

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION & SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL NEWS

HUMBOLDT COUNTY MAY 2020



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May is Still Bike Month

by Jenny Weiss

For many of us, the coronavirus outbreak has put a halt on getting out and doing the normal things we do. Unless you are deemed an essential worker or caring for others who need assistance, you are likely 'stuck' at home feeling like your daily life has done a complete 180, because it probably has. People seem to be having a difficult time slowing down but one thing that doesn't feel slower is the passing of time. As the days and weeks go by, making sure you get regular physical activity is an important way to maintain your health. Whether you prefer to take a walk, ride a bike, dance in your living room or do yoga, prioritizing time for movement can uplift and invigorate your spirit as well as your body. Encouraging children and other



family members to join you can be a lot of fun and help you establish a regular exercise routine. May is here and even though events, rides and races have been cancelled, May is still Bike Month. The weather is getting nicer and the days are getting longer. For those of you who ride regularly, keep doing what you're doing and for those of you who haven't ridden in a while, it is a great way to clear your mind,

breathe fresh air, get your heart pumping and exercise those legs and lungs. Vehicle traffic is lighter, and there is a much needed sense of togetherness, comradery and belonging seeing other cyclists out there. During Bike Month, the League of American Cyclists is encouraging people to participate in Bike Month by taking photos of your solo or family rides and sharing them on social media using [#BikesUnite](#) to spread the joy biking brings you. Sharing the reasons we ride can help bring us together while we shelter in place apart. Other Bike Month suggestions are to take selfies in front of your favorite small business to show support, join the [Humboldt Bike Challenge](#) to log your miles for the month, and watch or share some great League [videos](#) (featured in this newsletter) to help new cyclists or people getting back on their bikes again cycle safely.

Wednesday, May 6 is Bike to School Day. While schools are closed for the remainder of the year, students can still be encouraged to ride in their neighborhoods with family members from their household. The National Center for Safe Routes to School has also developed activities for an entire week from May 4 until May 8 to encourage students to ride. Whether it's by providing encouragement or helping children prepare for a safe ride, there are many resources on the [Bike to School Day](#).



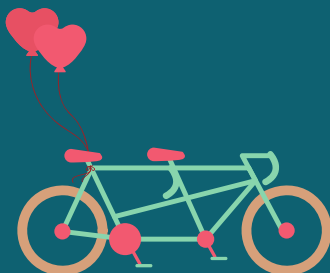
[website](#) to help assist you and inspire others. Please encourage youth to always wear their helmets. Even though traffic feels lighter, it is a stressful time for many and some drivers may be distracted or even tempted to speed. Adults can have a huge impact on youth by modeling good behavior such as always wearing your own helmet, using hand signals, and obeying all road laws, signs and signals.

The City of Eugene also has some great resources and lesson plans organized by grade level on their [SRTS webpage](#).



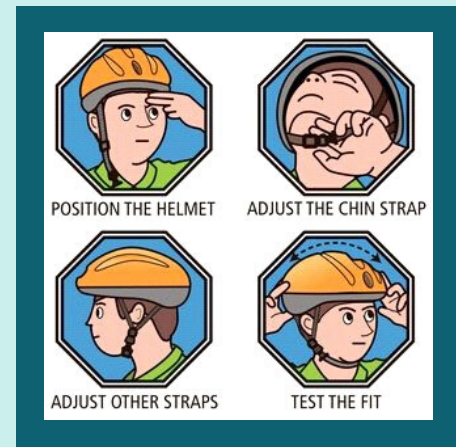
**"EVERY TIME I SEE AN
ADULT ON A BICYCLE, I
NO LONGER DESPAIR FOR
THE FUTURE OF THE
HUMAN RACE."**

-H.G. WELLS



Get Back On That Bike

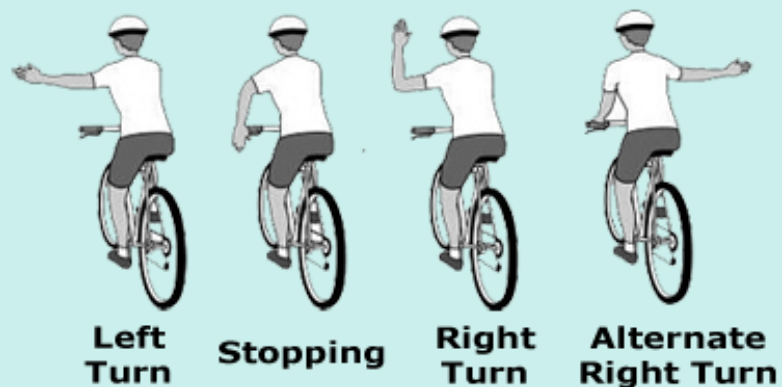
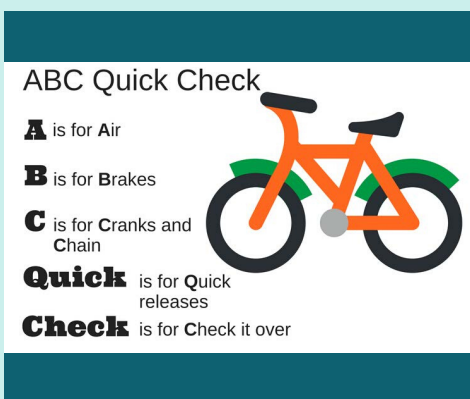
Some people are getting on their bikes again for the first time in a while and the League of American Cyclists is here to help make sure you ride safely. Whether you are getting back on the bike or want to start riding more, the League's '[Ride Smart](#)' video series has tips to help you get the most out of your first, or first time in a while, ride. Always make sure your bike is in good working condition before you set out by completing an [ABC Quick Check](#).



