



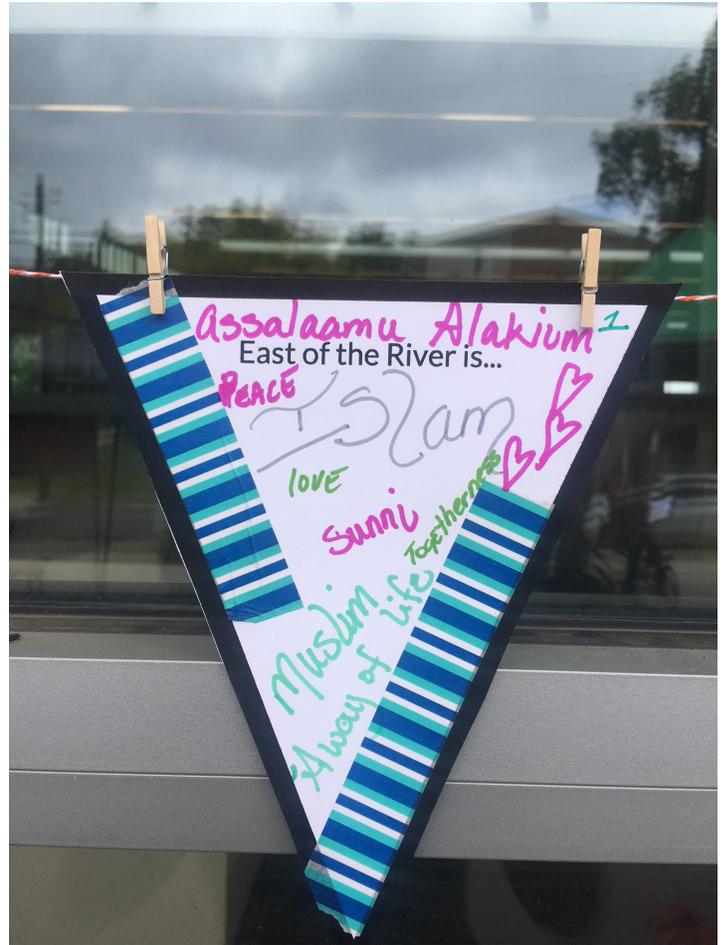
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT CARDS





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The Safe Routes Partnership Community Engagement Cards are a collection of arts-based activities that foster community building through creativity. Each activity is designed to spark curiosity, encourage free expression, and engage diverse people in a variety of settings. Our team regularly uses these activities during outreach events, planning meetings, training sessions, and classroom instruction. We made this collection to share some of our favorite activities and to inspire others to try them out.

Every card gives instructions for implementing a creative community engagement activity. They are meant to be easily adapted to fit the needs of your audience. In fact, we recommend putting your own unique twist on each activity to ensure they are accessible and culturally-relevant to your participants. No extensive art skills are required, just an open mind and a willingness to try new things.

BEFORE AND AFTER PICTURE REFLECTION

Combat survey-fatigue by asking for feedback in picture format. Providing a visual option for people to share their ideas ensures more voices will be heard.

Where and When to Use It: Consider using a picture reflection to gauge people's feelings on infrastructure changes or safety interventions in the community. You can also ask workshop participants to complete picture reflections to demonstrate what they knew before the session and what they knew by the end of it. Great for young students or individuals who prefer expressing themselves using images.

MATERIALS

- White drawing paper
- Pencils
- Colored pencils
- Pastels
- Crayons, markers
- Optional: Magazines, glue, scissors to create a collage piece



INSTRUCTIONS

1. Before your activity/workshop: Distribute reflection templates to participants and ask them to write/draw how they feel or what they know about the event topic. For example, if you are leading a workshop on starting a Walking School Bus program, you can ask participants what they already know about these kinds of programs. This will be your pre-assessment. Have participants hold on to their reflection template or collect them.
2. Lead your activity/workshop.
3. After your activity/workshop: Re-distribute reflection templates. Ask participants to write/draw how they are feeling or what they learned after your activity/workshop. This will be your post-assessment.
4. Give participants ample time to complete their reflections. Once pieces are complete, have participants share their work with a partner. Ask them to explain what they drew and their feelings behind the piece.
5. If time allows, have a small gallery walk so participants can view each other's work.

Tip: Not an artist? Not a problem! If people are not into drawing, have pre-made pictures they can paste onto their reflection sheets. Emoji pictures are great for this. If someone prefers not to draw and wants to give written or verbal feedback, that is fine. Their response is what's important.

