

## Frequently Asked Questions about Student School Commute Safety

### 1. Who is educating students to walk/bike safely?

Every day teachers, parents, police, crossing guards, engineers and others work to help everyone safely bike and walk in Palo Alto. The City of Palo Alto's Safe Routes to School Program leads on developing the majority of K-12 educational materials and curricula. Curriculum examples and other resources are available on the [Safe Routes to School Education Resources Page](#).

### 2. Why is the City unresponsive to Next Door Posts?

City Staff cannot monitor social media postings through applications such as NextDoor and Facebook. The [PaloAlto311](#) app is the most efficient way to reach out to City Staff. The Office of Transportation general phone number can also be used to contact the City at (650) 329-2520.

### 3. Where can I find information about Office of Transportation plans and projects?

A link to the City's Pedestrian Bicycle Transportation Plan is [here](#). The City's Office of Transportation Page also has more information about [local transportation projects and plans](#).

### 4. How can parents support education efforts around safe walking/biking?

Contact your school's PTA president and offer to assist your school's local Transportation Safety Representative with events and activities like Walk 'N Roll Days, conducting Bike Rack Counts, and sharing important safety messages via e-News and other channels. The PTA [City School Transportation Safety Committee \(CSTSC\)](#) also meets monthly with the Palo Alto Police Department and Palo Alto City staff. Meetings are public and dates are listed [here](#).

### 5. Is it safe for students to walk and bike to school?

In Palo Alto, more than 58% of PAUSD students walk and bike to school. Students are taught transportation safety skills beginning in 3rd grade. Fewer cars means fewer chances for a collision. PAUSD encourages families to refer to their school's Walk and Roll [Suggested Route Maps](#) to walk and bike whenever possible. If you must drive, please review the following [safety tips](#) and check your school's website for neighborhood specific transportation safety information.

### 6. My child's bike was stolen.

Report bikes stolen on school campuses to the school administration. A police report can also be filed by calling the Palo Alto Police Department 24-hour Dispatch Center at 650-329-2413. If your child's bike is registered with [Bike Index](#), you should log in and mark the bike as lost or stolen.

**7. How do I report concerns about Bicyclists/Drivers not safely sharing the road?**

First and foremost, please always bike and drive defensively. If poor driver/cyclist road sharing behaviors are happening please do not honk or yell. This could further exacerbate a dangerous situation. Instead, try to choose a different route to circumvent the situation as quickly as possible. Refer to the [City's suggested Walk and Roll Maps](#) to determine where there might be a higher number of bicyclists sharing the road. To share an enforcement concern, please use the [Palo Alto 311 App](#). The City's Safe Routes to School website also offers information about safe [driving](#) and safe [bicycling](#).

**8. Who do I contact to share my appreciation of improved infrastructure?**

Sharing feedback with City Council can have a significant impact on transportation projects and plans. Keep an eye on meeting agendas to show your in-person support when these items come up. Letters can also be sent to the City Council general email address at [city.council@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:city.council@cityofpaloalto.org).

**9. My child was involved in a collision**

Please call the Palo Alto Police Department non-emergency number at 650-329-2413, any time a collision involving a student, regardless of severity, occurs. All involved parties should remain at the scene until help arrives.

**10. How should student bicyclists remain safe during the winter months?**

Please refer to the [Safe Routes to School Winter Biking](#) resource for how to stay safe on the road during the winter.

**11. Can/do students get ticketed for not wearing helmets?**

Yes. The Police Department continues to enforce helmet law, disobeying stop signs and other traffic infractions, especially during morning arrival and afternoon dismissal. Enforcement concerns can be directed to the Police Department's non-emergency line at 650-329-2413 or the [Palo Alto 311 App](#).

If any of the above comments generate enhanced conversation, please reach out to City Staff at [saferoutes@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:saferoutes@cityofpaloalto.org) for additional information. Let's all work together to support safe Palo Alto student commutes.