

The WalkStreet Journal

A NEWSLETTER OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI WALKSAFE™ PROGRAM

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Letter from the Director

We welcome readers to our latest issue of the WalkStreet Journal. We are proud to report that WalkSafe's educational component reached 190,612 elementary school students in Florida during the 2009 school year! We also honored WalkSafe™ Poster Contest winners in 10 counties, and organized a special ceremony for our 2009 Statewide Poster Contest winner, Miss Tangi Perry, a 4th grade student at J. Colin English Elementary in Lee County.

WalkSafe continues to increase awareness of pedestrian safety and health issues on a broad scale and was featured as a model program in this quarter's SRTS "Putting Traffic Safety First" report and TE Corner newsletter. The WalkSafe™ program is described as a dynamic community program that will reach every public school in Miami by the end of 2010.

WalkSafe has begun its new year with great achievement and we look forward to accomplishing much more throughout the year!

Gillian Hotz, PhD
Director, WalkSafe
University of Miami Miller
School of Medicine



WalkSafe breaks record and educates thousands in 2009

In our eighth year of implementation, 233 Miami-Dade County elementary schools, including many charter and specialized schools, participated in the WalkSafe™ educational component. A total of 6,519 teachers helped to educate 144,061 students in Kindergarten through 5th grade about pedestrian safety and health. Also, WalkSafe continued to expand its efforts beyond our Miami-Dade home base and reached 10 additional counties this year! Outside of Miami-Dade, 78 elementary schools, 1,080 teachers, and 46,551 students participated in the WalkSafe™ educational component. This marks a 42% increase in the total number of children reached from the previous school year!

Bridging the gap: Uniting the community and policymakers in high-risk neighborhoods

Great ideas do not lead to change if no one knows where to start! This is exactly what we found when WalkSafe conducted focus groups in Little Haiti, Little Havana, and Liberty City (three of the highest-risk areas for pedestrian injury in Miami-Dade County). Focus group participants expressed important safety concerns and insightful suggestions for improvement. Yet, they felt that change was not possible because they had no forum for expression and did not know who to contact. To address this issue, WalkSafe will host Town Hall Meetings where community members can voice their concerns about pedestrian safety issues and learn how to initiate change in their communities. Influential city and political officials have been invited to attend the meetings to assist in empowering these community members. All meetings will be held in April 2010, with specific locations, dates, and times to be announced.

In this issue

WalkSafe™ Educational Component

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WalkSafe honors statewide poster contest winner

In November, students sat at the edge of their seats to await the announcement of this year's WalkSafe™ Statewide Poster Contest winner. Hundreds of posters were received, but only one would be chosen as the statewide winner. This year's winning poster – created by Tangi Perry from J. Colin English Elementary – featured two eyes walking safely across the street and a message reminding all pedestrians to "walk with your eyes." On December 4th, Tangi's school held a special ceremony to honor the proud student and, coincidentally, birthday girl! As she accepted the award and prizes (laptop computer and Nike running shoes), the entire assembly cheered for Tangi and joined her family in singing Happy Birthday to the proud winner.

In 10 counties across Florida, winning WalkSafe™ posters are displayed along school hallways to encourage students and visitors to walk more and walk safe! To see more winning posters visit the WalkSafe™ website www.walksafe.us.

County	Poster Contest Winner	School
Brevard	Pierce Talbert 5 th grade	South Lake Elementary
Broward	Jaenae Ganther 4 th grade	Quiet Waters Elementary
Collier	Marisela Bustillo-Guevara 5 th grade	Golden Gate Elementary
Duval	Ariya Salvi Kindergarten	Bartram Springs Elem.
Lee	Tangi Parry 5 th grade <i>Statewide Winner</i>	J. Colin English Elementary
Miami-Dade	Sean Schraffl 4 th grade	Wesley Matthews Elementary
Monroe	William Horn 3 rd grade	Gerald Adams Elem.
Orange	Naomi Nunez 5 th grade	Fern Creek Elementary
Palm Beach	Shaylla Renejuste 5 th grade	Egret Lake Elementary
Polk	Summer Wells 5 th grade	Auburndale Central Elem.



**Happy, Healthy Holiday Event
December 13th, 2009**



**Miami-Dade Poster Contest
Winner Sean Schraffi**



**District 8 Town Hall Meeting
January 27th, 2010**



**"Safety is Fun" in Liberty City
February 6th, 2010**



**Statewide Poster Contest
Winner Tangi Parry**

Happy, Healthy Holiday Event

On December 13th, 2009, WalkSafe was invited to participate in the *Happy, Healthy Holiday Event* hosted by District 8 of the Miami-Dade County Public School Board at the Jorge Mas Canosa Youth Center in Sweetwater, FL. The event was geared towards improving overall health while promoting safety and active living to students. WalkSafe conducted a street-crossing simulation and reached over 150 children and 61 adults. Participants actively engaged in the simulation, demonstrated safe pedestrian behaviors, and answered safety and health trivia about the benefits associated with walking daily. It was truly a happy, healthy holiday event!

Martin Luther King, Jr. parade and festivities

WalkSafe participated in the *Martin Luther King (MLK) Jr. Parade and Festivities* held on January 18th, 2010, at the MLK Park in Liberty City. The event is held annually, not only to honor and celebrate the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., but also to educate the community on the importance of pedestrian safety. During the event, WalkSafe educated 75 individuals, including 40 adults and 35 children, on pedestrian safety skills. Each participant was provided with a souvenir bag which included WalkSafe™ educational materials and promotional items to take home.

