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Background:

October is Pedestrian Safety Month. The personal, physical, and environmental benefits of walking can lead to healthier, quieter, cleaner, and safer streets. Walking and biking can also improve local economies and enhance social and community engagement, which can lead to more vibrant, resilient, and livable spaces.

Unfortunately, in 2020 there were 6,516 pedestrians killed in the United States. That is 18 pedestrians a day and 125 pedestrians a week. On average, a pedestrian was killed every 81 minutes and injured every 10 minutes in traffic crashes in 2020. In Vermont, an average of 6 pedestrians die on our roads each year and around 130 are hospitalized. An average of 1 cyclist dies on our roads each year and around 171 are hospitalized. But these deaths do not impact populations across Vermont equally. From 2011-2020, 51% of pedestrians killed on our roadways were 60+.

Rural and Urban areas face different challenges. More people in urban areas are walking/biking near cars which increases the chance of crashes. Additionally, urban areas can be unsafe for cyclists due to a lack of safe biking infrastructure, including limited protected bike lanes and places where

cyclists must share lanes with vehicles. Many rural areas lack safe walking infrastructure, including sidewalks, shoulders, or low-speed limits – and people may feel unsafe walking in their communities. Improving bike and pedestrian safety and creating safe, accessible, and active communities requires a statewide effort.

The Health Department’s [Watch for Me VT](#) program seeks to reduce injuries and deaths on Vermont roadways, specifically among people who walk and bike. Using education and enforcement, we can work together to improve the safety of our Vermont communities.

How to use the Social Media Toolkit:

Given the rise in roadway injuries and deaths, it is more important than ever for us to do our part in creating safer roadways for all, particularly those who are most vulnerable on our roadways. Help spread the word about how to walk, ride your bike, and drive safely during October and beyond. Feel free to use the suggested social media posts during the listed weeks, or whenever they fit into your content schedule. No need to schedule all these posts; you may choose the ones that fit your organization’s mission. Please share with other partners as you see fit.

For questions regarding the toolkit and/or images, please contact Alexandra.Breyer@vermont.gov. You can [download all the social media graphics below on our Watch for Me VT website](#).

Social Media Posts:

Week 1 (October 3-7): October is Pedestrian Safety Month

Facebook:

October is Pedestrian Safety Month. Whether commuting to work, heading to school, or running an errand, everyone deserves to arrive at their destination safely- no matter how they get around. Learn more about how we can work together to improve the safety of our Vermont communities:

<https://safestreeets.vermont.gov>

#WatchforMeVT

Twitter:

October is Pedestrian Safety Month. Whether commuting to work, heading to school, or running an errand, everyone deserves to arrive at their destination safely- no matter how they get around. Learn more about how we can work together to improve the safety of our Vermont communities:

<https://safestreeets.vermont.gov>

#WatchforMeVT



Week 2 (October 10-14): Pedestrian/Cyclist Safety Laws in Vermont

Facebook/Instagram

Sadly, many car crashes with pedestrians happen at crosswalks. When driving, take your time before moving and always look for pedestrians. Remember, under Vermont state law, drivers must yield to pedestrians even if the crosswalk is not marked. Learn more about pedestrian and cyclist safety laws: <https://safestreets.vermont.gov> #WatchforMeVT

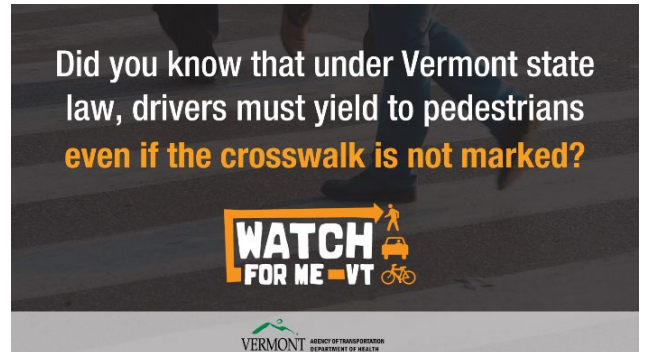
Twitter

Sadly, many car crashes w/pedestrians happen at crosswalks. When driving, take your time before moving & always look for peds. Remember, under VT state law, drivers must yield to pedestrians even if crosswalk is not marked. More about VT laws: <https://safestreets.vermont.gov> #WatchforMeVT

Facebook/Instagram



Twitter



Facebook/Instagram

Give them 4-feet! When passing cyclists, give them at least 4 feet of room if you can. Remember, if you are passing a cyclist or a pedestrian, you are allowed to cross the double yellow lines when it is safe. Learn more about pedestrian and cyclist safety laws: <https://safestreets.vermont.gov> #WatchforMeVT

