

## **Cycling Smarts Pilot Program**

The Working Centre is partnering with the City of Waterloo and community partners to provide a pilot program on school-based cycling training for grade 5 and 6 elementary students. Cycling Smarts will run from April to December 2026 and will include in school training sessions for four schools in the City of Waterloo.

### **Why is this program important?**

Early access to cycling education is a proven way to establish lifelong active transportation habits among children. Cycling is not only a healthy transportation option; it is also an affordable and accessible choice for kids and youth to get around the region's vast network of urban cycling routes. By learning how to ride a bike at a younger age, kids are establishing a life-long skill that will benefit them for their entire lives. Cycling skills and knowledge on how to ride safely in an urban environment can unlock a sense of freedom and agency that we hope every kid will feel at the end of the training program.

### **What will students learn during the Cycling Smarts Pilot Program?**

The pilot program is based on the curriculum developed and delivered by Cycling in the Future (CIFT) between 2014-2022. The Working Centre is working closely with the CIFT team to build on best practices and learn from their extensive experience providing school-based cycling training.

As part of the Cycling Smarts pilot program, student will learn:

- Road safety rules and best practices.
- How to repair a flat tire.
- How to balance, turn, stop, and start with confidence on a bike.
- Follow a route in an urban environment, including riding safely on a road and trail.
- How to safely signal and shoulder check while riding.
- How to be aware of their surroundings on residential streets.

### **How will students learn during the sessions?**

The program is built to support a diversity of learners in grades 5 and 6. The session instructors will provide the content using a variety of teaching methods, including hands-on-learning, role-playing, practical on-bike road training, and classroom tools such as a slide presentation, and an interactive digital game (Kahoot). There are 5 session modules, two will be held indoors, two in the school yard, and one will involve students riding in small groups with instructors guiding them to practice riding on residential streets and trails.

### **Will students who have never ridden a bike before be able to participate?**

Yes, absolutely! Students and parents will be asked to fill in a pre-training survey, and will be asked to indicate if a student has no experience riding a bike. The program instructors are ready to provide pre-session training to introduce students to their first experience on a bike. These sessions will be

held on school-grounds, and based on the students' needs, with a low ratio (1:1), to ensure students feel well supported in their learning. Though learning to ride with confidence takes time, the intention is to provide students with a doorway into cycling, and they will be able to fully participate in the classroom and some of the sessions in the school yard.

**How can I learn more about this and other cycling education programs?**

You can reach out to the Recycle Cycles ([recyclecycles@theworkingcentre.org](mailto:recyclecycles@theworkingcentre.org)) to find out more about the pilot program and future plans!