

SLOW DOWN, MAKE EYE CONTACT

Distractedness and speeding are HUGE issues for ALL road users—motorists, cyclists /skateboarders, walkers/joggers alike. Middlebury's Walk & Roll to School Day the first Wednesday of each month in town is all about practicing safe rules of the road (and sidewalks). We emphasize making good eye contact and indicating intent and direction by waving and pointing.

A Middlebury resident reported that she saw two college students on bikes collide on October 3. Neither stopped to look before crossing the street, yes on Route 30 on campus but one from each side of the street without so much as a glance to car traffic. Then they crashed into each other in the middle of the road and on the crosswalk. Another resident observed a cement truck "laying rubber" on Route 125 just in front of Munroe because a female Middlebury College student never took her eyes off her smart phone screen as she approached and then continued into the crosswalk. She can't believe there are not more accidents on campus streets. Middlebury Police, emergency responders and residents look with horror when Middlebury College students on bikes race down College Street past the intersection with Weybridge and Shaffer's Deli against one-way traffic. They should be dismounting and using sidewalks or continuing with the flow of traffic on Academy St. This offense is a major pet peeve of locals.

Let's work together to teach and monitor rules of road and SLOWING DOWN FOR A SAFER TOWN. Here's what Middlebury Safe Routes teaches monthly.

Pedestrians should use sidewalks, cross at crosswalks, wait for signals, use crosswalk safety flags & rapid flashing LED beacon lights to signal intent to cross (*look for these at Cross/ S Pleasant St intersection by high school & Court/N Pleasant St by Middlebury Inn*). These lights improve your visibility significantly. Always look first & make eye contact with motorists before crossing. Cyclists ride with traffic bearing as far right as practicable, yield to pedestrians, stop at stop signs, signal turns with arms, use lights/reflectors at night. Take lane when needed, such as when riding next to parked cars or when storm drains obstruct right portion of lane or when negotiating a left turn or rotaries or when directed by local ordinance, such as down Main St by "sharrow" and "start/end" stencils on the road where there is no shoulder and the road is tight. Drivers slow down for, yield to walkers & cyclists, don't text & drive, SLOW DOWN FOR SAFER TOWN! *Walkers hit by cars at 40 mph have 15% survival rate while those hit at 20 mph have 85% chance of survival.*

While motorists by state law must stop for individuals in designated crosswalks, individuals have an obligation to look for approaching vehicles first and signal their intent to cross and use common sense to wait for fast approaching vehicles to pass first.

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Middlebury Safe Routes