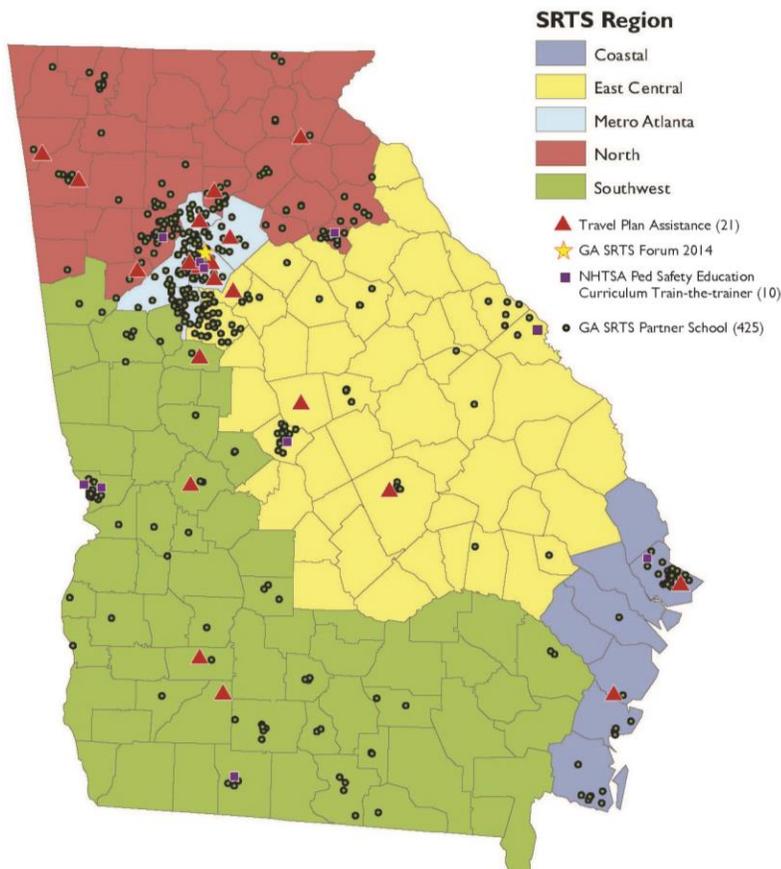




Georgia Safe Routes to School Resource Center Project Contract Update

In November 2008, the Georgia Department of Transportation awarded URS (now AECOM) a contract to manage Georgia’s Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Resource Center, an initiative establishing healthy travel options for elementary and middle schools in communities throughout Georgia. Partnered with Toole Design Group, the project team launched the Resource Center in June 2009 as a clearinghouse of Safe Routes to School programming, resources, and outreach. In 2013, GDOT awarded URS and Toole Design Group another contract to continue the Resource Center through June 2016.



Network of Partner Schools and Friends

Through the project team’s outreach efforts, more than 425 School Partners from more than 70 school districts (36%) in 64 counties (40%) have committed to implement Safe Routes programs through the [GA SRTS Partnership Program](#). Partner Schools may be public, private, or charter. Schools represent all regions of Georgia including rural, urban, and suburban communities. Additionally, more than 260 community stakeholders have become Friends of the Resource Center, creating a diverse network of organizations that support efforts to get more children walking and bicycling to school safely. Friends include Regional Commissions, local municipal agencies, state agencies, law enforcement offices, advocacy groups, businesses, and non-profit organizations. All services are provided at no cost to the School Partners and Friends.



School Outreach Coordinators

Regionally-based School Outreach Coordinators (SOC) in each of [five geographic regions](#) covering the entire state of Georgia provide direct, hands-on support to schools and communities. These Safe Routes experts interact directly with the schools and communities while serving on local bike/pedestrian and public-health committees, attending SRTS-related meetings, and organizing events and trainings. Each SOC establishes strong relationships within their territory and maintains a detailed database of activities. A telephone hot-line, newsletters, a frequently updated [Facebook page](#), and a comprehensive website (www.saferoutesga.org) reach statewide and beyond.