NEXT STEPS

- If space is available, display reflections on a bulletin board or send to funders to complement quantitative evaluation. Reflections may be completed anonymously, but try to collect demographic information from responders in order to disaggregate data.

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BUTCHER PAPER GRAFFITI WALL

Brown butcher paper is the perfect canvas for gathering community feedback, sharing ideas, note keeping, and remembering special events.

Where and When to Use It: This low-tech tool is adaptable to a variety of locations and audiences. Create a butcher paper graffiti wall for outreach tabling, school gatherings, staff meetings, and community events.

MATERIALS

- Brown butcher paper (bulletin board paper also works)
- Writing utensils: Pens, washable markers, Sharpies, crayons
- Pencil/marker holder
- Tape
- Optional: Stickers, washi tape, scissors, table



INSTRUCTIONS

1. Cut a large piece of butcher paper. Recommended size: 6 feet to cover a folding table or large wall space.
2. Tape paper onto wall or table and put out writing utensils.
3. Write a question in the middle of the paper. Make sure it is large enough for people to see.
Note: Gathering thoughtful feedback relies on asking the right questions. Check out our list of questions that allow people to share, celebrate, and reflect on their communities.
4. Invite attendees to respond to your question. Let people know their responses can be words, images, or a combination. If comments get off topic, that's okay! Let the graffiti wall develop organically.
Note: It is also important to explain why you are asking for people's comments. A sign or brief message about the purpose of the graffiti wall puts people at ease and gives them proper context to form their responses.

NEXT STEPS

Once your gathering is over, there are a few options for what to do with your graffiti wall:

- Take it with you for further analysis. Some people type up useful comments or find ways to quantify feedback.
- Leave the graffiti wall in the gathering space as a memento. This can brighten up a school hallway or office space for a few days. It also allows visitors who were not at your gathering to read others' comments or contribute their own.
- Graffiti walls often bring out the best of our creativity and talents. Invite attendees to cut off a piece of the paper to keep as a memento. This could be a drawing, some inspirational words, or a part of the final design that just looks cool!

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COMMUNITY QUILT

Quilting is a storytelling technique steeped in tradition. Easily adaptable and beautifully collaborative, quilts help us celebrate our unique identities and unite as a community.

Where and When to Use It: Community quilts are great additions to outreach events, conferences, and school-based activities. Choose a theme where every quilt square contributes to a collective narrative. Your quilt might commemorate a special occasion, display a collection of favorite things, or depict neighborhood history.

MATERIALS

- Paper
- Scissors
- Tape
- Markers, colored pencils, crayons



INSTRUCTIONS

1. Pre-make quilt square templates. This can be done on the computer, by hand, or by buying pre-cut sheets of square paper.
2. On the template or on a detached sheet, give instructions for what people should put on their quilt square. Here are a few ideas for quilt square topics:
 - Anything you love about your community
 - One idea to save the environment
 - Favorite place in your neighborhood
 - The way you get around town – bike, bus, car, scooter, walk
 - One wish for your community
3. Instruct people to design their quilt square. Once they are finished, tape squares onto a wall or large piece of paper to form a complete quilt.

Tip: Display instructions in the languages spoken within the community. Encourage people to incorporate their own language and cultural iconography into their quilt square designs.

NEXT STEPS

- If space and time allow, keep your community quilt displayed and encourage others to contribute.
- Use your community quilt to lead a staff discussion on diversity and equity. After looking at the quilt, ask yourself, “What do people in our community value? How do our organization’s values align with our community’s values? What else do we want to learn about our community? Where and how can we learn more?”

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DREAM MAP

Dream maps are creative complements to traditional brainstorming exercises like webs and wish lists. They ask us to reflect on where we are, determine where we are going, and design how we get there.

Where and When to use It: Incorporate a dream map into your next focus group, strategic planning session, or community meeting. Maps can be completed individually or collectively in a number of styles. The key to a successful mapping exercise is giving people ample space and time to reflect, create, imagine, and share their ideas for a better future.

MATERIALS

- Paper
- Scissors
- Tape
- Glue
- Magazines
- Pictures of your community
- Markers, colored pencils, crayons



INSTRUCTIONS

1. Select a brainstorm topic. You may ask participants to imagine their dream school drop-off/arrival scenario, their dream park, or their dream downtown neighborhood. The topic should be relevant to a community concern and should spark ideas for short-term and long-term change.

Example: "Imagine if our community prioritized the safety of all road users. What would our community look like?"

