

Learn it. Do it. Live it!



Crossing Guards help students cross the street safely throughout the year in all weather conditions. See how your school and community can participate in Crossing Guard Appreciation Day, one of Virginia's Safe Routes to School (SRTS) statewide

What is Crossing Guard Appreciation Day?

Crossing Guard Appreciation Day is a statewide event devoted to saying thank you to those who help students cross the street safely on their way to and from school.

The Virginia SRTS program has designated the second Wednesday as Crossing Guard Appreciation Day. We encourage your school and community to use this day to show your appreciation for the women and men who help make safe routes to school a reality.

Got questions?

Contact our hotline at **1.855.601.7787**
or email us at **info@VirginiaSRTS.org**

Who is a Crossing Guard?

Crossing guards are any adults who are trained to provide assistance to students crossing the street on their routes to and from school. Crossing Guards can be police officers, teachers, school staff, or volunteers.

How to Participate?

Whether simple or elaborate, Crossing Guard Appreciation Day events are a great way to acknowledge the value your crossing guards bring to safe travel to school.

Event ideas here include ways to say thank you in person, promote the work of your crossing guard, and ways to support their work. Most important is offering a heart-felt thank you.

Find flyers, templates, banners and other downloads at www.virginiadot.org/safe-routes. Find what you're looking for on the Acknowledgements Page.

Event Ideas

Say Thank you, in person!

- ✓ Schools, parents, and other community members can host a meet and greet with coffee, hot chocolate, and some 'comfort food' after the morning shift on a cold February morning.
- ✓ Students should be encouraged to walk or bike (bundled up appropriately!) and thank their crossing guards in-person.
- ✓ Students can make thank you cards in class to give to the crossing guard on the way home. This can be part of art class, or social studies class, or another class.
- ✓ Teachers can help students write songs, cheers, or poems thanking the crossing guard for their help. Students can deliver their message during school dismissal.
- ✓ Parents can write thank you cards to either deliver in person or send with children on the way to school.
- ✓ Principals can write official letters of appreciation and deliver them during the afternoon dismissal.
- ✓ Schools can think of new ideas of their own! Anything that expresses gratitude for their service is an eligible activity.



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CROSSING GUARD APPRECIATION DAY



Event Ideas

Promote their work

- ✓ Communities can nominate their crossing guard for one of the Outstanding Crossing Guards of 2013.
- ✓ Contact local media sources to highlight your crossing guard for a personal interest story.
- ✓ Make a video of your crossing guard at work to post on your school website, share with media, or use to help promote your schools' SRTS program.

Support their work

- ✓ Schools can apply for a QuickStart Mini-grant to upgrade crossing guard equipment such as stop paddles, reflective vests, flashlights, etc.
- ✓ Outstanding Crossing Guards of 2013 (see more below)

Interested in becoming a crossing guard or training adults to be crossing guards at your school?

Crossing guards should receive training before assisting students. Many Virginia communities offer training. Call your local government's office of citizens' assistance, or try a website search for crossing guard training.

Questions? Contact our Local Technical Assistance Coordinators at 1.855.601.7787 or email us at info@VirginiaSRTS.org.

Teaching Opportunity

While the focus of Crossing Guard Appreciation Day is on crossing guards and the work that they do, it can also be a good time to remind students how to cross streets safely, especially when crossing guards are present.

Important Messages for Students

- ✓ If under the age of 10, remind students to cross with the help of an adult or older sibling.
- ✓ When waiting to cross, students should stand at least 3 steps away from the edge of the sidewalk or curb.
- ✓ When the crossing guard enters the crosswalk, students should remember stay on the sidewalk until the crossing guard waves at the students, giving them the signal that it is safe to cross.
- ✓ While waiting to cross, students should practice looking left-right-left, as well as behind and then watch the crossing guard to see if the crossing is clear of cars and safe to cross.
- ✓ When using the crosswalk students should walk quickly without running. For safety reasons students should not roughhouse with other students while walking to/from school, especially in the street.
- ✓ Students should always cross in front of the crossing guard.
- ✓ Students should remember to only walk in the marked crosswalk when crossing the street. If there is not a marked crosswalk, students should walk directly in front of the crossing guards and make a straight line to the opposite side of the street.
- ✓ It is important for students to obey crossing guards at all times. If crossing guards tell students to stop walking, students need to follow directions as the crossing guard may see a potential threat that is not clear to young students.
- ✓ Remind students to thank their crossing guards for the work that they do every day. A simple "thanks for your help today" can go a long way towards showing crossing guards that they are valuable members of the community.

