

**Communities Putting Prevention to Work—Get Healthy Philly
Safe Routes Philly 2010-2011 Report**



saferoutesphilly.org

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Table of Contents

| | |
|--|-----------|
| 1) Overview | 3 |
| A. Introduction and <i>Get Healthy Philly</i> Overview | |
| B. Safe Routes Philly in the Context of the National Model | |
| 2) Summary of Intervention and Evaluation | 5 |
| A. School and Parent Outreach | |
| B. Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Curriculum and Resources | |
| C. Teacher Training and Professional Development | |
| D. Encouragement Activities | |
| E. Evaluation | |
| 3) Year 1 Impact and Achievements | 8 |
| 4) Conclusion and Next Steps | 11 |
| Appendices | 12 |
| Appendix A: Post Training Survey | |
| Appendix B: Teacher Completion Form | |
| Appendix C: Student Travel Tally | |

1) OVERVIEW

A) Introduction and Get Healthy Philly Overview

Get Healthy Philly (GHP) is a federally-funded initiative that aims to make it easier for Philadelphians to engage in healthy behaviors. Through partnerships with government agencies, community-based organizations, and academic institutions, *Get Healthy Philly* is working to increase the availability and affordability of healthy foods, decrease consumption of unhealthy foods and beverages, and increase physical activity among Philadelphians. *Get Healthy Philly* intervenes in a variety of settings including schools, worksites and the retail environment.

A primary intervention of the GHP initiative is to promote and increase physical activity in Philadelphia's public elementary schools. Safe Routes Philly (SRP) is a partnership between the Philadelphia Department of Public Health (PDPH), the Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia (BCGP), and the School District of Philadelphia (SDP). Safe Routes Philly provides pedestrian (2nd grade) and bicycle (5th grade) safety lessons and a supporting website to improve walking and biking conditions for students and teachers. In addition, SRP encourages kids to walk and bike safely on a regular basis with fun encouragement activities like walking school buses and bicycle rodeos.

B) Safe Routes Philly in the Context of the National Model

Nation-wide, since the late sixties, there has been a steady decline in walking and biking to school. This trend has prompted advocates to educate and encourage children and families about the importance of active transportation in developing a healthy and safe community. Walking or riding a bicycle to school can play a significant role in a child's daily amount of physical activity.

The Safe Routes to School National Program (SRTSNP) encourages elementary and middle school-aged children to walk and ride bicycles to school. This program was created in response to nationally-rising obesity rates and the decline of children walking or biking to school. Walking and biking to school rates have been deteriorating since the late 1960s. From 1969 to 2001, the percentage of students walking and bicycling to school declined from 41% to 13%. At the same time, the percentage of children being driven or driving themselves to school nearly tripled, from 20% to 55%.ⁱ

Today, nearly one in three young people in the United States is either obese or overweight.ⁱⁱ Obesity in Philadelphia is particularly prevalent. In 2010, 66.3% of adults and 40.7 % of children in Philadelphia were overweight or obese.ⁱⁱⁱ Among counties containing one of the largest U.S. cities, Philadelphia County^{iv} has the highest prevalence of hypertension (34.5%) and heart disease (4.7%), and the second highest prevalence of obesity (29.3%) and diabetes (10.7%).^v Local data reveal that

a staggering 44% of African-American adults in the city report a diagnosis of hypertension.^{vi} Since 2000, approximately 24,000 Philadelphians have died of diseases caused by poor diet and physical inactivity.^{vii, viii}

Consistent with the Safe Routes to School National Program^{ix}, SRP was designed to incorporate the following components to their education and encouragement program:

- Enabling and encouraging children to walk and bike to school.
- Improving the safety of children walking and bicycling to school.
- Facilitating projects and activities that will reduce traffic, fuel consumption and air pollution near schools.

The following report summarizes Safe Routes Philly intervention components, as well as impact, achievements and challenges during the first year of intervention. The purpose of the report is to highlight findings and share strategies and resources with other communities interested in adopting a similar model.

