



Street Smarts

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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STREET SMARTS CAMPAIGN LAUNCHES COUNTYWIDE EFFORT

Building on a successful public safety campaign established by the City of Santa Cruz, a coalition of educational and local government partners is pleased to announce the expansion of the Street Smarts campaign throughout Santa Cruz County.

By raising awareness and promoting safe practices among drivers, cyclists and pedestrians, the Street Smarts campaign aims to reduce the number of traffic-related crashes and injuries throughout Santa Cruz County. Joining the City of Santa Cruz in the 2019 campaign are the County of Santa Cruz, the Santa Cruz County Office of Education and the cities of Watsonville, Scotts Valley and Capitola.

"The County is pleased to join this important effort to protect all users of our transportation network," said Matt Machado, Santa Cruz County Public Works Director. "Whether in cities or in rural parts of the county, distractions imperil pedestrians, cyclists and motorists alike, and everyone deserve our respect and full attention."

"As educators, the safety of our children is paramount to everything we do," said Dr. Faris Sabbah, superintendent of the Santa Cruz County Office of Education. "We are beyond pleased to join the Street Smarts campaign to complement our ongoing efforts to assure the safe passage to and from school for all of our children."

While alternative transportation modes are popular throughout Santa Cruz County, more needs to be done to improve bicycle and pedestrian safety according to data from the California Office of Traffic Safety, with the County experiencing a high number of cyclist- and pedestrian-involved traffic collisions.

Street Smarts public education efforts target traffic-related problems that include unsafe speed and distracted driving. Pertinent messages that also raise awareness of the most vulnerable road users are being posted on banners in front of City of Santa Cruz elementary and middle schools, followed by placement near Santa Cruz County schools.

The bilingual ad campaign includes awareness advertising within Santa Cruz Metro buses and on City of Santa Cruz vehicles. Street Smarts banners are also being installed on street poles in downtown Santa Cruz as well as along Water Street, Soquel Avenue and other locations.

Through a yearlong media campaign, messages are also being delivered in print and through radio broadcast and social media. UC Santa Cruz will continue delivering Street Smarts messaging to students, faculty and staff throughout their campus community.

Community partners also play important roles in supporting the Street Smarts mission. They include Santa Cruz County Traffic Safety Coalition, Bike Santa Cruz County, Ecology Action, Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission, Santa Cruz Metro, Santa Cruz Police Department, Santa Cruz Neighbors and the Santa Cruz Warriors.

Kicking off year three of its campaign, the City of Santa Cruz welcomes the community to a Street Smarts Family Bike Ride on Saturday, Aug. 24, 10 a.m. to noon at the Tannery Art Center's Colligan Theater Plaza. Participants will ride along the Riverwalk with Mayor Martine Watkins, Santa Cruz Police officers and Ecology Action. There will be a traffic safety open house with Santa Cruz Warriors mascot Mav'Riks, California Highway Patrol's Chipper the Chipmunk, games and prizes, plus free Penny Ice Creamery cones after the ride.

For more information on the family bike ride and the regional campaign, visit www.cityofsantacruz.com/StreetSmarts.

Attached photos:

- Street Smarts "Slow Down" banner in front of Gault Elementary School.
- Street Smarts banner on City of Santa Cruz street pole.
- Mav'Riks will teach bike turn signals at the Street Smarts Family Bike Ride with Mayor Watkins.
- Mayor Martine Watkins welcomes the community to bike ride with her at the Street Smarts Family Bike Ride on Aug. 24.