2. Instruct participants to complete their dream maps. While they are envisioning their ideal future, ask them to consider how they will get there and what barriers exist. This will help guide planning conversations. Allow at least 20 minutes of work time.
3. Have participants share their maps with a partner or small group. If time allows, lead a short gallery walk to compare and contrast ideas.

Tip: If you are focused on a specific geographic location, have a few pre-printed maps of the area. This will help people who might be intimidated by creating a map from scratch. Encourage them to add ideas to a pre-existing map using small drawings, symbols, words, or magazine cut-outs.

NEXT STEPS

- Use participants' ideas to inform strategic plans, grant proposals, program development, etc. Ask for permission to share maps with local leaders and advocacy groups.

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Art is everywhere! Contour line drawings capture our neighborhood surroundings in a new way.

Where and When to Use It: Add an artful twist to your neighborhood walk/bike audits with a contour line drawing activity. This activity can also be done indoors, in one location (one street corner, a community garden, a certain area in a park), or in multiple locations around your community. Consider using a walk audit route to scout different locations.

MATERIALS

- White drawing paper
- Pencils
- Colored pencils, pastels, crayons, markers
- Clipboards
- Table or designated area to complete art project



INSTRUCTIONS

1. Distribute clipboards, pencils, and paper.
2. Ask participants to observe the area around them and notice different shapes they see. For example, a traffic light is comprised of circles and rectangles, plant leaves might be oval shaped, cracks in the pavement might form intersecting lines.
3. Have the participants choose one shape they would like to focus on. Have them draw that shape on their white paper without including the fine details. They are just drawing the outline. For example, if someone wants to draw a car, they might draw the outline of the car without including windows, door handles, or tire rims. If someone is drawing a stop sign, they will just draw an octagon shape and not include the word "Stop." These drawings are fast, simple, and should be done in under a minute.
4. Repeat this process until participants have two or three contour drawings of different shapes. Encourage them to explore a variety of shapes and sizes. They do not have to focus only on standard shapes (square, rectangle, triangle), they can play with curves, lines, and oddly-shaped objects. Each shape should be drawn on a different piece of paper.
5. Once participants have completed their drawings, find a place to create your final artworks. When you gather, ask each participant to share one of their contour line drawings and why that shape stood out to them.
6. After sharing, have participants begin to add colors and details to their contour drawings. The drawings do not have to look like the original object. For example, a contour line drawing of a car might turn into a spaceship. A contour line drawing of a plant leaf might turn into a colorful kite. There is no wrong way to complete your contour line drawing, just experiment, have fun, and see where your imagination takes you! Depending on your group, art-making can last from 5 – 10 minutes to over 30 minutes.
7. When artworks are complete, lay them out on the table or workspace. Have participants do a quick "gallery walk" and look at the artwork they produced. If time allows, have the group reflect on the activity went for them. Ask them, "What was easy? What was difficult? What did you learn about their community by doing this activity?"

NEXT STEPS

- If you have an appropriate space available, create a mini gallery to display the finished artwork with permission of participants. As a part of the final display, add a short description about the activity so viewers understand the purpose of the artwork.
- Go Deeper – Lead another contour drawing activity, this time giving participants specific guidelines for the shapes and objects they are drawing. Here are a few suggestions:
 - Something that makes you feel safe
 - Something that makes you feel unsafe
 - Something that makes you feel proud
 - Something you wish you could change
 - Something you hope will remain in 50 years



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PENNANTS

Colorful pennant flags can make any space feel festive. Easy to design in any shape or style, this multi-purpose décor gives people to show off their community pride.

Where and When to use It: Pennant flags have the flexibility to be whatever you need them to be –window decorations, office art, community building exercises. Make a pennant creation station at your next outreach event or leave a few empty pennants and drawing materials in your office lobby for visitors to complete (bonus points if there is a space to display them!). To add more meaning, ask people to design a pennant focused on a theme relevant to your work or community.

MATERIALS

- Paper - cardstock, printer paper, construction paper, tissue paper
- Markers, colored pencils, crayons
- Pencils, string, tape, mini clothespins
- Optional: Glue sticks, magazine, and colorful decorative paper for pennant collages



INSTRUCTIONS

1. Create a pennant template. Pennants are usually triangle-shaped and can easily be designed on a computer or by cutting triangle-shaped pieces of paper.
2. Decide on a theme for your pennants. You can include the theme on a pre-made pennant template or display it at your outreach table. Here are a few themes and prompts to get you started:
 - Our community is...
 - Celebrate community milestones – Founder’s Day, school anniversary, grand opening
 - Hidden gems – What is something you want other people to know about your community that is not usually talked about?
 - Favorite memories
 - Foods from your culture
 - Design a symbol or logo that represents you
3. Have participants create their pennants. This is supposed to be fun and freeing, there is no wrong way to complete the activity. As people are creating, encourage conversations about the theme and the art.