2) Summary of Intervention and Evaluation

Safe Routes Philly: Program Objective

As part of *Get Healthy Philly*, the Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia aims to engage 70% of public elementary schools (125 schools) within the School District of Philadelphia to adopt national standards from Safe Routes to School as part of the Pennsylvania Academic State Standards for bicycle and pedestrian education.

To develop the intervention, SRP consulted best practices for Safe Routes to School education and encouragement campaigns, focusing on nationally recognized models from Oregon Bicycle Transportation Alliance, Bike Texas, Iowa Bicycle Coalition, WalkSafe in Miami, Active Transportation Alliance/Chicago DOT, and Vermont's Center for Health and Learning.

The Safe Routes Philly Intervention focused on the following four core activities:

- School and Parent Outreach
- Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Curriculum and Resources
- Teacher Training and Professional Development
- Encouragement Activities

A) School and Parent Outreach

In order to effectively work in schools, the Safe Routes Philly team fostered a strong relationship with the School District of Philadelphia. In doing so, they were able to distribute information to school principals and staff via professional development workshops and mailers, and to parents through the District's Parent Resource Centers. In addition, SRP integrated its work with the *Campaign for Healthier Schools*, the umbrella school wellness initiative through *Get Healthy Philly*.

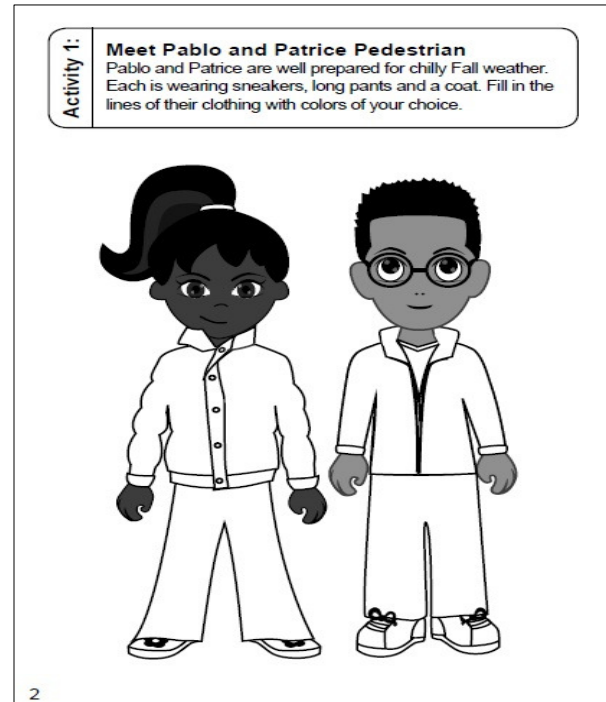
B) Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Curriculum and Resources

A curriculum was created for both physical education and homeroom classes for elementary schools in the Philadelphia School District, reaching nearly 20, 000 students. SRP conducted three focus groups with teachers to obtain feedback and ensured lessons aligned with the Pennsylvania Academic State Standards that promote walking and biking as part of elementary level education. The Safe Routes Philly pedestrian and bicycle safety lessons teach children teach pedestrian and bicycle safety skills through vocabulary, videos and simulation activities. The lessons (Appendix D) come with many resources including an activity book for each 2nd and 5th grade student, flash cards, simulation cards and additional lesson plans for the classroom and physical education class.

Elementary school Physical Education (PE) teachers incorporated the curriculum into instruction. In addition, PE teachers worked to encourage classroom teachers to adopt cross circular friendly pedestrian and bicycle lessons.

The following materials were developed and made available via the Safe Routes Philly website at: www.saferoutesphilly.org.

- A teacher's guide containing 2nd grade pedestrian and 5th grade bicycle safety lessons, encouragement activities, flashcards and teacher evaluations.
- A supplemental DVD containing tutorial videos to help teachers show more complex bicycle safety concepts like Helmet Fitting and Bike ABC's.
- Assembly programming which provides condensed pedestrian and bicycle lessons to schools that do not have a PE teacher.
- A website to house program materials and collect school level data.
- Training workshops for teachers which qualify for Act 48 credits.