Twitter

Give them 4-feet! When passing cyclists, give them at least 4-ft of room if possible. Remember, if you pass a cyclist or a pedestrian, you can cross the double yellow lines when it is safe. Learn more about pedestrian and cyclist safety laws: <https://safestreets.vermont.gov> #WatchforMeVT

Facebook/Instagram



Twitter



Week 3 (October 17-21): Watch for Youth & Youth Resources

Facebook/Instagram:

Walking and biking to school helps students develop independence, improves academic performance, helps reduce traffic congestion and air pollution, and helps create a stronger community. As a driver, be sure to drive slowly around school zones. As a parent, you can teach your children safe walking and crossing behaviors. Together, we can create safer school zones for all students. <https://safestreets.vermont.gov#SRTSVT>

Twitter:

Walking and biking to school is great for kids! Both drivers and parents have a responsibility to help students feel safe getting to school. Learn more: <https://saferoutes.vermont.gov/#WatchforMeVT> #WatchforMeVT #SRTSVT



Facebook/Instagram/Twitter:

Local Motion has many incredible programs to introduce children to the joys of walking and biking, and to teach them how to walk and bike safely. Check out their list of resources: https://www.localmotion.org/bike_smart_kids



Week 4 (October 24 – 28): Be Bright at Night

Facebook/Instagram/Twitter

Be bright at night this Halloween! If you are driving, go slow and watch out for people (and ghosts and goblins). If you are trick-or-treating, incorporate some reflective gear into your costume! Find more safety tips here: <https://safestreets.vermont.gov> #WatchforMeVT

Facebook/Instagram

In Vermont, many car crashes involving people walking or biking happen when it's dark out — especially in the fall and winter. Drive slowly at night and watch for pedestrians. If you're walking or biking, use reflective gear and a light so you can be seen! Find more safety tips at <https://safestreets.vermont.gov> #WatchforMeVT

Twitter

In VT, many crashes w/people walking or biking happen when it's dark out—especially in fall & winter. Drive slowly at night & watch for pedestrians. If you're walking/biking, use reflective gear & light so you can be seen! More safety tips: <https://safestreets.vermont.gov> #WatchforMeVT



Posters and Rack Cards

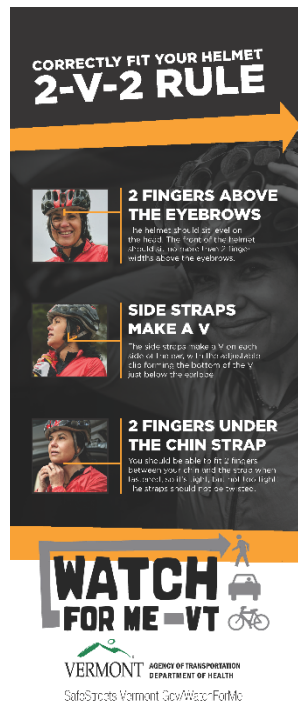
The Health Department has also created and printed numerous informational materials for you to use in your office, organization, or other locations throughout your community. To order these materials, please fill out this form and select how many of each material you would like mailed to you:

<https://forms.office.com/g/aqfKV09ET9>

The materials will be mailed to you. Examples of the materials are below.

Rack Cards

Bike Helmet Rack Card (1- sided)



CORRECTLY FIT YOUR HELMET
2-V-2 RULE

2 FINGERS ABOVE THE EYEBROWS
The helmet should sit level on the head. The top of the helmet should be no more than 2 finger-widths above the eyebrows.

SIDE STRAPS MAKE A V
The side straps make a V on each side of the head, with the adjustment clip forming the bottom of the V just below the earflaps.

2 FINGERS UNDER THE CHIN STRAP
You should be able to fit 2 fingers between your chin and the strap when the strap is tight, but not too tight. The strap should rest on the chin.

WATCH FOR ME - VT

VERMONT AGENCY OF TRANSPORTATION
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
SafeStreets.Vermont.Gov/WatchForMe

Safety Rack Card (2-sided)



WATCH FOR ME - VT

SAFETY IS A SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

Did you know that under Vermont state law, drivers must yield to pedestrians in crosswalks even if the crosswalk is not marked?

MARKED CROSSWALKS

Crosswalks may be marked, either with two parallel white lines or a series of white blocks running across the street (or road). Be extra careful when making a left turn because pedestrians may be in a crosswalk.

MID-BLOCK CROSSWALK

These marked crosswalks are located in the middle of a block, not at an intersection.

UNMARKED CROSSWALKS

These crosswalks occur whenever a sidewalk ends at an intersection and continues on the other side. There is an implied crosswalk across the intersection.

