

NYC Walk to School Program



New York City's Walk to School project is a NYC Department of Transportation-sponsored program that aims to improve children's health, tackle traffic congestion and pollution, and improve safety surrounding schools in each of the city's five boroughs. Nelson\Nygaard worked in conjunction with Sam Schwartz PLLC and the Brooklyn Center for the Urban Environment to implement the program at five pilot schools across the city. The project team worked with each school over the course of one school year to provide children with the skills to walk to school safely. The team also worked with parents to overcome barriers such as supervision and security issues.

Nelson\Nygaard headed the parent outreach efforts for this project which included establishing a parent "working group" at each school, and supporting these groups to address issues unique to each school. Through the use of walking awareness strategies such as the "Walking School Bus" and "Walk to School Wednesdays," Nelson\Nygaard was able to increase walking activity at each school, and increase parental support for walking as a safe and beneficial means for getting children to school each day.

This project built upon Nelson\Nygaard's previous work as Safe Routes to School coordinator for Marin County, California, one of the Federal Highway Administration's two national demonstration sites. In the program's first year, nearly

50% of auto trips to the pilot schools were eliminated, creating measurable improvements in morning peak traffic congestion. Follow up projects for the county included a best practices review and detailed evaluation of the Safe Routes program.

Project Duration: 2004-2005

Total Budget: \$500,000

Nelson\Nygaard Budget: \$83,270

For more information:

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