Activity from pedestrian curriculum

C) Teacher Training and Professional Development

Using a train-the-trainer model, SRP staff trained physical education teachers in Philadelphia public elementary schools to implement the pedestrian and bicycle safety lessons. Trainings occurred during scheduled in-service professional development days or on-site workshops after school. SRP staff worked collaboratively with key school stakeholders to increase awareness about Safe Routes Philly and how easy it is to adopt in a classroom setting. Safe Routes Philly also created a website (www.saferoutesphilly.org) which houses materials and provides additional context, training and resources for teachers.

D) Encouragement Activities

A subset of schools received encouragement activities to strengthen the Safe Routes Philly curriculum. These activities included assembly programs led by Safe Routes Philly staff featuring safety videos; pedestrian and bicycle safety simulations; and interactive game shows to review basic safety rules. Videos helped limit staff time while still engaging students. In addition, Safe Routes

Philly hosted bicycle rodeos, which are on-bike workshops developed for the purpose of teaching children basic bicycle riding skills like stopping, balancing, signaling and turning. In addition, SRP encouraged schools to adopt Walk to School Days, a school and community wide event to increase physical activity.



Community representatives conduct assembly

E) Evaluation

The Safe Routes Philly team obtained approval from the Philadelphia Department of Public Health's Institutional Review Board (IRB), the School District of Philadelphia's Research Review Committee, the Health Commissioner's Office Research and Review Committee to collect data on training, curriculum adoption, and student travel counts. The following evaluation methods were used to evaluate the intervention during the first year of implementation:

- 1) *Post Training Survey*: Delivered after teacher trainings to measure teacher satisfaction, knowledge acquisition, institutional support and confidence in ability to implement the curriculum. **(Appendix A)**
- 2) *Teacher Completion Form*: Completed by teachers after lesson implementation within a month of receiving the training. **(Appendix B)**
- 3) *Student Travel Tally*: To obtain a baseline of student travel choices and options in Philadelphia developed by the National Center for Safe Routes to School. These tallies will help identify any change over time in transportation choices made by students. **(Appendix C)**

Results will be used to improve implementation in the 2011-12 academic school year. All data will be analyzed and published in a subsequent report.

3) Year 1 Impact and Achievements

A) Program Accomplishments

During the first year of the intervention, SRP accomplished the following:

- Implemented pedestrian and bicycle safety curriculum to approximately 20,000 2nd and 5th grade students in the School District of Philadelphia **(see Figures 1 and 2)**.
- Developed and distributed pedestrian and bicycle safety teacher’s guide, activity books for students and instructional DVDs about Helmet Fitting and Bike ABC’s to 131 elementary schools.
- Conducted 7 professional development trainings attended by 150 teachers and educators representing 131 schools; approximately 83% of teachers and educators completed the post-training survey.
- Trained 150 physical education teachers to adopt and implement the pedestrian and bicycle curriculum. Received post-lesson teacher completion forms from 79 unique elementary schools.
- Implemented 5 school assemblies reaching approximately 900 students to improve safety for walkers and bikers.
- Created a website to house all program materials and track evaluation data at www.saferoutesphilly.org.
- Identified six elementary schools to participate in youth evaluation activities.
- Conducted Bicycle Rodeos in 2 Philadelphia public schools.
- Engaged 12 parents from 3 Parent Resource Centers.
- Connected 2 elementary schools with community resource to help restore 12 bikes for students to use during gym and for an after school bicycle club.