A is for air - **B** is for brakes - **C** is for chain - **Quick** is for the quick release levers on your tire and/or seat - **Check** is for a once over to check that everything is working properly.

[Starting and stopping](#) sound easy enough but a few pointers will make it even simpler. First, make sure your bike is the correct size and your seat is at the correct height for you to ride. Finding and becoming comfortable with the location of the pedals is next. Stop when your foot is at the bottom of the stroke and squeeze both brake levers slowly at the same time. After you stop, reset your pedal to the top so it is easier to get going again.

[Using hand signals](#) in advance of turning will help you ride safer by being predictable to vehicles around you. [Scan over your left shoulder](#) before you signal and try to make eye contact with drivers. There is even a hand signal for slowing and stopping!



Using gears will help your pedaling stay smooth and consistent. Practice shifting on a flat and quiet street until you feel comfortable. You can usually tell by the sound of your gears if something is not quite right.

Knowing proper riding etiquette and where to ride is very important. Bicycles are considered vehicles and should be ridden as such. Always ride on the right side or with traffic. Sometimes 'taking the lane' is appropriate and safer for you as well as the drivers around you.

Don't forget to wear your helmet every time and make sure it fits properly !

For more information on riding safely visit bikeleague.org/content/smart-cycling-tips-0.

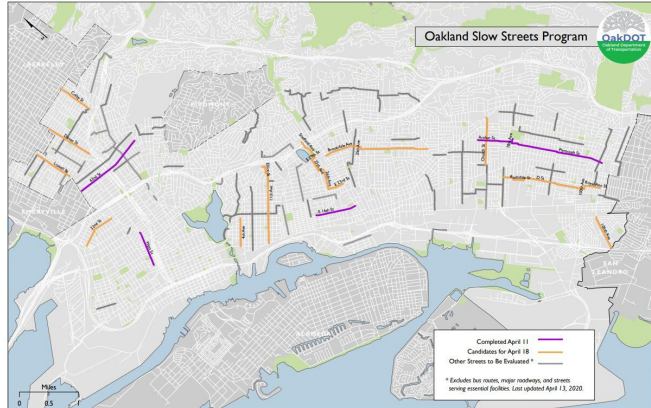


Adapting Streets for Peds and Bikes

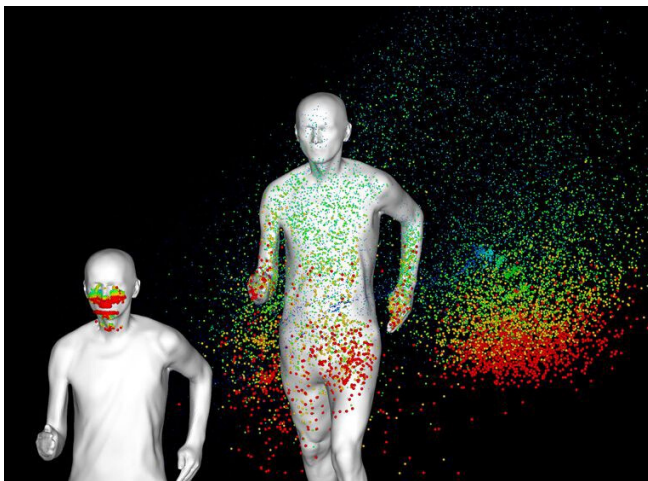
As Shelter in Place and Stay at Home orders continue throughout California and the country, some parks and open areas are experiencing overcrowding sparking concerns that park users could spread the coronavirus if users are not following social

distancing guidelines. The National Park Service (NPS) recently modified its operations to stay aligned with guidance from the Centers for Disease control and Prevention (CDC) as well as with state and local public health authorities. While NPS buildings, campgrounds, facilities, and even some trailheads and overlooks have been closed, outdoor spaces in some parks are staying open to the public. NPS is monitoring CDC guidance regularly and making decisions on a park by park basis. Individuals and families need to get exercise during these stressful times, not only to keep their respiratory and immune systems healthy but to reduce stress and maintain good mental health. It can be challenging to maintain 6 feet of distance when passing others on a trail, and some cities and communities are closing open spaces and parks altogether.