For more information on pedestrian and bicycle safety laws in Vermont, visit SafeStreets.Vermont.Gov/WatchForMe

VERMONT AGENCY OF TRANSPORTATION
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

WATCH FOR ME - VT

WHEN YOU'RE DRIVING:

- Yield to people in crosswalks
- Always look first for pedestrians and bicycles before turning, backing up, and when driving at night.
- Pass bicyclists only when it is safe to do so and be sure to give them 4 feet of room.
- Be aware that bicyclists may move left to avoid debris or to prepare to make a left turn.

WHEN YOU'RE WALKING:

- Look for cars in all directions—including those turning left or right or backing up—before crossing the street or parking lot.
- C obey all pedestrian traffic signals.
- At night, walk in well-lit areas, carry a flashlight, or wear something reflective to be more visible.
- Cross the street where you have the best view of traffic. At bus stops, cross behind the bus or at the nearest crosswalk.
- Always walk on the sidewalk, if there is no sidewalk, walk facing traffic and as far from the roadway as you can.
- Don't cross distracted: put the phone down and unplug earphones when crossing.

WHEN YOU'RE BICYCLING:

- Wear a helmet. It could save your life.
- C obey all traffic signals and stop at "Stop" signs and road lights.
- Yield in the direction of traffic and as far to the right as is safe.
- Use front and rear lights and reflectors at night and be as visible as possible.
- Use hand signals to indicate when turning.

8.5x11 Posters

Bike Safety Tips Poster



BICYCLE SAFETY TIPS

Use lights and wear reflective clothing when bicycling at night, and be as visible as possible.

OBEY ALL SIGNS AND SIGNALS. This includes stopping at stop signs and red lights.

Use all of your senses – watch and listen for cars, particularly at intersections and drive ways.

Ride in the direction of traffic. Drivers may not be looking for you if you are riding the wrong way.

WEAR A HELMET. It could save your life.

Avoid distractions such as listening to headphones or answering phones when riding.



Ped Safety Tips Poster



PEDESTRIAN SAFETY TIPS

Be careful crossing multiple lanes of traffic. Make sure each lane of traffic is clear before you cross.

Watch for cars backing up in parking lots; brake lights can mean that a car is about to back up.

Cross the street where you have the best view of traffic. At bus stops, cross behind the bus or at the nearest crosswalk.

Enhance your visibility at night. Walk in well-lit areas, carry a flashlight or wear something reflective, such as stickers or armbands, to be more visible.

Look for cars in all directions – including those turning left or right – before crossing the street; never assume a driver will stop.

Avoid distraction. Texting or talking on cell phones when crossing streets diminishes the ability of your two key senses – hearing and seeing – that are used to detect and avoid cars. So particularly when crossing streets, put down the phone for a few seconds.

Always walk on the sidewalk; if there is no sidewalk, walk facing traffic and as far from the roadway as you can.

Be predictable to drivers and follow the rules of the road. Obey signs and signals.



Give Bikes 4 Feet Poster



GIVE BIKES 4 FEET!

Pass bicyclists only when it is safe to do so and be sure to give them 4 feet of room.

Be aware that bicyclists may move left to avoid debris or to prepare to make a left turn.



Crosswalk Information Poster



WHAT IS A CROSSWALK?

MARKED CROSSWALKS
These crosswalks occur whenever a sidewalk ends at an intersection and continues on the other side. There is an implied crosswalk across the intersection. Be extra careful when making a left turn because pedestrians may be in a crosswalk.

MID-BLOCK CROSSWALK
These marked crosswalks are located in the middle of a block, not at an intersection.

UNMARKED CROSSWALKS
These crosswalks occur whenever a sidewalk ends at an intersection and continues on the other side. There is an implied crosswalk across the intersection.

Did you know that under Vermont state law, drivers must yield to pedestrians — even if the crosswalk is not marked?



11x17 Posters

Tips for Being a Safe Pedestrian

WATCH FOR ME - VT Tips for Being a **Safe Pedestrian**

- Be Bright at Night**
- Cross Safely When Exiting the Bus**
- Walk Facing Traffic**
if sidewalks are not available
- Watch for Turning Cars**
- Pull the Plug and Pay Attention**
- Be Careful in Parking Lots**

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Tips for Being a Safe Cyclist

WATCH FOR ME - VT Tips for Being a **Safe Cyclist**

- Obey Traffic Signals & Signs**
- Look Before Entering Traffic & Changing Lanes**
- Ride with Traffic**
- Use Hand Signals**
For a right turn you can also point with your right hand
- Be Bright at Night**
- Wear a Helmet**

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Make Room for Bikes




Make room for bikes.

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Yield to people in crosswalks



Yield to people in crosswalks.
It's the law.

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