



**Safe Routes to School National Partnership
Voices for Healthy Kids: Active Places
Applications for Technical Assistance:
Due October 18, 2013**

OVERVIEW OF VOICES FOR HEALTHY KIDS

[Voices for Healthy Kids](#) is a joint initiative between the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the American Heart Association to engage, organize and mobilize communities to improve their health and reverse the childhood obesity epidemic by 2015. Voices for Healthy Kids recognizes that the obesity epidemic does not affect all communities equally, and is committed to reaching communities adversely impacted by childhood obesity, especially communities of color and lower-income communities.

Voices for Healthy Kids pursues policy-change strategies that research and practice suggest will have the greatest impact. Those strategies are focused on six key policy areas including reducing the consumption of sugary beverages, protecting children from unhealthy food and beverage marketing, increasing access to affordable foods in communities, ensuring that schools serve healthy foods, helping schools and after school programs increase physical activity, and a focus on the built environment and healthy community design titled Active Places. The Voices for Healthy Kids approach uses a model that includes six teams of expert organizations to serve as Hubs to execute and support the success of campaigns in these six strategic areas.

OVERVIEW OF ACTIVE PLACES

The Safe Routes to School National Partnership serves as the expert for increasing access to parks, playgrounds, walking paths, bike lanes and other opportunities to create active places and increase physical activity. Our charge for the Voices for Healthy Kids: Active Places initiative is to build sustainable shared use and street scale advocacy efforts that will work to change policy at the local and state level, with a specific focus on addressing equity in underserved communities (i.e. lower-income areas and communities of color).

The built environment affects childhood obesity by either discouraging or encouraging physical activity, and lack of access - particularly in lower-income communities - to safe streets, school recreational facilities and other public recreational facilities, such as playgrounds and parks, limits the ability for children to engage in healthy physical activity.

Lower-income communities and communities of color experience higher rates of childhood obesity and often have less opportunities for physical activity due to poor walking and bicycling infrastructure, unsafe public spaces, and less parks and school recreation areas. These disparities are further perpetuated in underserved communities through reduced access to government grants and private funds for built environment improvements due to less government staff and advocacy capacity and minimal technical assistance opportunities.

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[Voices for Healthy Kids: Active Places](#) provides an important opportunity for the Safe Routes to School National Partnership to work with local and state partners to engage underserved communities in an authentic way around securing shared use agreements and street scale improvements. A large part of this effort is premised upon the bringing together of targeted and sometimes unconventional partnerships and building the capacity for advocates to make long term changes that benefit their communities. Active Places effort will broaden the scope of influence, and bring fluency about active transportation resources and policies to organizations that are well trusted in these communities and create a new diverse generation of advocates and achieve positive policy change.

Helping Your Community

The Voices for Healthy Kids: Active Places initiative and the expertise of the Safe Routes to School National Partnership can assist your community's or state's efforts. We can offer free technical assistance on existing campaign efforts that relate to shared use agreements and street scale improvements such as passing Complete Streets policies, securing funding for shared use agreements, and ensuring that MAP-21 funding at the state and regional levels supports walking, bicycling and Safe Routes to School.

Technical assistance can range from providing resources, to assisting with the creation of campaign plans and platforms, to providing communications strategies and coaching to ensure a successful campaign. Simply describe your community need in detail on the application form provided and our staff of experts will assess and work with each applicant to discuss your particular situation and goals.

We are currently seeking applications, due October 18, 2013.

Please read the following, including the policy goals, to ensure that your effort fits into one or more of these categories:

CAMPAIGN PRIORITIES

The Safe Routes to School National Partnership will be working with advocates at state and local levels to advance the following six policy levers for Active Places related to A) shared use agreements and B) street scale improvements as described below.

A) *Shared Use Agreements*: We will work with policy makers and advocates at the state and local level to advance shared use agreements and policy adoption ensuring that underserved communities have access to physical activity opportunities.

Shared Use Agreement Policy Levers

1. Clarify liability laws for shared use agreements in states
 2. Support appropriations for state level shared use programs and incentives to promote shared use agreements
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B) Street Scale Improvements: We will work with policy makers and advocates at the state and local levels to advance street scale improvements that increase physical activity in underserved communities.

Street Scale Improvement Policy Levers

3. Codify Safe Routes to School programs in state laws and provide state level funding to enhance federal appropriations
4. Secure Safe Routes to School, bicycling and walking MAP-21 funds at state and regional levels
5. Pass Complete Streets policies at state and local levels
6. Secure a percentage of state appropriations or new state funding sources for the transportation budget for bike/ped or Safe Routes to School

The Safe Routes to School National Partnership is also working with state advocates to advance the award and obligation of SAFETEA-LU Safe Routes to School funds. [Click here](#) to see how much money your state still has to award and program. We are providing technical assistance to advocates to:

Policy Goals

7. Help state DOTs to create an application process for SAFETEA-LU Safe Routes to School funds.
8. Help state DOTs to obligate SAFETEA-LU Safe Routes to School funds that have been awarded.

APPLICATION PROCESS

In order for a campaign to be considered for technical assistance by the Safe Routes to School National Partnership, the point of contact from the lead organization, office, or community group must complete the [application form](#) and submit via email to activeplaces@saferoutespartnership.org by **October 18, 2013**. The application will be reviewed by the Safe Routes to School National Partnership Active Places staff and each contact will receive a follow up phone call within a month of receipt of the application. Final decisions for campaign support and a plan for the appropriate level of support will be made by the National Partnership staff.

Need help?

We are happy to provide assistance in completing the application form. Please contact one of our staff below based on your campaign focus.

Shared Use: Mikaela Randolph, mikaela@saferoutespartnership.org

Street Scale: Keith Benjamin, keith@saferoutespartnership.org

Policy Goals: Maggie Cooper, Maggie@saferoutespartnership.org