The city of Oakland, California is taking a different approach by closing certain streets to most vehicle traffic creating more space for residents to enjoy walking, running, and cycling more safely. Called Oakland Slow Streets, the initiative is intended to support safe physical activity by creating more space for physical distancing for Oaklanders by closing Neighborhood Bike Routes to through traffic, with the exception of residential and emergency vehicle access. The program rolled out on April 11, 2020 with the closure of four sections of city streets totaling 74 miles and is expected to continue until the Shelter in Place order has been lifted. The city has since identified additional streets to add to the closures over the next few weeks. By closing nearly 10% of the streets in Oakland to through vehicles, there will be more space to socially distance from neighbors when walking, jogging and bicycling along these streets. This is welcome news to many residents who are unable to visit city and county parks because of recent restrictions placed on park access in Alameda County due to COVID-19. These closures have contributed to inequitable access to open spaces for some residents and by recognizing that all residents have access to public streets and by opening more street space, the Oakland Slow Streets



initiative is addressing these social inequities. The city has made it clear that by closing streets to most vehicles they are not encouraging social gathering or events on any of the streets. Residents are still expected to maintain at least 6 feet of physical space from others at all times. While Oakland's initiative is the first large-scale closure of city streets during the coronavirus outbreak, other cities are also jumping on the same bandwagon. The City of Philadelphia was one of the first cities to create more room for walking and bicycling when they closed MLK Jr. Drive a week before their current 'stay at home' order was enacted. The quick action taken by the city was successful in part because of the seasonal closure of MLK Jr. Drive every year from April to November on the weekends. Boston, Denver, Minneapolis, and New York City have also closed some streets to vehicle traffic, Montreal has been removing parking spots to create more walking and biking space, and Berlin is even installing temporary bike lanes. We are fortunate here in Humboldt County having lots of space to get outside and walk or ride safely during the coronavirus pandemic, but it is inspiring to hear about efforts in different communities that are helping others do the same.



Is 6 Feet Enough? Why We May Need More Space

The social distancing rule of staying 6 feet away from others is effective when you are indoors, standing still, or outside with low wind. But when you jog or bike, you may need to be more careful. While

biking and jogging are great ways to exercise and reduce stress during the COVID-19 Shelter in Place order, it is important that you avoid the 'slipstream' of others when doing these activities. When someone else sneezes, coughs or just breathes, those particles stay behind in the air and a person behind them goes through that same cloud of droplets much like a boat travels through a wake of another boat creating movement in water. During COVID-19 it is important to avoid those droplets whenever possible because they could contain the virus and be transmittable even if that person has no symptoms and doesn't know they have been infected. For this reason, if you are jogging and come upon another person, you might consider giving yourself 12-15 feet of distance. If running or biking slowly the distance could be increased to 30 feet and if biking fast, you could give yourself 50 feet of space. This information comes from a study done in Belgium and The Netherlands. To read more, click [here](#).

How far is 6 feet?

We keep hearing about keeping a minimum distance of 6 feet away from others to protect ourselves and those that are more vulnerable from contracting COVID-19.

But just how far is 6 feet?

To protect your health and the health of others, stay home if you are sick, only leave your home for essential tasks or to walk/bike/exercise with members of your household. Stay six feet away from others, wash your hands for 20 seconds when you get home, and wear a face mask or covering whenever you are in public.

Stay Safe
Stay home!



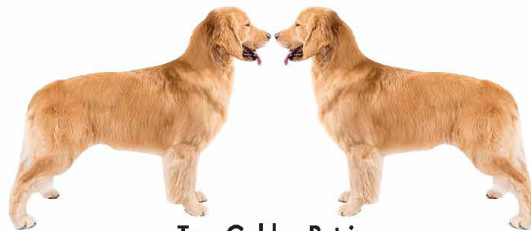
The width of an average car



Two shopping carts



Bruno Mars with an extra face on top
(He is 5'5")



Two Golden Retrievers



*Above graphic is available for reproduction.
Contact weiss@nrscaa.org*

RESOURCES



Humboldt County Libraries Are Online and Offering Free WIFI Outside!

Humboldt County Library buildings may be closed during the coronavirus outbreak but there are many ways to keep reading! Many books, audiobooks, and magazines are available to download online. If you are in need of WIFI, all Humboldt County libraries are offering free WIFI in their parking lots. Visit the Humboldt County Library online [here](#).

COVID-19 Community Resources and Mental Health Hotline Available

The Humboldt County Joint Information Center has a call center open and available to answer COVID-19 related questions. Call 707-441-5000. They have English, Spanish, and Hmong speakers available. The Humboldt County Department of Health and Human Services Behavioral Health Branch also has a hotline available for residents to speak with a health professional while social distancing. The number to call is 707-268-2999.

COVID Information

covidinfo@co.humboldt.ca.us
707-441-5000

Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 7 p.m.
Saturday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Humboldt County
Joint Information Center



Información de COVID

covidinfo@co.humboldt.ca.us
707-441-5000

lunes a viernes 8 a.m. a 7 p.m.
sabado 10 a.m. a 5 p.m.

Centro de Información Conjunta
del Condado de Humboldt





To learn more about what Natural Resources Services - RCAA is up to, visit our website [here](#).



This newsletter has been developed for school teachers, administrators, transportation planners, public health, and pedestrian and bike safety advocates in order to keep you informed of the latest news involving our local Active Transportation and Safe Routes to School efforts and programs. For more information contact weiss@nrsrcaa.org or (707)269-2062