

Montana Safe Routes to School

Taylor Lonsdale is Program Coordinator for the Montana Safe Routes to School program, funded through the Federal Highway Administration and administered by the Montana Department of Transportation. Mr. Lonsdale works for Montana State University's Western Transportation Institute, contracted by MDT to provide the coordinator position. Safe Routes to School programs are part of the solution to increase children's physical activity, in part by ameliorating unsafe walking and bicycling conditions. SRTS programs can enhance children's health and well-being, ease traffic congestion near schools and improve air quality.

Activities Relevant to State Plan to Prevent Obesity: Create safer conditions and motivators for children to walk or bicycle to school (with or without parents).

Services/Recipients: Work with schools and municipalities on routes and infrastructure. Work with schools, children and parents to implement habit-changing programs. Administer statewide grant programs to assist schools and municipalities with SRTS program implementation.

State Plan Settings: Built Environment; Schools.

CDC Behaviors:

- Increasing physical activity through active transportation to and from schools.

Gaps and Concerns: Weather related winter maintenance of sidewalks is a serious inhibitor. Funding in communities is inadequate. Education on role of non-infrastructure SRTS programs.