



METROPOLITAN
TRANSPORTATION
COMMISSION



BAY AREA
AIR QUALITY
MANAGEMENT
DISTRICT

News Release

For Immediate Release

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Spare the Air Youth Empowers Students to Reduce Transportation-Related Pollution

Sparetheairyouth.org encourages kids to walk, bike, carpool or take transit for the environment and for their health

OAKLAND, Calif., October 2, 2012 — The Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), in partnership with the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (Air District), today announced the launch of a new web site, sparetheairyouth.org, to teach students about the benefits of walking, biking, carpooling or taking transit to and from school. The website provides resources for parents and teachers to teach kids and families about improving air quality around schools. Program providers will be able to access a wealth of information about best practices, idea sharing, available programs, as well as lesson plans, events and contests that teach youth about safety, clean air and transportation. Providers also will be able to connect with others in their field through the website.

“Not only does walking and biking to school help the environment, but it also improves our children’s health,” said Adrienne Tissier, chair of the Metropolitan Transportation Commission. “Additionally, parents can avoid the traffic congestion and stress of picking up and dropping off their kids at school. The website provides examples of how other parents are doing this successfully through various programs.”

Launched to coincide with national “Walk and Roll to School Week,” the web site is part of MTC’s Climate Initiatives Program, a partnership effort between MTC and the Air District to reduce transportation-related greenhouse gas emissions. Sparetheairyouth.org seeks to educate, inspire and empower Bay Area youth and their families to change transportation habits to improve air quality and reduce vehicle miles traveled, while also providing a regional resource for students, parents, teachers and program providers.

“Automobile trips to and from school amount to a significant number of cars on Bay Area roads,” said Jack Broadbent, executive officer of the Air District. “The Spare the Air Youth program

seeks to reduce these short trips to and from school through alternatives like neighborhood carpooling, biking and walking, which will go a long way towards improving air quality around schools.”

Spare the Air Youth works together with Spare the Air and Safe Routes to School programs throughout the nine Bay Area counties to promote collaboration and to support their outreach and encouragement efforts. Parents, teachers and others with successful programs or innovative ideas on ways to encourage youth and their families to use alternative modes of transportation can submit ideas via the web site.

For more information about the Spare the Air Youth Program, visit sparetheairyouth.org. MTC is the regional transportation planning, coordinating and financing agency for the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area. The Bay Area Air Quality Management District (www.baaqmd.gov) is the regional agency responsible for protecting air quality in the nine-county Bay Area.

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