The spreadsheet can only be used with the previous tally sheet that requires a 5-day count. (Contact Austin Brown, brown@hsrc.unc.edu, for information about downloading the spreadsheet). *The spreadsheets and 5-day tally sheets will be phased out during spring 2008; users are strongly encouraged to switch to the updated 2-day count forms for all future counts.* Completed spreadsheets provide some basic summary statistics that can be used for local purposes, and sent to the National Center for Safe Routes to School (brown@hsrc.unc.edu) for inclusion in the National SRTS Tracking Program.

Parent Survey

The Parent Survey is intended to collect information from parents about how their children travel to and from school, what barriers there are to walking or biking to and from school, and their attitudes about walking and biking to school. This information has numerous uses, including understanding the overall environment for walking and biking to school, why children don't walk or bike to school, and how attitudes change as a result of SRTS programs.

Local SRTS programs should be particularly interested in this information because it can be used to help them identify issues that need to be addressed to improve their SRTS activities. Information from parents might also identify unexpected opportunities to increase walking and biking to school.

[NOTE: The Parent Survey was revised slightly in October 2007 to reduce the number of pages from three to two, make minor changes to the categorization of data collected, and add data that allows better mapping and spatial analysis. The revised form also better facilitates scanner-based data entry.]

The Parent Survey form is designed with three potential means of administration (specific instructions for each approach are below):

- First, it can be handed out or placed in backpacks for students to take home, deliver to parents, and then have the students return to their teachers. The survey should take between 5-10 minutes to complete.
- Second, it can be given to parents to complete while they are waiting before parent-teacher conferences.
- Third, it can be assigned as part of a homework assignment, where the student would take home the form and fill it out as part of an interview with the parent.

The parent survey should be conducted twice during the school year. Exact timeframes are listed, and these should be followed when the survey is administered using the take-home method. But when the survey will be administered in conjunction with Parent-Teacher Conferences, the local SRTS program manager and teacher(s) should determine the best time to administer the survey.

a. To collect baseline information, parents should be surveyed during the second, third, or fourth week of school.
b. Parents should also be surveyed at the end of the school year to collect information about how attitudes and beliefs have changed during the year.
c. A local SRTS program might also want to conduct the survey sometime during the year.
    i. A survey conducted within 2-3 weeks of the completion of educational events or encouragement and enforcement campaigns can be used to measure immediate effects of these activities.
    ii. A mid-year survey can also be used to understand the progress and early effects of long-term programs, as well as other variation in parental attitudes that affect walking and biking to and from school.

Downloading and Printing Instructions

1. The Parent Survey form can be downloaded from www.saferoutesinfo.org/resources under the "Evaluation" tab.
2. Forms should be printed at the highest resolution possible. A minimum resolution of 400 dots per inch should be used; most laser and inkjet printers meet this standard. Resolution under 300 dots per inch may prevent the forms from being readable by scanning systems.
3. The Parent Survey form is two pages long. It can be printed double-sided to reduce costs.

[Alternate One] **Take-Home Administration Instructions**:

1. Please distribute copies of these forms to teachers for each classroom, so that all parents will receive a copy of the survey.
2. Collect forms from teachers weekly for a two-week period after the surveys have been sent home.
3. Raw data from completed surveys can be converted to useful formats in three ways described below.

[Alternate Two] **Parent-Teacher Conference Administration Instructions**:

1. Identify when parent-teacher conferences will occur and determine whether these times of the year are appropriate to collect baseline information and end-of-year information. (If the times do not seem appropriate, a take-home methodology might more successful.)
2. Distribute copies of the survey form to teachers for each classroom, so that all households will receive a copy of the survey during (or immediately before) the parent-teacher conference. (Note that teachers will be responsible for distributing and collecting surveys, and then returning the completed surveys to the local SRTS program manager.)
3. Ask teachers to provide forms to parents/caregivers so that they can fill out the forms while they wait for the conference.
    a. A sign with simple instructions next to the stack of forms may help explain the process.

    b. Teachers may collect forms during their conference.
    c. Parents may also complete the survey after their meeting with the teacher.
    d. Teachers may allow parents to take the surveys home and send them back with the students. If this approach is followed, teachers should request that the forms be returned within a few days, and set a specific date. (Note that this approach will likely reduce the number of surveys that are returned.)
4. Collect forms from teachers weekly for a two-week period after the surveys have been sent home.
5. Raw data from completed surveys can be converted to useful formats in three ways described below.

[Alternate Three] **Homework Instructions**:

1. Please distribute copies of these forms to teachers for each classroom, so that all parents will receive a copy of the survey.
2. Teachers can assign the surveys to be filled out as part of a homework assignment. The student would take the survey form home and fill it out during an interview with their parent, or along with their parents.
    a. Other homework approaches can also be used, as long as the recommended form is used, and the parent provides the answers.
    b. In many instances, curriculum changes or new homework assignments require approval from the principal or a curriculum committee. Local SRTS programs considering the homework approach should check on this potential issue early.
3. Collect forms from teachers weekly for a two-week period after the surveys have been sent home.
4. Raw data from completed surveys can be converted to useful formats in three ways described below.

Parent Survey Data Entry Options:

Raw counts from paper forms can be converted to useful data in three ways:

1. Centralized Data Entry – Users can collect their paper forms and send them, along with the Local Program Data Information Sheet ("cover sheet"), to the National Center for Safe Routes to School. The National Center processes the forms and provides the data to users through an online data viewing system.
    a. The Local Program Data Information Sheet ("cover sheet") can be downloaded from www.saferoutesinfo.org/resources under the "Evaluation" column.
    b. Users send the cover sheet and their completed parent surveys to:
        National Center for Safe Routes to School
        SRTS Data Entry
        730 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.
        Suite 300
        Chapel Hill, NC 27599
    c. The National Center will scan the forms, validate the data, and transfer the data to the National SRTS Program Tracking Database.

d. The data entry process will take approximately 2 to 4 weeks, depending on workload. [Note: The Central Data Entry process is new, and this time requirement is an estimate that will likely be shortened as the system is implemented.]
e. Users will be sent an email as soon as their data has been processed. The email will contain information on how to login and access their data using the online "DataTools" system described below. Users will have access to summary reports and basic analysis tools, and will be able to download their data for any other applications they may have.

2. Online "DataTools" – Users can use the National Center's online "DataTools" to enter their data directly into a system that provides immediate access to their data, the ability to generate some basic summary information in table and graphical forms. Users can also download their data in Excel format.
    i. User creates account with the DataTools system at www.saferoutesinfo.org/tracking.
    ii. User provides some basic background information about their SRTS program.
    iii. User accesses data entry form. Online form replicates the basic appearance of the paper survey form to better facilitate data entry.
    iv. When data entry is complete, user can view data and summary reports. Charts and tables can be copied and pasted into other documents such as program or progress reports.
3. [NOTE: The following option will be phased out during spring 2008 and is no longer recommended.] Data from the old (3-page) Parent Survey forms can be entered into the Parent Survey Report Excel spreadsheet available at for download from the National Center's FTP site. The spreadsheet can only be used with the previous survey form that has slightly different questions in a slightly different sequence than the revised form. (Contact Austin Brown, brown@hsrc.unc.edu, for information about downloading the spreadsheet). *The spreadsheets and previous 3-page parent survey will be phased out during spring 2008; users are strongly encouraged to switch to the updated 2-page survey forms for all future administrations of the parent survey.* Completed spreadsheets provide some basic summary statistics that can be used for local purposes, and sent to the National Center for Safe Routes to School (brown@hsrc.unc.edu) for inclusion in the National SRTS Tracking Program.