4. Hang up pennants to decorate an outreach table display or to brighten an indoor space. If this activity is completed in a workshop, have people share their pennants with the group.

Tip: Many communities have their own flag-making traditions. For example, traditional [papel picado](#) is decorative Mexican folk art using cut tissue paper to make color banners. Research cultural traditions in your community and incorporate them into your outreach display.

NEXT STEPS

- Save pennants to use as decorations for future events. Repeat this activity a few times to build a collaborative art piece. See if there are any trends or variations when creating pennants with different groups.

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PHOTO BOOTH

From selfie stations to the resurgence of Polaroids, we have seemingly endless options for capturing and sharing our lives. Get in on the action by creating a DIY photo booth at your next event.

Where and When to use It: A photo booth can add a bit of fun to office spaces, conferences, and outreach events. Use them to document special moments or to solicit ideas from the community. Photo booths can also demonstrate large-scale support for a local cause or community action.

MATERIALS

- Large piece of fabric or tarp - a bedsheet can work great!
- Camera
- Markers
- Message card - cardstock or small whiteboard
- Optional: Other fun thematic props



INSTRUCTIONS

1. Create blank message cards for people to fill out at your booth. Your message card could ask people share something about who they are and how they feel about their community. Be sure to have message cards in the various languages spoken within the community. Here are a few messaging ideas:

- I am a _____ who wants _____.
- I bike because...
- I dream of a street where...
- My community is...
- I bet you didn't know that my community...

2. Hang a large piece of fabric or paper to create a photo backdrop.

3. Invite event participants to fill out a message card to hold in their photo booth picture. If you have access to a Polaroid camera or picture printer, you can create a collaborative photo display during your event

Tip: Expand your reach by creating a fun hashtag for your photo booth. Encourage people to use the hashtag when sharing their photo booth picture on social media.

Tip: If photo subjects do not want their pictures taken or want their faces displayed, ask if you can take a picture of their message card instead.

NEXT STEPS

- Share images on social media if you have permission from the photo subjects.
- Use responses from the message cards to inform your future work and to educate the larger public about a particular issue.

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PUZZLES

Custom puzzles can be playful conversation starters. Put the pieces together to reveal a question, image, or idea that gets the discussion flowing.

Where and When to use It: Puzzles can be used in multiple settings – staff meetings, outreach events, classrooms – to introduce a concept, explore a new idea, give an instruction, or gather feedback. Instead of asking participants to respond to a message on a whiteboard, have them out put together a puzzle that will reveal the message.

MATERIALS

- Paper (8.5 x 11 inches or larger) – Printer paper, construction paper, drawing paper
- Cardstock
- Markers, pencils
- Glue, scissors,
- Envelopes, paper clips, or small bags to hold puzzle pieces
- Optional: Computer and printer to create puzzle design



INSTRUCTIONS

1. Decide what message you want displayed on each puzzle and how many puzzles you would like. For example, one completed puzzle might display, "What is one transportation safety concern you have in your community?" Another puzzle might display, "Brainstorm five ways to improve park access for disabled individuals."
2. Write each message on a separate piece of paper. Make sure you write in large, neat letters so the message is easy to read. Use colorful patterned paper or add little designs and drawings to decorate your paper. This will make the puzzle design more interesting and fun to put together.
3. Glue each piece of paper onto a piece of cardstock. This will make the puzzle more durable.
4. Turn the cardstock over. On the blank side, use a pencil to lightly draw the individual puzzle pieces. Make sure you draw pieces large enough for people to assemble easily. It's okay to make a puzzle that is challenging, just not impossible!
5. Cut out the individual puzzle pieces and place them in an envelope or baggie. Repeat this process for each puzzle.
6. At your meeting or event, give participants a puzzle to put together. They can work individually, in pairs, or in small groups. Tell them that their puzzles will reveal a message to respond to.
7. Once each person or group completes their puzzle, have them respond to the message. In a staff meeting, you might have people share their responses in pairs or small groups. At a community event, people might write their responses on a piece of butcher paper or share ideas with the staff member tabling.