Planning Assistance

Schools and communities may also receive assistance through the Resource Center to develop a SRTS Travel Plan – a comprehensive set of strategies specifically geared to identify and address a school’s specific barriers and goals. To date, the Resource Center has developed [17 SRTS Travel Plans](#). Four additional plans are underway in 2015. The Resource Center also developed a [Georgia SRTS Planning Guide and Workbook](#) that local organizations may use to develop a plan independently. Outreach staff works closely with Georgia’s Regional Commissions to support SRTS and bicycle/pedestrian planning efforts. The SOCs also facilitate travel-plan meetings and walk audits to assess barriers and strategies for schools wishing to improve their walk/bike options and coordinate local SRTS teams of stakeholders to support SRTS plans and goals. Travel Plans have been utilized to pursue funding for infrastructure improvements and to guide SRTS programs.



Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Education and Outreach

The Georgia Safe Routes Resource Center’s Outreach team is trained and to train educators to provide the [National Highway Traffic Safety Administration’s \(NHTSA\) Child Pedestrian Safety Curriculum](#) to students in grades K-5th. The curriculum has been adapted for school-wide assemblies, individual classroom instruction, special community events, and small group education. Each lesson teaches students important safety skills. The Resource Center has held 10 regional NHTSA Child Pedestrian Safety trainings for educators and continues to find opportunities to share the valuable life skills with children and their families. Additionally, the Resource Center has developed safety tip bookmarks and parent/adult guides to improve pedestrian safety. In 2014, the Resource Center developed a Bicycle Rodeo Toolkit to teach bicycle safety skills to students and to help communities and schools hold bicycle rodeos. SOCs host informational tables at events, present at various meetings and conferences, and provide educational sessions at safety and health fairs.



Resources

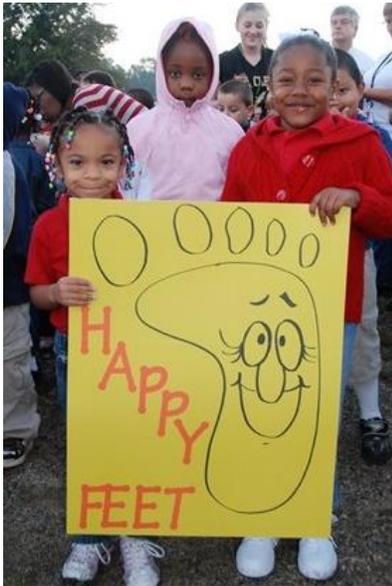
The project team has developed numerous [resources](#) to meet the SRTS needs of Georgia’s schools and communities. Tip sheets, how to guides and videos, marketing materials and incentives for walk and bicycle events, webinars, a customizable toolkit for schools, resources to address pedestrian and bicycle safety, and SRTS planning materials are all downloadable from the website or available from the School Outreach staff.





Events

The Resource Center also supports annual walk and bicycle events throughout the year and highlights three major walk/bike events. [International Walk to School Day](#) is held in early October; [Georgia Walk to School Day](#) is in its sixth year this March; and [National Bike to School Day](#), started by the National Center for SRTS in 2012, is held each May. . The Resource Center provides tip sheets, customizable materials, and incentives to schools that participate. Hundreds of bike and/or walk events have been registered with the Resource Center or with the National Center for SRTS at www.walkbiketoschool.org.



Schools are also encouraged to hold walk and bike to school events more frequently throughout the year, with the goal that walking and bicycling to school will become normal, every-day activities when and where it is safe. With that in mind, the Resource Center has created resources for schools electing to host [monthly events](#). Additionally, tips sheets and materials for starting [walking school buses](#) and [bicycle trains](#) are also available.

In 2014, the Resource Center launched the first annual [Georgia Crossing Guard Appreciation Week](#). Held the second week in November, the event was an opportunity for communities, schools, and law enforcement agencies to recognize and celebrate guards.

In June 2014, the Resource Center held the first GA SRTS Statewide Forum in Decatur. This one-day, conference-style event was attended by more than 100 stakeholders from around the state who learned from and networked with peers and experts. The [2015 GA SRTS Statewide Forum](#) is planned for June 5th

[The Georgia Department of Transportation Safe Routes to School Resource Center](#) empowers these schools and their surrounding communities to make walking and bicycling to school a safe and routine activity once again.