Bike Rodeo at Family Fest 2010

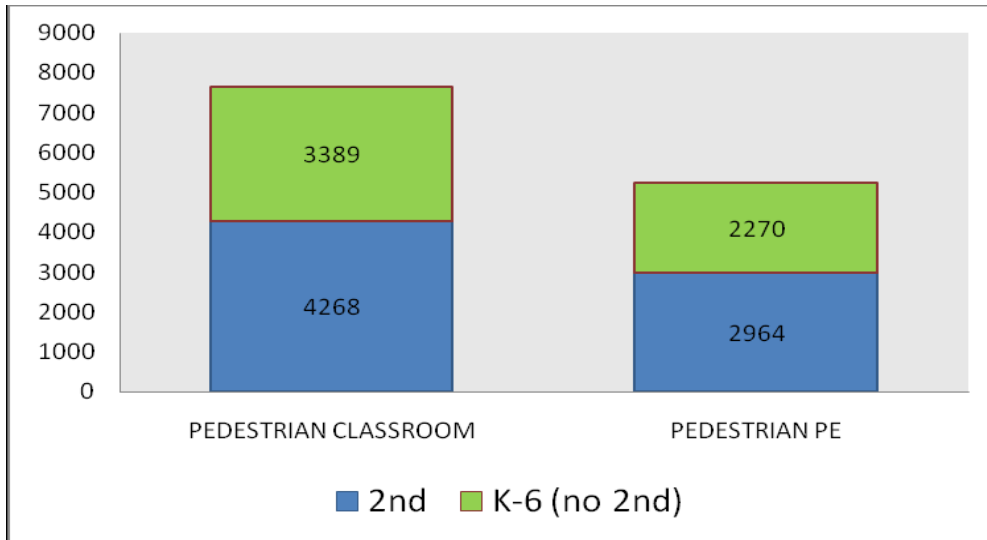


Figure 1. Students Reached by Pedestrian Safety Lessons in Academic School Year 2010-2011

Figure 1 shows the total number of students (green and blue combined) who received the SRP Pedestrian Classroom and/or PE lessons in grades K-8 in the School District of Philadelphia. The blue bar identifies only 2nd graders, while the green bar combines all other grades affected by the Pedestrian Classroom and PE lessons.

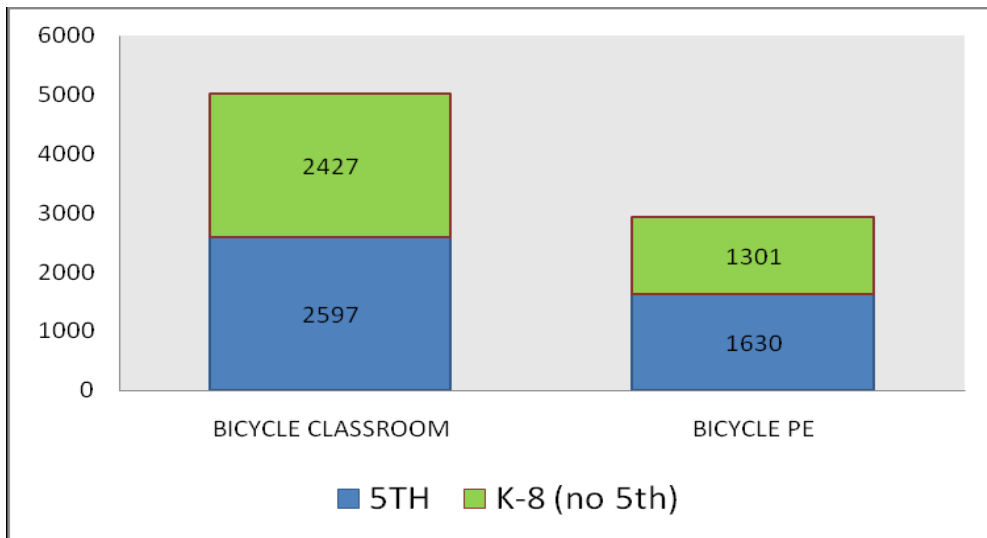


Figure 2. Students Reached by Bicycle Safety Lessons in Academic School Year 2010-2011

Figure 2 shows the total number of students (green and blue combined) who received the SRP Bicycle Classroom and/or PE lessons in grades K-8 at the School District of Philadelphia. The blue graph identifies only 5th graders, while the green bar combines all other grades affected by the Bicycle Classroom and PE lessons.

