

TRAFFIC COUNTS & OBSERVATIONS

The **Traffic Counts and Observations** establishes pre-‘action plan’ numbers of vehicles and students using active transportation to and from school at assigned locations and helps identify safety issues at drop off (am) and pick up (pm) times. **The traffic counts are conducted at identified key entry points (checkpoints) to the school over 3 consecutive days.**

In the morning, traffic counts should start 30 minutes before the bell and last for 5 minutes after. In the afternoon, counts should start 10 minutes before the final bell and last for 20 minutes after.

Set-up and Preparations:

1. Organize counting and observation checkpoints based on entry points to the school area by:
 - a. Observing travel patterns before school
 - b. Streets and paths leading to/from the school
 - c. View **Example Traffic Counts & Observations Maps** for examples
2. Recruit volunteers for each checkpoint, for morning and afternoon, for at least 3 consecutive days
3. Request volunteers arrive 30 minutes before the morning bell and 10 minutes before the end of school day
4. Assign and provide volunteers with a pencil, clipboard, map and **Traffic Counts & Observations Tally Sheet**

Instructions for *Traffic Counts & Observations Tally Sheet*:

1. Fill in the date, school, location (i.e. street, intersection, path location), circle whether it is morning (am) or afternoon (pm), and briefly describe the weather conditions (approximate temperature, wind, precipitation, cloud cover, etc.)
2. To eliminate double counting on the street the school is on, only count those going towards the school in the morning and those leaving the school in the afternoon
3. Observe and record any driver/cyclist/walker behaviour that is illegal, unsafe or otherwise represent a concern to children and parents/caregivers approaching and leaving the school
4. Keep your eyes open for:
 - Other traffic patterns (i.e., students travelling same route to other schools)
 - Vehicles stopping in marked no-stopping or no-parking zones
 - U-and 3-point turns where not permitted or unsafe
 - Rolling stops at intersections
 - Drivers failing to yield to walkers
 - Jaywalking, walking on the street, or sidewalk concerns
 - Real or potential conflicts between vehicles, bikes and/or walkers
 - Visibility/sight line problems (i.e., parked cars, overgrown vegetation, etc.)
 - Presence and behaviour of delivery or maintenance vehicles

Keep all Tally Sheets in the STP Manual. Use the results:

- a. To identify concerns to address in the **Action Plan (Traffic Counts & Observations Summary)** forms, and
- b. For baseline data to compare with follow-up counts after implementing **Action Plan** items