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Research Brief

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Community Trainings at Work: An Evaluation of Community Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Trainings

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Community Trainings at Work

An Evaluation of Community Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Trainings

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The Community Pedestrian Bicycle Safety Training (CPBST) program trains and mobilizes communities to address pedestrian and bicycle safety and strengthens collaboration with local officials and agency staff. This research brief summarizes an evaluation of the CPBST program completed in 2018.

What is the Community Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Training (CPBST) Program?

The CPBST was founded to increase pedestrian and bicycle safety in communities throughout California. A joint project of UC Berkeley SafeTREC and California Walks, the CPBST program is designed to increase community capacity and knowledge about proven safety countermeasures for walking and biking, with the ultimate goal of reducing traffic-related injuries and death. Between 2009-2018, the CPBST team has conducted 89 CPBST workshops in communities across California.

The tailored workshops cover subject matter to help communities plan, finance and implement pedestrian and bicycle safety initiatives. To be considered for a workshop, communities must have a documented pedestrian or bicycle safety need and organizations in place to support the ability of the community to implement action plans developed at the workshop. Additionally, the CPBST management team prioritizes underserved communities when selecting the sites. Once host communities are selected, they participate in a two-to-three month workshop planning process with the CPBST team during which they decide on the focus and logistics of the workshop. The planning committee is responsible for inviting community partners, residents, business owners, and other interested parties to the workshop (see program details box for more information). After the workshop, the CPBST team provides a report that summarizes the action plans developed during the workshops, as well as recommendations for next steps and provides follow-up support to communities in technical assistance, grant writing, additional training, and other activities.

Program Details

The workshop lasts about four hours and has three main parts:

- 1. Presentation:** Workshop facilitators focus on equity/empowerment, evaluation, engineering, enforcement, education, and encouragement (what the program calls the “6 E’s”).
- 2. Walking audit:** Participants observe first-hand the pedestrian and bicycle safety challenges and opportunities their community faces.
- 3. Planning Session:** Participants collaborate in brainstorming and planning for safety improvements in the community.

Workshops throughout the years have included collaborative exercises with public officials, community members, and other partners, such as photovoice and videovoice projects to document the community’s safety needs and walk audits to document locations that community members found unsafe for walking or bicycling (Fearer and Beck, 2016; Babka et al., 2011).

Community-Based Participatory Research

The CPBST uses principles of Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR), which is a type of research in which researchers, practitioners and community members who will be most affected by the outcomes of the research partner to conduct research that leads to actionable, sustained goals for the affected community. CBPR projects are co-constructed between researchers and communities; foster equitable, ongoing relationships among partners; and take a social-ecological perspective that addresses multiple determinants of health (Israel et al., 2012). Critically, they address issues that the host community identifies as important (Minkler et al., 2003). While the overall focus of the CPBST workshop is pedestrian and bicycle safety, communities determine additional focus areas, such as child safety, older adult safety, safe routes to school or parks, concerns about litter on sidewalks, etc.



Workshop presentation in partner community.

Program Evaluation

In 2017, SafeTREC researchers evaluated the CPBST program in order to gain a better understanding of the effectiveness of the workshops and to contribute to general knowledge about community-based programs addressing street safety. The research team used a mixed-methods approach of surveys, participant observation, and follow-up interviews to evaluate workshops in 13 of 20 California communities in 2017-18. The program's short-term effectiveness in meeting the following goals was evaluated:

1. providing relevant safety information to participants,
2. building community partnerships,
3. increasing walking and cycling in host communities,
4. improving perceptions of pedestrian and bicyclist safety, and
5. planning for additional safety countermeasures.



North Shore CPBST, 2017

Evaluation Framework

The evaluation team followed a four-step approach to evaluating the CPBST program. First, the team identified the purpose of the evaluation, then clearly defined program goals as well as process and outcome objectives that aligned with these goals. The evaluation team worked with workshop facilitators to review the evaluation plan and measurement tools, and to integrate the evaluation into the workshops. During the workshops, the evaluation team collected information using surveys and observations, then 6-9 months after the workshops, the evaluation team interviewed members of the planning committees in the 13 communities evaluated. After analyzing this information, the team developed and shared evaluation findings with community partners, practitioners and researchers.

Sources:

Israel, Barbara A., Eng, Eugenia, Schulz, Amy J. (Eds.), 2012. *Methods for Community-Based Participatory Research for Health*, 2nd ed.

Minkler, Meredith, Blackwell, Angela Glover, Thompson, Mildred, Tamir, Heather, 2003. Community-based participatory research: implications for public health funding. *Am. J. Public Health* 93 (8), 1210–1213. <https://doi.org/10.2105/AJPH.93.8.1210>.

Fearer, Jaime, Beck, Kate, 2016. P23- Walking the Talk: Using Community-Based Participatory Research to Increase Underserved Communities' Capacity to Improve Pedestrian Safety. *J. Transp. Health* 3 (2), 575–576. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jth.2016.05.026>.

Evaluation Findings

Based on this evaluation, the research team found that these workshops:

- Had beneficial effects on identifying community needs, developing partnerships between stakeholders, and changing perceptions of safety in historically disadvantaged communities.
- Improved participants' perceptions of the role that community organizations and community events play in pedestrian safety efforts.
- Provided a critical space for community stakeholders to meet, learn a common language about safety, and develop partnerships around pedestrian and bicycle safety.

Host communities have used the workshops as support for grant applications, and several have obtained funding for pedestrian and bicycle improvements after participating in the workshops.

“The workshop helped to give power and language for the community to advocate directly to the city and state.”

– Workshop Planning Committee Member

“Learning about safety for walking helps me feel like I can speak up for improvements in the focus community.”

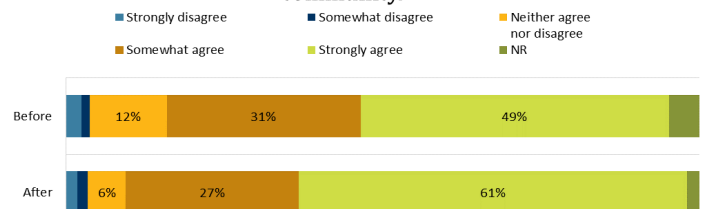


Figure 1: Workshop helped participants advocate for improvements

Additional Resources:

[Community Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Training Program Evaluation Report:](#) This report provides a summary of the qualitative and quantitative methods used to evaluate the CPBST program, findings, and lessons learned.

[CPBST Case Study in Florence-Firestone:](#) This blog post presents an example of a community where a CPBST workshop helped to build partnerships and provided stakeholders with information that was used in funding applications.

[How effective are community pedestrian safety training workshops? Short-term findings from a program in California:](#) This article about evaluation findings was published in the *Journal of Transport and Health's* March 2019 issue.