

## Project Summary: “Bike On” Community Rodeos

Sponsoring Organization: South Eastern Alberta Safety Alliance Society (SEASAS)

Contact Information: Ms. Sabrina Moore/ [seasas@telus.net](mailto:seasas@telus.net) / 403-529-2912

Project Start/End Date: February 9<sup>th</sup>, 2010/ August 21<sup>st</sup>, 2010

This project targeted the unsafe practices of cyclists by hosting three community bike rodeos in the communities of Medicine Hat, Redcliff and Brooks and also developed a bike rodeo resource kit. The rodeos focused specifically on affecting changes in participant’s knowledge and safety behaviour.

SEASAS focused on the SMARTISK theme: “Buckle Up, Look First, Wear the Gear, Get Trained and Drive Sober”. Each community Bike Rodeo was comprised of five stations that focused specifically on this key messaging. There were Helmet, Bike Maintenance and Traffic Safety stations as well as an Obstacle Course station that included three components; the Slow Race, Shoulder Checking and a Ride A-Long.

The **Helmet station**, along with pertinent information promoting helmet use, also provided a free helmet to those that required one including individuals with lower income levels. This station also provided information about proper fit, brain injury and the various types of helmets. At the **Bike Maintenance station**, there were several technicians on hand to inspect the bikes. Along with the inspection came easy to follow instructions for children and parents on basic bike maintenance. Bells were also mounted on bikes that did not have them, as unbeknownst to many, bells are required by law. The rationality of this law was also discussed. Participants were also provided promotional South Eastern Alberta Traffic Safety Coalition red blinking lights that are to be utilized if a bike driver is cycling at night. Most individuals attending the bike rodeo did not realize that they are required by law to have at least one red tail lamp and at least one red reflector mounted on the rear when riding at night. At the **Traffic Safety station**, rules of the road were examined. Many individuals that are biking, including adults, do not realize that the same rules of the road apply to them as they do to any other vehicle. Subsequently, the project committee ensured that the correct information was relayed as to their responsibilities as a road user. The use of hand signals was also discussed and participants had the chance to learn and practice them. The project committee also reviewed traffic signs and their meanings with the younger bike rodeo participants.

The **Obstacle Course station** had three challenging activities aimed at testing and participants visual and balance capabilities. The **“Slow Race”** was utilized to showcase the balance and coordination required of bike drivers. The name of the game was to be the LAST person across the finish line. Pylons were also set up at this station meant for participants to weave in and around them, again highlighting the importance of balance, coordination, cognitive abilities and proper handling. The last leg of the obstacle course station was **“Shoulder Checking”**. A volunteer stood behind the participant with a hand-made car on a stick. The participant called out whether they seen the car or did not see the car, depending on when the volunteer choose to hold it up. This activity tested visual capacities and highlighted the importance of shoulder checking while maintaining balance. The final stop was the **“Ride A-Long”** station where we were fortunate enough to have the Medicine Hat Police and RCMP bicycle unit officers on hand. This final leg of the bicycle rodeo was meant to reinforce all newly acquired knowledge and skills by having the officers model the correct/safe behaviours and practices.

SEASAS able to secure a \$200 donation from the Kinsmen Club of Medicine Hat to provide complimentary BBQ’s in Redcliff and Medicine Hat for participants and their families. We also raffled off door prizes at each rodeo and at the final rodeo, with participant’s slips from all three rodeos, made a grand prize draw for bicycles donated by Sport Check.

Another very important and valuable component of the project was the compilation of a **“Bicycle Rodeo Kit”** to be used at future rodeos and to be shared with other communities. The kit is also a method of streamlining the safety information to ensure consistent messaging. This kit also provides an opportunity for other community partners to access such information and resources without having to re-create the wheel. (For detailed

information about the Bicycle Rodeo Kit resources please contact the project manager or the ATSF Grant Program Coordinator).

The essential items and supplies for the resource kit include:

- Bike Rodeo Passports (These are easy to follow “itineraries” that participants use to guide them along to each station. Upon leaving each station the page is hole-punched to ensure the participant has been to all stations. These are also entered for prize draws.)
- Stand Up Signs for Ride A-long Station (Stop, Yield, Do Not Enter, Railroad Crossing, Left Turn Only, Pedestrian Crossing, No Turn Left)
- Handheld Signs for Traffic Safety Station (Stop, Yield, Do not Enter, Railroad Crossing)
- 500 Promotional SEATS Coalition red flashing lights
- Approximately 50 bells to be placed on bikes that require them
- 1 Large walled awning tent
- 15 Safety vests for volunteers
- Hole Punches
- Jello Brain
- Pylons
- Registration Box

Other Miscellaneous Items:

- Helmet Foam
- Helmets (If supply exists)
- Air Pump
- Sidewalk Chalk, Marking Tape

Key/Notable Learning’s from this project included:

- ❖ Most participants did not realize that bells are a requirement of law
- ❖ Participants did not know how often or the particular circumstances of when to replace a helmet (if involved in crash)
- ❖ Most participants recognized that a helmet needed a “safety sticker” to ensure it was safe
- ❖ The younger participants (4-6 year olds) did not understand the concept of where to cross if a marked crosswalk was not present.
- ❖ 22% of participants thought that the correct side of the road to ride on was the left
- ❖ All bike participants recognized that they were supposed to walk their bikes across the street (as to whether all of them do, is a potential observational study for the future).

Note: It is the writer’s opinion that participants, specific to this question, told the volunteers what they knew to be the right answer, but not necessarily practice.

Further Findings:

- ❖ It will take further education and promotion to get many individuals over 18 to wear a helmet. They seem to think that because it’s not a requirement of law for them, that this is a proper excuse for not wearing one. It’s the project manager’s opinion that this has always been an issue and will continue to be an issue in the future without changes in legislation.
- ❖ Regardless of promotion, some events held simply won’t meet the highest expectations for attendance. Certain factors are always present that may affect attendance including weather and/or other community events being offered at the same time.

For more information about this project and to see the additional resource materials please contact the ATSF Grant Program Coordinator, Mandy Fisher @ 780.492.0887 or the Project Manager, Sabrina Moore @ 403.529.2912.