

Pedestrian and bicyclist safety education

Regardless of whether students can currently walk or bike to their schools, learning and practicing pedestrian and bicyclist safety skills will serve them well now and throughout their lives. Walking through a parking lot, to a bus stop or somewhere else all require safety skills needed today. As students grow up, they may choose to move somewhere new that requires use of mass transit, biking to destinations or more walking, and what they learn today can help them be prepared.

Safety research shows that pedestrian and bicyclist safety skills must be practiced; not just learned about in a traditional classroom setting. Read more in this section about resources like Let's Go NC!, a comprehensive, free curriculum that has a strong skills practice component, how to hold a bicycle skills clinic (also called a bike rodeo), and how parents can assess and nurture their child's skills.

This section also includes two online guides for safety education, the *Cycling Skills Clinic Guide* (<https://one.nhtsa.gov/Driving-Safety/Bicycles/CyclingSkillsClinic>) and *Bikeology* (https://www.shapeamerica.org/publications/resources/teachingtools/qualitytype/bicycle_curriculum.aspx).

Snapshot: Rolling out safety education in McDowell County

The growing community interest in biking inspired the McDowell County School System to invest more heavily in bike education. In 2015, McDowell County launched the *Let's Go Biking McDowell!* program, teaching the *Let's Go Biking NC!* curriculum to fourth and fifth graders system-wide through their physical education departments. Along with the curriculum, an 11-foot bike trailer and 24 bikes and helmets were purchased for the program.

The equipment is available to community organizations when it is not being used in the schools, helping to provide more opportunities for bicycle rodeos throughout the community during the summer months.

The program was a collaborative project between the Elementary School Curriculum Specialist for McDowell County, the NC Public Health Foundation, the Catalyst for Healthy Eating and Active Living and Active Routes to School. The McDowell School System and the McDowell Bus Transportation Department manage the schedule, insurance, liability, and delivery of the trailer to the schools. They've also collaborated with the local prison, which repairs bicycles.

