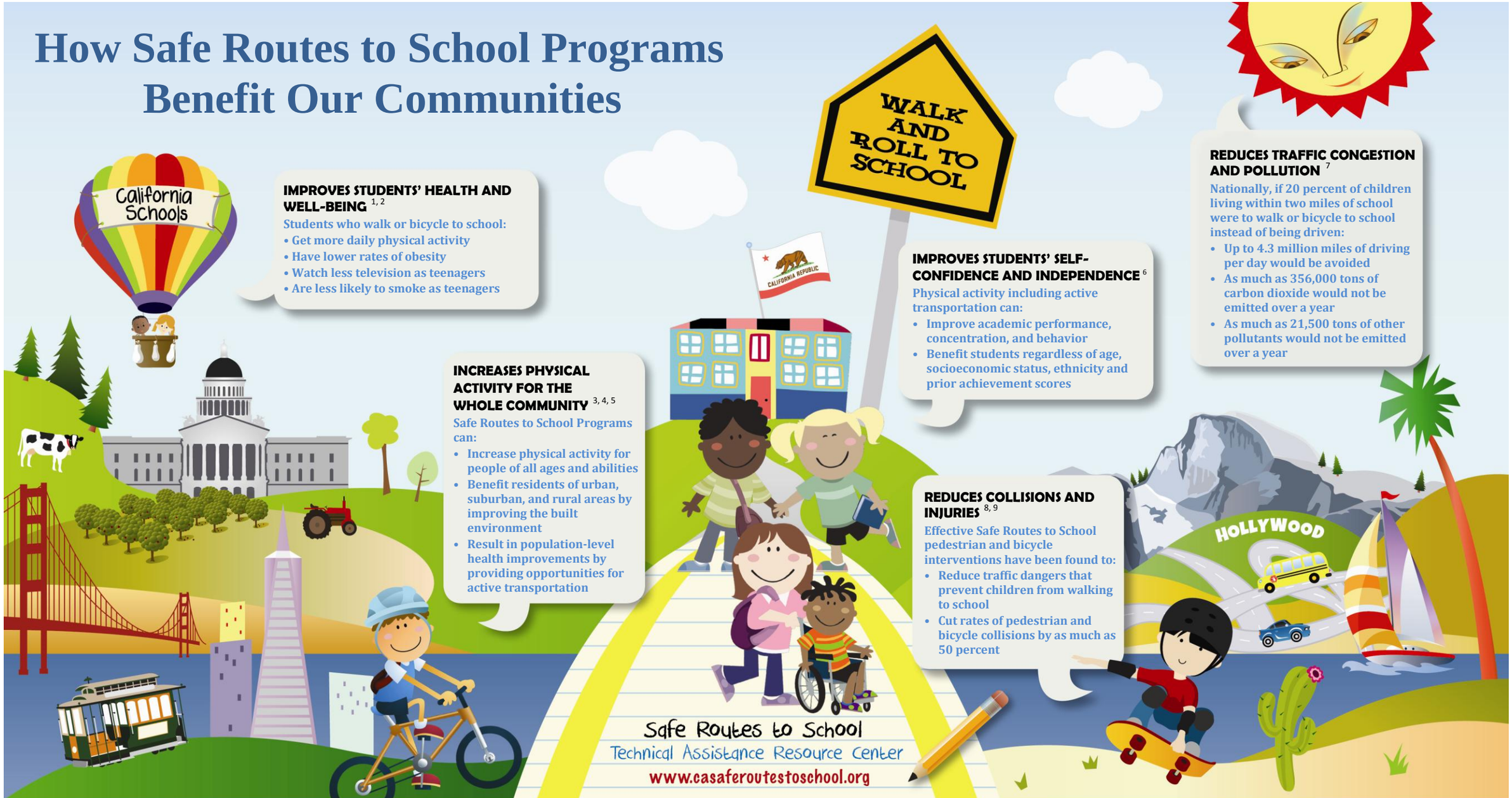
How Safe Routes to School Programs Benefit Our Communities



IMPROVES STUDENTS' HEALTH AND WELL-BEING [1, 2]

Students who walk or bicycle to school:

- Get more daily physical activity
- Have lower rates of obesity
- Watch less television as teenagers
- Are less likely to smoke as teenagers

INCREASES PHYSICAL ACTIVITY FOR THE WHOLE COMMUNITY [3, 4, 5]

Safe Routes to School Programs can:

- Increase physical activity for people of all ages and abilities
- Benefit residents of urban, suburban, and rural areas by improving the built environment
- Result in population-level health improvements by providing opportunities for active transportation

IMPROVES STUDENTS' SELF-CONFIDENCE AND INDEPENDENCE [6]

Physical activity including active transportation can:

- Improve academic performance, concentration, and behavior
- Benefit students regardless of age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity and prior achievement scores

REDUCES COLLISIONS AND INJURIES [8, 9]

Effective Safe Routes to School pedestrian and bicycle interventions have been found to:

- Reduce traffic dangers that prevent children from walking to school
- Cut rates of pedestrian and bicycle collisions by as much as 50 percent

REDUCES TRAFFIC CONGESTION AND POLLUTION [7]

Nationally, if 20 percent of children living within two miles of school were to walk or bicycle to school instead of being driven:

- Up to 4.3 million miles of driving per day would be avoided
- As much as 356,000 tons of carbon dioxide would not be emitted over a year
- As much as 21,500 tons of other pollutants would not be emitted over a year

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2) Landsberg, B., et al. "Associations between Active Commuting to School, Fat Mass, and Lifestyle Factors in Adolescents: The Kiel Obesity Prevention Study (KOPS)." European Journal of Clinical Nutrition 62 (2008): 739-47.

3) Watson, Margaret and Andrew L. Dannenberg. "Investment in Safe Routes to School Projects: Public Health Benefits for the Larger Community." Preventing Chronic Disease 5(3)(2008).

4) Loh, Tracy Hadden, et al. "Beyond Urban Centers: Active Transportation in Rural America." Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (2012).

5) Pucher J., R. Buehler, D.R. Bassett, A.L. Dannenberg. "Walking and Cycling to Health: A Comparative Analysis of City, State, and International Data." American Journal of Public Health 100.10 (2010): 1986-92.

6) Pedroso, Margo, et al. "Getting Students Active through Safe Routes to School." Safe Routes to School National Partnership (2010).

7) Pedroso, Margo, et al. "Safe Routes to School: Steps to a Greener Future." Safe Routes to School National Partnership (2008).

8) Beck, Laurie F. and Arlene I. Greenspan. "Why Don't More Children Walk to School?" Journal of Safety Research 39.5 (2008): 449-52.

9) Orenstein, Marla, et al. "Safe Routes to School Safety and Mobility Analysis." UC Berkeley Traffic Safety Center (2007).

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