

MOUNT ARLINGTON STUDENTS ADDRESS PEDESTRIAN & BICYCLE SAFETY VIRTUALLY: TRANSOPTIONS SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL PROGRAM

On January 11th, [TransOptions](#) Educational Outreach Program Specialist Mr. Szeluga visited the 2nd Grade Physical Education class at the Edith M Decker School in Mount Arlington through virtual instruction. Mr. Szeluga shared the Walk and Roll program, which is part of the "Safe Routes to School". The program encourages students and their families to walk and bike more to school and around town safely. The 30 minutes lesson started off with an active and engaging street sign game and included a superb educational video that was created by Mr. Szeluga and his team. The video covered pedestrian and bike safety in a way that was fun to watch. Students were super impressed by the making of it. Class finished up with a hands on safety helmet check. We all learned so much that morning! Thank you Mr. Szeluga, and we are looking forward to seeing you again next year.

Mount Arlington Grade 2 student Lexi Olic is an avid rider. Besides riding her bike, she also enjoys her penny board, scooter, hoverboard and rollerblades. Lexi takes the bus to school, but walks and rides her bike around town often, mainly to visit her friends and grandparents. "My mom taught me a lot about being safe" says Lexi's, but she also states that the program was a good review in many ways and that she didn't know how to check her helmet for safety until now. "I never knew about the 2 finger safety rule or that there is a dial in the back to tighten the helmet." Lexi enjoyed the Simon Says traffic sign game and the pedestrian safety part of the video " I liked how they used playmobil people. It was fun to watch!". Safe riding Lexi!



2nd grader Dante Sarinelli takes the bus to school, but he walks and rides his four wheeler, bike and scooter in Mount Arlington. When his mom goes out for a run, Dante enjoys riding his bike beside her. “I really liked the Walk and Roll video, especially how they made the town. I loved the cardboard houses and crosswalks.” When doing the helmet safety check Dante learned that the straps were too loose and that his helmet needed a few adjustments to truly protect him.



Program Specialist, Jeremy Szeluga (MPH, CHES) further explains the importance and changes of the Walk and Roll Program: “This past year has been an unprecedented time for our schools and communities. Whether students are learning from home, returning to school, or some hybrid of the two, how they travel has changed. At TransOptions, we have remained committed to keeping our communities engaged in pedestrian and bike safety. Due to Covid-19, we had to adapt the way we think about delivering education programs to students despite not being able to do in class programs. We have learned that there is much we can still influence. Over the past year we have expanded our virtual education programs and activities and added extra emphasis on being able to tailor our services to best fit the needs of the schools we work with.

Even though this year has looked a lot different with not as many students walking and biking to school, we have seen an increase of walking and biking around town. We continue to work hard to develop our programs virtually to be able to reach as many students as we can. Our most recent program designed for 1st and 2nd graders is a virtual stop motion Walk and Roll Program. Entirely influenced by our in class program, this video was compiled of nearly a thousand individually taken pictures to tell a story and demonstrate safety tips when walking to school. We want to encourage all people to walk and bike and we will continue to support all of our communities to ensure everyone remains safe on the road!”

Marlen Tomosieski, a 2019 WDHA Teacher Who Rocks recipient, acknowledges the impact of the program: “Due to the pandemic we find ourselves outside more. It is especially important

that we continue with the program as it reminds and teaches our students and their families to walk and ride safely.” The program adds status to Mount Arlington’s progress on the Safe Routes to School Program which is acknowledged by TransOptions and Sustainable Jersey for Schools.

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