



# Quality Improvement Success Story

## Creating Safe Routes to School & Increasing Physical Activity



Less than 20% of Seaside elementary school children walk to school. Cars in school neighborhoods created traffic congestions, and parents exceeded speeding limits to get their kids to school on time. "SCHOOL CROSSING" traffic signs and safe pull out areas did not exist. Surveys conducted by school students found that pedestrian safety, lack of safe crosswalks, and bullying were the greatest barriers to getting exercise by walking to school.

The Monterey Peninsula Unified School District installed the traffic safety signs at the start of the 2014-15 school year. Three schools formally applied to reduce school traffic zones to 15 mph. Seaside Police Department installed traffic monitoring devices. School neighbors formed Neighborhood Watch groups to help kids safely walk to school. Now,

- More kids walk to school
- Driving speeds have decreased
- Residents are empowered
- Neighborhoods are safer



MCHD staff used CA4Health funds to establish and coordinate the Seaside Leadership Council, which shared the students' survey results with parents, community leaders, and city Public Works staff. The group brainstormed ways to remove barriers to walking. CA4Health funds were used for parent education fliers, student zipper pulls and glow in the dark backpack stickers, and "walk to school day" awareness activities. MCHD used CA4Health funds to purchase traffic safety signs.

- MCHD works to prevent injury and childhood obesity by
- Educating parents and partners about outdoor safety and recreation
  - Empowering youth to make healthy choices
  - Empowering residents to become engaged in civic processes
  - Working with community partners to create lasting, meaningful, outcome-focused change.

September, 2014