B) Keys for Successes

The first year of implementation helped build the infrastructure for an efficient and effective program and met or exceeded benchmarks. Specific contributors to these successes include:

- A positive relationship with the School District of Philadelphia, which allowed SRP to quickly connect with a majority of elementary school PE teachers.
- A partnership with The Food Trust and school wellness coordinators to help integrate with the *Campaign for Healthier Schools* school wellness councils.
- Weekly internal staff meetings and internal tier structure for school recruitment, which helped with coordination and reporting.

4) Conclusions and Next Steps

Overall, Safe Routes Philly successfully instituted Safe Routes to Schools in Philadelphia schools via a custom-created curriculum, teacher training and enhancement activities that aligned with the Safe Routes to School National model. The partnership with the School District of Philadelphia was a key factor contributing to the successful implementation during the first year of implementation.

In the upcoming 2011-12 academic school year, SRP will continue to recruit public elementary schools within the school district of Philadelphia to 1) Adopt national standards from Safe Routes to Schools as part of the Pennsylvania State Standards of pedestrian and bicycle education and 2) Continue to invite all school wellness councils to incorporate safe pedestrian and bicycle behaviors as part of their school health improvement plan. Specifically, the Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia plans to:

- Distribute curriculum which will contain core lessons to schools; provide encouragement activities on SRP website.
- Continue to provide teacher training via school in-service days and as afterschool workshops, which qualify for Act 48 credit.
- Conduct at least 10 pedestrian and bicycle safety assemblies in select schools that are unable to adopt SRP programming due to lack of physical education resources and school capacity.
- Refine website and develop strategies to increase use by teachers.
- Hold a month long initiative in October to encourage at least six schools to participate in Walk/Bike to School Day.
- Implement and complete 5th grade bicycle evaluation study in 6 pre-selected schools receiving extra encouragement support such as Walk and Bike to School Day, Bicycle Rodeo and launch of walking and/or biking club.

ⁱ Ham, S. M. (2008). Changes in percentages of students who walk or bike to school - United States, 1969-2001. *Journal of Physical Activity and Health*, 5 (2) , 205-215.

ⁱⁱ Safe Routes to School National Partnership. (December, 2009). Putting Traffic Safety First: How Safe Routes to School Initiatives Protect Children Walking and Bicycling. 3-5.

ⁱⁱⁱ 2010 PHMC Household Health Survey

^{iv} The City of Philadelphia and County of Philadelphia are coterminous, and are one and the same.

^v See Nat'l Ctr. for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, U.S. Dep't of Health and Human Services., *Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System* (2009); Nat'l Ctr. for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, U.S. Dep't of Health and Human Services., *Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System* (2008).

^{vi} Public Health Management Household Health Survey (2010).

^{vii} Philadelphia Department of Public Health Annual Vital Statistics Reports.

^{viii} Mokdad A et al. "Actual Causes of Death in the U.S. 2000." *Jama*, 2004. (291)10:1238-1245.

^{ix} Safe Routes to School National Program website:

http://guide.saferoutesinfo.org/evaluation/step1_plan_program_collect_information.cfm

Appendices

Appendix A: Workshop Survey

| The workshop..... | STRONGLY AGREE | AGREE | NEUTRAL | DISAGREE | STRONGLY DISAGREE |
|---|-----------------------|--------------|----------------|-----------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Provided me with new knowledge or skills. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 2. Provided opportunities to practice new knowledge or skills. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 3. Included opportunities for participants to interact with one another. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 4. Included more than one format (such as lecture, discussion, or brainstorming). | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| The presenter(s)..... | | | | | |
| 5. Stated the goals of this workshop at the beginning of the session. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 6. Exhibited expertise on this workshop topic. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 7. Was/were well-prepared and organized. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 8. Welcomed questions and comments. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 9. I was satisfied with this workshop. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 10. I plan to use this workshop information. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 11. My School will support me in implementing these lessons. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 12. I plan to share these lessons/information with other teachers. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

