

MOVE IT *Get kids on their bikes to ride* BY SHANNON FINNELL

If you want to keep Eugeneans green and fit, you've got to start 'em young. Shane MacRhodes, program manager for Eugene Safe Routes to School Program, says the program makes it safer for kids to walk and bike to school by use of the five E's: education, encouragement, engineering, enforcement and evaluation. This tidy little description includes a wide swath of projects that shows just how many tools are required to build a bike culture safe enough for tykes.

One project Safe Routes is always tackling is educating kids on how to bike safely, a program that MacRhodes says he hopes to expand into all local 4J middle schools. "We work with city of Eugene Recreation Program to bring in instructors to support P.E. teachers to do a 10-hour bike safety education that's sort of like a drivers ed intro, but for biking," he says.

After bringing a fleet of bikes into the school and practicing safety, the unit culminates with a neighborhood ride. "It's a great hands-on, physical activity learning piece that we do," MacRhodes says.

On top of the education, Safe Routes also hosts Kidical Mass and other family events — meeting and riding to fun activities — and advocates for infrastructure changes that make it safe for kids to walk and bike to school. MacRhodes says that while barriers like funding and distance are two areas that require a lot of work, infrastructure changes also pose a big challenge. "Our built environment and how we plan and build our cities really affects the choices that we make," he says.

Beyond establishing active habits, Safe Routes helps kids stay healthy in other ways. "Biking helps to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and helps to reduce congestion around schools, which have been shown to have higher air-quality issues than other parts of the community," MacRhodes says.

"Getting more kids healthy and active in their transportation choices helps the greater environment as well," he continues. "We hope that we teach the kids lifelong lessons and also to build the infrastructure." **EW**

To participate in family events or volunteer on neighborhood rides, check out eugenesrts.org and kidicalmass.org and sign up for the e-alerts.

MY CAR YOUR CAR WE CAR

Sometimes biking or using public transit isn't a viable option, so people keep a car around just in case. But if that eats a hole in the old wallet or makes driving on the regular too tempting, now there's the WeCar option.

Lane Transit District's Point2point Solutions expanded Eugene's WeCar program with Enterprise on April 2 (the program already had cars aimed at UO students). The program's contract stipulates that it has to pay for itself, not using tax revenue. After a \$25 annual membership fee (which buys you \$35 in credits), Eugeneans and Springfielders can rent Ford Fusions for \$5 or \$8 an hour or overnight. Complete information on pricing is available at wkly.ws/191

Point2point Program Manager Theresa Brand says that car-sharing can have significant impact in lowering CO2 emissions. "Statistics show, nationally, that car sharing vehicles take between 11 and 15 cars off the road." By taking cars off the road, and with high participation, other vehicles can spend less time stuck in traffic because of lowered congestion.

There's another benefit on the pocketbook as well: "They are fuel-efficient so they might not be burning the national average of 21, 22 miles per gallon, they're getting high 30s to 40s in these vehicles, which saves money and saves CO2," Brand says.

— Shannon Finnell



A FORD FUSION TO BE USED IN EUGENE'S WE CAR PROGRAM

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