WalkSafe educates families at District 8 Town Hall meeting

On January 27th, 2009, 80 elementary school students from southwest Miami were honored for their outstanding effort and academic achievement at the *District 8 Town Hall Meeting*. The event was hosted by Dr. Marta Perez, Miami-Dade County Public School Board member, at Cypress Elementary School in Westwood Lakes. Shortly after the event began, Christine Stinson, a WalkSafe™ program project coordinator, delivered a ten-minute speech about pedestrian safety and health to the families in attendance. The audience received information about local pedestrian-hit-by-car statistics, the obesity epidemic, WalkSafe's mission and aims, and the WalkSafe™ educational component. The WalkSafe™ speaker also communicated pedestrian safety/health tips and facts aimed to equip parents with the knowledge and skills necessary to instill healthy habits in their children.

WalkSafe reminds Liberty City community that "Safety is Fun!"

On February 6th, 2010 WalkSafe participated in the Liberty City outreach event *Safety is Fun! Family Safety and Check-Up Day*. The event took place at Mt. Calvary Baptist Church located in the heart of Liberty City to educate residents about issues related to pedestrian and traffic safety. Other organizations also participated, including the Child Passenger Safety & Associates Group, the Epilepsy Foundation of South Florida, and the BikeSafe™ program. WalkSafe™ staff members distributed educational materials to raise awareness about pedestrian safety. During the event, participants were encouraged to take part in a street-crossing simulation and were educated about the dangers of crossing roads in high-traffic, high-risk areas of Liberty City. The families that participated in the road simulation event were all excited to learn that safety truly is fun!

**WHAT'S
NEW
ONLINE**
www.walksafe.us



The WalkSafe™ Poster Contest winner photos, along with other pictures from events and activities, are just a click away! Visit WalkSafe's Community Gallery at www.walksafe.us to see it all.



Community Approaches to Pedestrian Safety Education Webinar
Thursday, March 18th
2:00 PM – 3:30PM
Register at:
<http://www.walkinginfo.org/training/pbic/webinars.cfm>

Brain Fair 2010
Saturday, March 20th
10:00 AM – 4:00 PM
Miami Science Museum
3280 South Miami Ave,
Miami, FL



Town Park Village Dedication Ceremony
Saturday April 17th
11:00 AM – 2:00 PM
1680 NW 4th Ave,
Miami, FL

The Children's Trust 4th Annual Family Expo
Fuchs Pavilion
Saturday May 8th
10:00 AM – 6:00 PM
10901 Coral Way,
Miami, FL

Visit WalkSafe on Facebook and Twitter!



www.facebook.com



www.twitter.com/WalkSafe

WalkSafe: A model program for category 2 TE funds

WalkSafe was featured in the Winter 2010 issue of the National Transportation Enhancements Clearinghouse newsletter, *TE Corner*. The *TE Corner* newsletter is a quick-read two page publication that is designed to keep its subscribers up to date with the latest and greatest from the world of Transportation Enhancement (TE). The article describes WalkSafe as a model for successful implementation of Category 2 TE

funds and a dynamic community program that will reach every public school in Miami by the end of 2010. The article attributes the WalkSafe™ program's multiple achievements to a strong educational framework, evaluation efforts, solid community relationships, and support from the school board. View the newsletter: http://www.enhancements.org/download/TECorner/TECorner_Winter2010.pdf

WalkSafe: A cost-effective SRTS program

WalkSafe was featured in the December 2009 *Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Putting Traffic Safety First* report. The publication presents five exemplary case studies that demonstrate how SRTS efforts can create safe communities. The WalkSafe™ educational component is described as a cost-effective SRTS initiative that has spent \$640,000 over three years to educate more than 360,000 children in Florida. Since WalkSafe was launched in 2001, there has been a 60% decrease in the total number of child pedestrians-hit-by-cars (PHBCs) being sent to Miami's two level-one trauma centers. It is evident that WalkSafe's \$2 per student cost of pedestrian safety education has resulted in a significant decrease in the health care costs associated with PHBCs in Miami-Dade. View the SRTS report:

http://www.saferoutespartnership.org/media/file/Safety_report_final.pdf

Miami-Dade launches pilot Speed Reduction Program

A pilot Speed Reduction Program was launched in December, 2009 at seven Miami-Dade County high schools (Coral Gables, John A. Ferguson, Felix Varela, Dr. Michael M. Krop, American, G. Holmes Braddock, and Coral Reef). The program seeks to utilize solar-powered speed display signs to encourage drivers to slow down around schools. The pilot program is slated to expand to middle and elementary schools (Flagler Elementary and Eugenia B. Thomas K-8) in upcoming months.



Pictured at left: Ribbon-cutting ceremony for pilot Speed Reduction Program at American High School

Future Research

Safe Routes to School Travel Data Report sparks research ideas

The recently released *SRTS Travel Data Report* provides a summary of travel data collected by U.S. local programs between April 2007 and May 2009. Walking was reported as the third most popular mode of transportation for students in grades K-8, preceded by the use of family vehicles and school buses. Results revealed that 11% of students walk to school and 15% percent of students walk home from school. Walking

to and from school was shown to increase with age, while distance was reported most commonly by parents to be an influential factor in their decision to allow their child to walk to/from school. This report provides a launching pad for local SRTS programs like WalkSafe in planning future research and interventions, and provides baseline data for tracking trends. View the SRTS report: http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/news_room

Thank You!



Questions or comments? Contact the WalkSafe™ office at (305)243-8115.

To unsubscribe to the WalkStreet Journal, e-mail CStinson@med.miami.edu.

