



Comprehensive School-Age Pedestrian Safety Program



Pedestrian and Bicycle
Information Center

Problem

Orange County, Florida's safety team formed a comprehensive K-12 curriculum to address pedestrian safety following a rash of school-age crashes.

Background

The safety team, like others in the state, is sponsored by the Florida DOT. However, its members are all volunteers from local agencies, using their own agencies' funds. In Orange County, the team was composed of the Sheriff's Office safety specialist, staff from the Police and Fire departments, engineering specialists, the local school board, and various advocacy organizations. The large presence of government officials can give the group a stronger voice than sometimes politicized or marginalized advocacy groups, and often outside groups come to the team for help organizing a project. One agency or volunteer is elected to lead the effort based on the topic of focus at the time.



These children attract attention to the pedestrian safety program.

Solution

The school-age pedestrian safety program was led by the local School Board to ensure the curriculum developed was age-appropriate and fit within the school structure. At the elementary school level, a pedestrian component was added to the safety villages already in place, where the Sheriff's office safety specialist guides the children through marked and unmarked crosswalks, signaled intersections, and more. Walk Your Child to School Day is emphasized in presentations and curriculum materials. At the middle school and high school level, the safety message was spread through books, in-class curriculum presented by the teacher, posters, videos, and presentations given by safety officials on the team.

Results

Started in 2004, the curriculum development and implementation process took about a year and a half all together. The team works from the four discipline approach, finding that the different perspectives given by specialists in education, enforcement, engineering, and emergency services all blend to make a truly comprehensive program. The group worked to balance the safety message with an accurate message about what the law states, as the state pedestrian laws can be rather vague (e.g. "What constitutes jaywalking?").

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