

# LIVING & MOVING GREEN - SUPPORT PACKAGE



## Bike Rodeo

Riding a bike is beneficial for our mental and physical health, friendly to the environment, and easy on your wallet. However, fewer children are riding their bikes now than when their parents were kids. This could possibly be because they are uncomfortable or afraid. Hosting a Bike Rodeo allows students to have their bikes tuned, helmets fitted, and learn the rules of the road, including hand signals and defensive riding. It is also a chance to challenge students to ride in different conditions to build their cycling confidence and skills so they want to jump on their bikes every day!

## Action Plan

**Step 1- Gather an organizing team.** Find staff, parents, or community members who want to help organize a bike rodeo. Ask individuals who are passionate about biking and would be keen to pass on their enthusiasm to students. The RCMP often have a community liaison officer assigned for schools and they are usually interested in bike rodeos to teach the rules of the road and provide support.

**Step 2- Collect donations.** It is always fun to have prizes such as bike gear at a rodeo. Ask local cycling businesses for donations for a raffle or door prize. Home Hardware even donated a bike to one rodeo!

**Step 3- Recruit volunteers.** You will need many volunteers on the day of the rodeo. Ask parent groups, high school students, O2 students, student council, key club, green teams, Kiwanis members, [Health Promoting Schools](#), local politicians, and student leaders in your school. Ask a local bike mechanic or qualified volunteer to do bike checks for the bike rodeo.

**Step 4- Plan your course.** Decide what grades or ages are going to take part in the bike rodeo. Where will the course be? Younger students do well in a gymnasium but grade two and older really need to be outside, so you may need to set a rain date. Make a detailed plan for the course and obtain any signs or obstacles beforehand. Take special care to plan the staging and end zones to keep the students and bikes flowing. The course should be fun, challenging, and create spaces where participants have to practice their hand signals.

**Step 5- Integrate education.** Before the big event, and perhaps also during the event, teach the rules of road, hand signals, and the importance of active transportation. Invite a guest speaker to address students before the rodeo such as an RCMP officer or Public Health Nurse. They could speak to each class before students head to the rodeo. Create a display in your school entryway with the bike gear raffle, rules of the road, and pamphlets on the importance of biking.

**Step 6- Suggest a classroom activity for participating teachers.** Each child can make their very own bicycle license plate that they can attach before bringing them to the school. They will want to include their name, teacher's name, and lots of color to make it their own. This activity is optional but you will want to clearly label the bikes with student and teacher names.

**Step 7- Letter of permission to parents.** The bike rodeo will need an explanation, as well as promotion! Give parents exact times for when they can drop off and pick up the bikes. If parents are comfortable lending their bikes, students who can not bring a bike could have a chance to ride that day. Ask parents to attach the child's personal license plate. Include name and classroom on the form. It would be helpful to have a few scooters on hand for students who are too nervous to bike. The letter could include checkboxes for items such as:

1. We will bring in our child's bike;
2. We will NOT bring in our child's bike;
3. Will need to borrow a bike;
4. We will allow others to ride our bikes;
5. We will need to borrow a helmet.



Engagement Officer Marlene Le Bel and her friends travel by bike from the South Shore to the Annapolis Valley in her Green Schools Story from fall 2017.

**Step 8- Arrange the drop-off, storage, and pick-up times and areas.** Arrange two drop-off times the day before the rodeo, for example, after school and after supper. As a last resort, offer a drop-off time during the morning before the rodeo. You know your community best and you have insight into what will work. Map out a storage area based on class or grade, depending on the bike rodeo schedule. Determine where the bikes will go in this zone after the children are finished the course. You will want to arrange them so the bike mechanic can access the bikes. The pick-up time will be at the end of the day, as well as an extra pick-up time in the morning on the following day. You will also want to have bikes that can be shared in one place for easy access. Since this is a learning opportunity, it is a good idea to have at least one shared bike with training wheels, even for older kids.

**Step 9- Bike and helmet checks.** Before each bike is used, ask a local bike mechanic or experienced volunteer to inspect the tires, brakes, and chains during drop-off or during the rodeo. Someone should also check

helmets at the start of the course and make adjustments as needed. Many parents do not know how to fit a helmet and this fitting should last the summer bike season.

**Step 10- Event Day!** Get ready for some excited students because they love bike rodeos! Arrive early to set up the course, organize volunteers, get the bike mechanic started, and do final preparations.

**Step 11- Share your Story.** Invite the local media and take lots of pictures. Share your story so other schools get inspired to host a bike rodeo! Send the story or a few photos to your Green Schools NS Engagement Officer. We can help!

**Step 12- Host a follow-up event to practice what was taught.** A follow-up event could be to organize a day that everyone is encouraged to bike to school, maybe during your local Bike Week, Canada Bike Day, or Bike to School Day. The resources below can be helpful in coordinating your event.

## Resources

[Green Schools NS Bike-to-School Day Activity](#)

[Green Schools NS Pinterest - Living and Moving Green Board](#)

[Green Schools NS Sustainable Transportation Support Package](#)

[Green Schools NS Story: Take Yourself Outside and Choose Your Own Green Adventure!](#)

[Helmet-Fitting Guide](#)

[Global News: How Canadian classrooms are being transformed by a revolution on two wheels](#)

[We Often Walk or Wheel - Ecology Action Centre P-6 Curriculum Links](#)

[Making Tracks Teaching Manual for Cycling - Ecology Action Centre](#)

[Making Tracks Ecology Action Centre Video](#)

[Safe Routes to School-Tips for Success](#)

[Bike to School Day](#)

[Halifax Bike Week](#)

[Canada Bikes](#)

[Bicycle Nova Scotia](#)

[Bicycle Safer Journey](#)