| Circle the number that reflects your opinion. | HIGH | ABOVE AVERAGE | AVERAGE | BELOW AVERAGE | LOW |
|---|-------------|----------------------|----------------|----------------------|------------|
| 13. My knowledge of the Safe Routes Philly Program: | | | | | |
| a. before attending this workshop was: | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| b. now that I have attended this workshop is: | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 14. My belief in the importance of the Safe Routes Philly Safety Lessons: | | | | | |
| a. before attending this workshop was: | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| b. now that I have attended this workshop is: | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 15. My confidence to implement the Safe Routes Philly lesson(s): | | | | | |

a. **before** attending this workshop was: 5 4 3 2 1

b. **now** that I have attended this workshop is: 5 4 3 2 1

16. Do you have access to a bicycle and helmet for demonstration purposes:

yes

no

17. Please share additional comments, feedback and/or suggestions about this workshop:

THANK YOU!



Teacher Completion Form

* this information will be kept confidential and will not be used for any type of personnel evaluation of the teachers.

| 1.) What Safe Routes Philly core lesson(s) did you use? (check all that apply) | | | | | | | |
|--|-------------------------------|-------------|----------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------|----------------------|
| 2nd Grade Pedestrian Safety | | | | 5th Grade Bicycle Safety | | | |
| Check mark | Lesson | Date Taught | Time spent on lesson | Check mark | Lesson | Date Taught | Time spent on lesson |
| | Pre lesson | | | | Pre Lesson | | |
| | Vocabulary | | | | Vocabulary | | |
| | Video and Discussion | | | | Be Responsible (Helmet/ABC) | | |
| | PE Street Crossing Simulation | | | | Be Visible/Predictable | | |
| | PE Street Signals | | | | Traffic Simulation Game | | |

| 2.) If applicable, were you able to bring in a helmet and/or bike for demonstration purposes for the bike safety lesson? (check all that apply) | | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Yes, I was able to bring in a helmet. | <input type="checkbox"/> | Yes, I was able to bring in a bike. |

| 3.) How many students were taught the Safe Routes Philly lesson? | | | |
|---|-------------------------------|--|-------------------------------|
| 2nd Grade Pedestrian Safety | | 5th Grade Bicycle Safety | |
| _____ | Total # of 2nd Grade students | _____ | Total # of 5th Grade students |
| _____ | Total # of 2nd Grade classes | _____ | Total # of 5th Grade classes |
| <i>Were any additional grades taught the Pedestrian curriculum?</i> | | <i>Were any additional grades taught the Bicycle curriculum?</i> | |
| What additional grades were taught? _____ | | What additional grades were taught? _____ | |
| How many non-2nd grade students were taught? _____ | | How many non-5th grade students were taught? _____ | |

| 4.) If applicable, on what date did you attend Safe Routes Philly training? |
|---|
| |

I attended a Professional Development day on _____.

I attended an After School Workshop on _____.

_____ I did not attend Safe Routes Philly training.

5.) Did you complete the Safe Routes Philly student travel talley?

Student Travel Talley (taken on 3 consecutive days)

Dates completed: _____

Dates completed: _____

Dates completed: _____

Parent Survey

Date distributed to students: _____

Date collected from students: _____

6.) What went well during the lesson used? (check all that apply)

- Material was relevant to age group
- Students were involved and engaged
- Lesson plans were user friendly
- Lesson time intervals were appropriate
- Other (list on the right)

Additional Comments:

7.) What can Safe Routes Philly do to make the implementation of the lesson(s) more user friendly? (check all that apply)

- Provide longer trainings
- Provide more resources
- Follow up with you more frequently
- Offer more video tutorial
- Nothing, you did great

Additional Comments:

8.) What additional resources did you use through the Safe Routes philly resource manual? (check all that apply)

- Optional pedestrian lessons (list on right)
- Optional bicycle lessons (list on right)
- Walk/Bike to School Day

Additional Comments:

| | | |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Bicycle Rodeo | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Walking Initiative (list on right) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Other (list on right) | |

| |
|--|
| 9.) I felt prepared to teach the Safe Routes Philly lesson(s) (circle one): |
| Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree |

| |
|---|
| 10.) Other comments about the Safe Routes Philly lesson: |
|---|

