



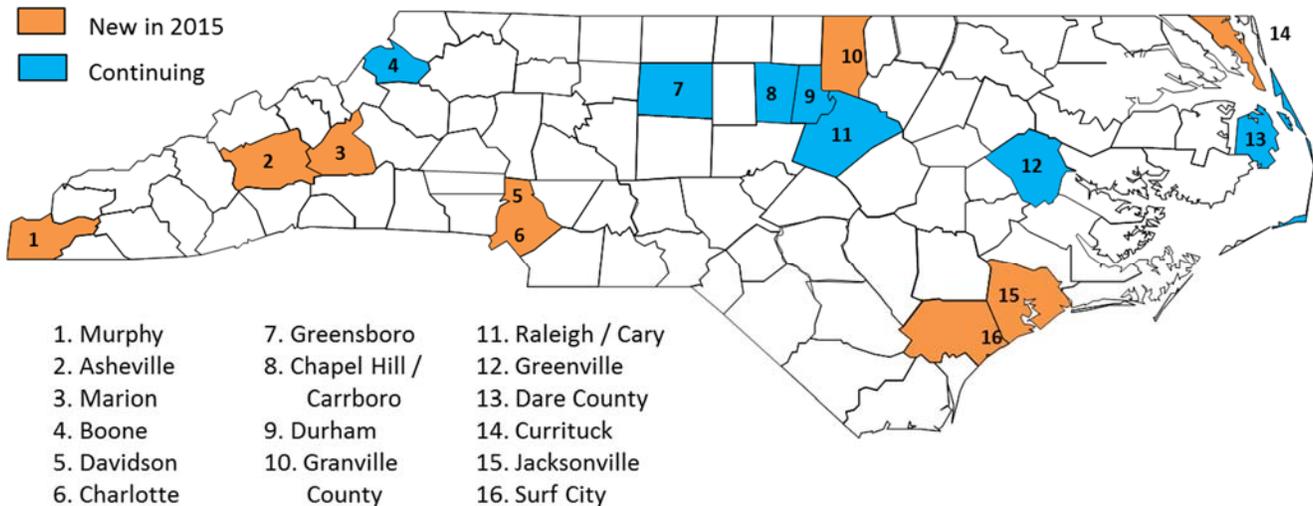
2015 Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety, Education, and Enforcement Program Executive Summary

Overview

The Watch for Me NC program aims to empower communities to address pedestrian and bicycle crashes by supporting: 1) dissemination of safety messages through various outreach and education strategies, and 2) high-visibility enforcement of pedestrian, bicyclist, and motorist laws. The program began as a regional pilot test in 2012 and now has partner-driven efforts across the State. The UNC Highway Safety Research Center (HSRC) supports NCDOT in program development, delivery, and evaluation through partner recruitment, technical assistance and training, and program evaluation. To learn more about the program and its history, visit: <http://watchformenc.org/>.

2015 Participating Communities

A total of nine prior participating communities and nine new communities were selected to participate in 2015. Many communities included one or more universities implementing the Watch for Me NC program at the campus level.



Technical Assistance and Training

Participating communities received support and assistance from HSRC to implement their local programs. Support services included access to a partner listserv and contact list, direct technical assistance, a website of partner-specific resources, and facilitated meetings to discuss how to effectively deliver educational and enforcement components of the program. Meetings covered topics including: 1) Partners and Strategies to Make an Impact, 2) The Role of Law Enforcement and Strategies for Coordination, and 3) Successes and Challenges to Date, as well as a wrap-up meeting.

Additionally, HSRC offered nine one-day training courses to participating law enforcement agencies in summer 2015. Brian Massengill, a sergeant with the Durham Police Department, served as lead course instructor. The courses prepared officers to perform pedestrian and bicycle safety operations as part of the Watch for Me NC program. They involved classroom education on relevant laws and best practices in conducting enforcement, as well as field exercises in conducting targeted operations aimed at improving driver yielding at crosswalks. In total, 116 officers from 35 agencies participated in the trainings. Of these, 94 officers completed a pre- and post-training test designed to evaluate changes in officer knowledge of laws, plans regarding enforcement, and self-reported capacity to perform operations to improve pedestrian safety. Average test scores rose from 68% at pre-test to 78% at post-test and there was a statistically significant increase in officers reporting that they were familiar with the laws and could perform pedestrian operations.

2015 Program Monitoring and Evaluation

HSRC monitored program delivery by participating communities by collecting information through 1) web-based reporting forms, 2) community status reports, and 3) interviews with program staff. Field data was collected from August 2015 to January 2016 in selected locations to evaluate program outcomes such as changes in driver and pedestrian behavior at crossings. Results from this data analysis will be in the Final Report, available in Spring 2016. The following sections highlight program efforts from 2015.

Paid Media

Media was a key element in distributing pedestrian and bicycle safety messages to the general public. About \$300,000 was spent on media in at least 12 media markets across the state. Purchased media included Pandora radio ads (which received 33,000 clicks), 60 sidewalk stencils, two mobile billboards, more than 12 traditional and digital billboards, and external/internal bus ads placed in 14 bus systems across the state. Paid media efforts also included “experiential” campaigns—using high-visibility balloons and print materials to engage visitors and local residents—in five areas. The media agency estimated that at least 51.5 million gross impressions—a measure of how many times an ad was seen—were delivered via purchased media. Additional funds were used to purchase print materials, with tens of thousands of rack cards, posters, banners, bumper stickers, and other safety materials delivered to and disseminated by community partners through local events and public engagement. Several communities also developed and purchased their own unique materials, including video PSAs, reflective bags, water bill inserts, t-shirts, and other supplemental items.

Local Outreach and Earned Media

Participating communities performed extensive outreach, including distributing print materials and engaging with students, local businesses, community groups, and the general public at more than 120 local events. These included events such as 1) university and school open houses or student orientations, 2) National Night Out, 3) community meetings, and 4) festivals, fairs, and farmers markets. Partner communities also engaged with the media as a key strategy to help amplify the message to a broader audience. At least eight press releases were distributed, and more than 34 news stories (print, TV, and radio) covered local pedestrian and bicycle safety efforts.

Law Enforcement Operations

From January 2015 to December 2015, 10 municipal police agencies and two university police departments reported conducting more than 97 operations targeting enforcement of pedestrian and/ or bicycle-related laws. These efforts involved 350+ officers spending 530+ hours in total, not including time spent doing routine enforcement patrols that incorporated pedestrian and bicycle safety surveillance. In large part, officers focused on issuing warnings to try to engage the public and raise awareness of the laws. Partners reported many positive outcomes, including improved road user awareness and behaviors, positive community response, and traffic citations upheld consistently in court. This year, many communities also took a “good ticket” approach, often partnering with local businesses to deliver “caught being good” tickets that held local business discounts/free food to serve as positive reinforcement of safe behaviors observed.

Road User Violation	Citations Given	Warnings Given	Total Contacts
Drivers: failure to yield to pedestrians	148 (60%)	355 (27%)	896
Pedestrians: failure to use crosswalk	32 (13%)	725 (55%)	843
Bicyclists: failure to use signals	68 (27%)	236 (18%)	327
Total	248	1,316	2,066

Conclusion

Overall, the 2015 program involved significant participation by partners in diverse communities across NC. Participants reported strong collaborations between police, schools, planning, and other departments. They noted that strong partnerships, established action plans, and long-term commitment to the program and pedestrian/bicycle safety in general were keys to effectively implementing the Watch for Me NC program. Participating communities continue to evolve their plans to strengthen and achieve pedestrian and bicycle safety goals through a variety of ways.