



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Asbury Park Street Smart NJ Pedestrian Safety Campaign Underway

Asbury Park kicked off its Street Smart NJ pedestrian safety campaign Wednesday, reminding drivers and people walking and biking to be safe when travelling city streets.

“This campaign is important to Asbury Park because we are a very walkable and bikeable City that prioritizes the safety of our streets’ most vulnerable users,” Asbury Park Mayor John Moor said.

The extra emphasis on pedestrian safety comes as students are returning to school this week.

Street Smart NJ – coordinated by the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA) – is a collaborative effort between public, private and non-profit organizations that aims to change driver and pedestrian behaviors through education and enforcement. The program, which began in 2013 with five pilot sites, has expanded to include more than 80 community partners.

City and county officials, representatives from the NJTPA, EZ Ride Transportation Management Association, and the Brain Injury Alliance of New Jersey participated in the kickoff event at the Asbury Park Transportation Center.

“Pedestrian safety is a top priority in Monmouth County every day, but it’s especially important as students return to school this week,” said Monmouth County Freeholder Director Thomas A. Arnone, a member of the NJTPA Board of Trustees. “I hope you will all keep safety in mind as you’re walking, driving or cycling through our communities.”

Street Smart NJ campaigns make a difference. Evaluations following previous campaigns have found a 40 percent reduction in drivers failing to yield to crossing pedestrians or cyclists and a 28 percent reduction in pedestrians failing to use the crosswalk or crossing against the signal.

The campaign focuses on five core messages. Drivers are reminded to Stop for Pedestrians and Obey Speed Limits, while pedestrians are urged to Use Crosswalks and Wait for the Walk. A fifth message, Heads Up, Phones Down, reminds everyone to avoid distractions.

Asbury Park's Police Department will be distributing safety tip cards, which highlight the state's pedestrian laws and include Street Smart NJ's five core messages. They will also be reminding drivers and people walking and cycling to obey New Jersey's laws when travelling in Asbury Park.

Street signs with the five core messages have been posted in the city and area businesses are displaying posters and other materials with safety messages, including coasters, cup sleeves and table tent cards.

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has designated New Jersey a "focus" state for the high pedestrian fatality and injury rate. From 2013-2017, 825 pedestrians were killed in motor vehicle crashes, according to New Jersey State Police. During that time more than 22,000 pedestrians were injured. Pedestrians accounted for 27.6 percent of people killed in vehicle crashes in New Jersey in 2016, while the national pedestrian fatality rate for that year is 16 percent, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

In Asbury Park, there were 97 pedestrians involved in motor vehicle crashes from 2012-2016, according to Numetric, the New Jersey Division of Highway Traffic Safety's crash analysis tool. There were no pedestrian fatalities during that time, but the crashes injured 77 pedestrians, including eight with incapacitating injuries.

Motor vehicle crashes are one of the leading causes of brain injuries in New Jersey. Wendy Berk, Vice President of Development and Communications for the Brain Injury Alliance of New Jersey, participated in the kickoff event to raise awareness about support services available to those with brain injuries and to emphasize the importance of prevention, which is the only cure for a brain injury.

"The Brain injury Alliance of New Jersey is committed to working with our community partners to make our roads safer for all users," Berk said. "Everyone is a pedestrian and drivers and walkers share the responsibility for reducing crashes that occur every day in our state."

For additional information on Street Smart NJ visit bestreetsmartnj.org.

For more information on the City of Asbury Park, visit www.cityofasburypark.com

The NJTPA is the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for 13 northern New Jersey counties. Under federal legislation, MPOs provide a forum where local officials, public transportation providers and state agency representatives can come together and cooperatively plan to meet the region's current and future transportation needs. It establishes the region's eligibility to receive federal tax dollars for transportation projects.

The NJTPA Board consists of one local elected official from each of the 13 counties in the region (Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Hunterdon, Middlesex, Monmouth, Morris, Ocean, Passaic, Somerset, Sussex, Union and Warren), and the cities of Newark and Jersey City. The Board also includes a Governor's Representative, the Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Transportation, the Executive Director of NJ TRANSIT, the Chairman of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, and a Citizen's Representative appointed by the Governor.