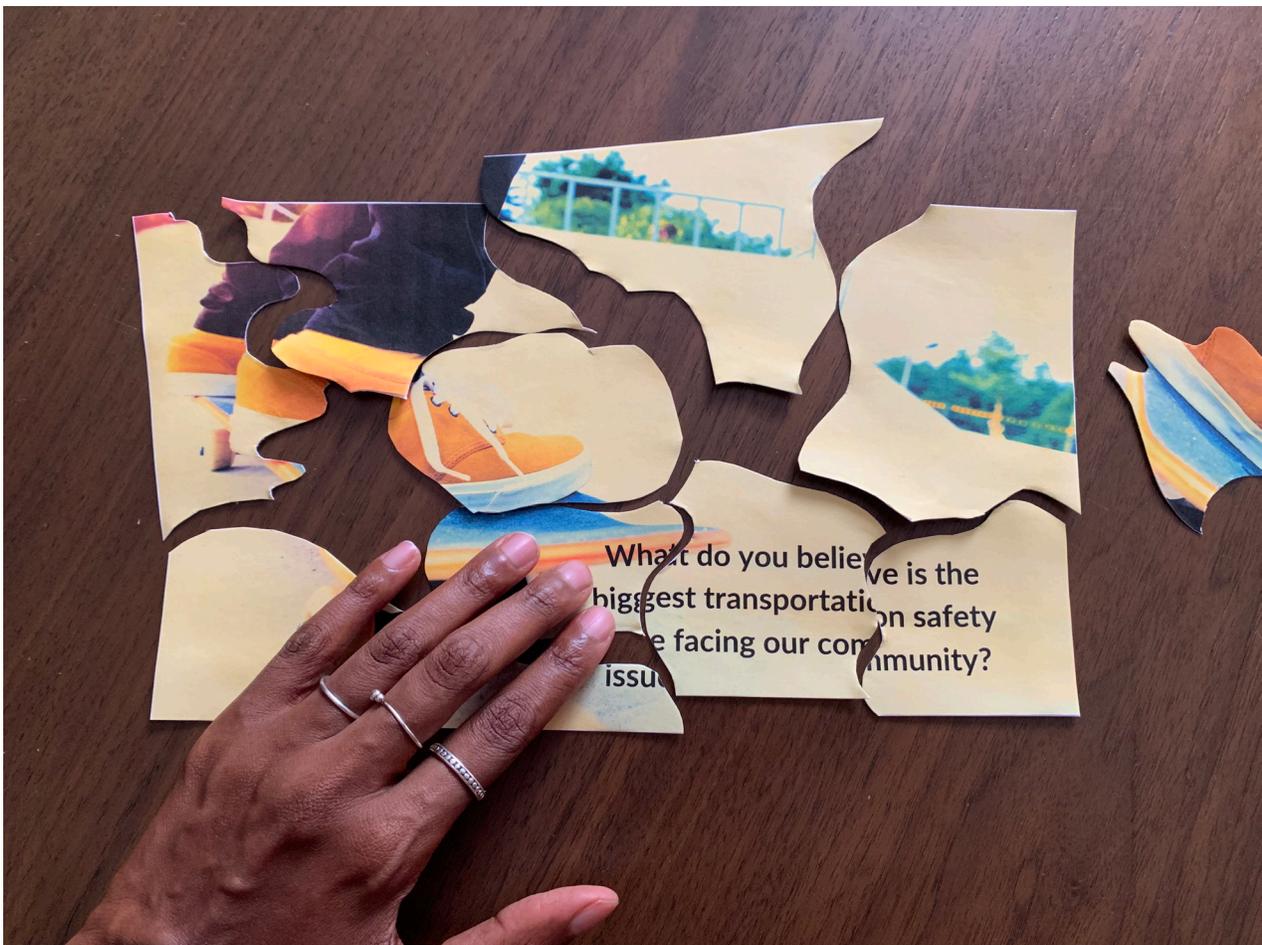
Tips: Not all puzzles have to reveal messages. Try creating puzzles by cutting up images of your neighborhood (historical photos are great for this!). Once participants complete their puzzle, ask them to respond to the image in front of them. Here are a few questions to ask using the Visual Thinking Strategies method:

- a. What's going on in this picture?*
- b. What do you see that makes you say that?*
- c. What more can you find?*

Tip: Check out the [Visual Thinking Strategies](#) website for tips and resources on using visual art to spark meaningful conversations.

NEXT STEPS

- While putting together a puzzle is fun, the conversations they inspire will be key. After the puzzles have been assembled and ideas are shared, decide how you will turn ideas and feedback into action. Keep a record of responses to reference during future meetings or planning sessions. Save puzzle pieces to reuse with different groups.



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