



**King County Bicycle Helmet & Safety Project 2024**  
**Final Report**

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PHSKC - Violence & Injury Prevention Unit

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## **Project Summary**

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Since 2022, the King County Council has funded the Violence & Injury Prevention (VIP) Unit of Public Health – Seattle & King County to increase bicycle safety education and outreach among traditionally underserved and underrepresented communities in King County. This report highlights VIP’s work in calendar year 2024 within a racial and justice framework. The program will sunset in 2024 due to a lack of funding.

In 2024, Public Health’s bicycle safety funds were used to

- Pay the salary and benefits for a part-time Bicycle Safety Manager who coordinated all the activities highlighted in this report
- Distribute 2512 bicycle helmets to community members directly and through partner organizations
- Train over 50 staff from community-based organizations how to fit helmets properly
- Give away 137 bicycles
- Instruct 357 youth on bicycle riding and safety skills
- Repair approximately 115 bicycles belonging to low-income and unhoused residents
- Promote bicycling and bicycle safety at numerous community events
- Communicate with and make connections among 200 bicycle safety advocates in the region
- Create educational content that reached over 351,000 viewers via webpages and social media

## Bicycle Helmet Distribution

VIP staff distributed 2512 free bicycle helmets to King County residents, prioritizing low-income residents, communities of color, and unhoused communities. Appropriate staff received helmet fit training when the helmets were given to organizations.



*The West Seattle YMCA staff smile after receiving helmet-fit training from VIP staff. They fitted 100 young people with free helmets during the YMCA’s annual Healthy Kids Day in May.*

### Recipients of PHSKC Free Bicycle Helmets 2024

Recipient	Region	# Helmets
South King County Fire and Rescue	Serves Federal Way, parts of Auburn, and Des Moines	60
Puget Sound Regional Fire Authority	Serves Covington, Kent, Maple Valley, SeaTac, and Tukwila	150
Valley Regional Fire Authority	Serves Algona, Auburn, and Pacific	105
Bicycle Rescue for Youth	Covington, Maple Valley, other South King County areas	50
City of Kent Bicycle Advisory Group	Kent	60
12 King County YMCA branches for Healthy Kids Day events	Auburn, SeaTac, Kent, Coal Creek, Bellevue, Seattle, West Seattle, East Madison/Seattle, Northshore, Shoreline, Sammamish, Snoqualmie	1,125
PHSKC Community Outreach Worker program	South King County	40
Algona Police Department	Algona	50
Muckleshoot Tribe Youth Program	Tribal land/Auburn	75
Alpac Elementary	Pacific/Auburn School District	25

<b>Recipient</b>	<b>Region</b>	<b># Helmets</b>
SeaMar Clinics	South Park/Seattle and Burien	75
Bitter Lake Community Center	Bitter Lake/Settle	50
KC Sheriff Community Services Office	Burien	45
KC Sheriff Community Services Office	Skyway	130
VIP staff working alongside PHSKC Health Care for the Homeless Mobile Medical Van	Seattle & South King County	35
PHSKC Community Health Navigators	South King County	293
We Love Our City (volunteer community group)	Federal Way	25
Rainier Vista Boys & Girls Club	Rainier Valley/Seattle	5
Mother Africa	Kent	25
Real Change (unhoused vendors)	Seattle	25
Compass Housing Alliance (supportive housing)	Auburn	25
Sidney Wilson House (supportive housing)	Renton	15
Neighborhood House School Health Center	Federal Way	24
	<b>Total # helmets</b>	<b>2,512</b>

## **Bicycle Access and Safety Grants**

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The VIP program awarded five grants through a competitive Request for Application (RFA) process. A group of evaluators individually reviewed and scored each application and collectively decided the top awardees. VIP staff brought all grantees together in September to meet each other and share success stories. All current grantees were interested in future funding; VIP staff followed up with a resource list of possible funding sources as well as general bicycle-related organizations and conferences.

Here are summaries of the successes of each of the nonprofits that received grants:

### **Cycle Therapy Racing - \$10k**



In partnership with the City of Auburn Parks and Recreation, this all-volunteer nonprofit organization held a twice-a-week BMX( bike motocross) biking program for youth ages 3 – 17 at Cedar Lanes Park. The goal was to provide a fun, safe, and educational environment for youth to learn biking skills while



promoting mental health through physical activity. Far surpassing their goal of serving 100 youth in their 6-week program, they impacted an impressive 254 unduplicated youth. The largest number of riders were between the ages of four and eight. On average, five to ten volunteers helped at each three-hour session, teaching proper helmet fit and pump track skills, such as pumping, balancing, turning, and jumping. They helped five kids transition from balance bikes to pedal bikes each session. In addition, they gave away T-shirts to each rider who attended at least three days of camp and, along with the City of Auburn, donated approximately 75 free helmets and 30 bicycles to attendees in need.

They finished the 12-day summer camp by inviting all attendees to the River Valley BMX racetrack in Sumner to allow the children to test their new skills. Seventy-five kids attended, along with 15 volunteers. Leaders were thrilled when 35 out of 75 participants signed up for a BMX membership to begin racing.

### **First Five Years & Beyond - \$10k**

First Five Years & Beyond (FFYB), a nonprofit agency serving African Immigrant and African American families in South King County, used their grant funds to replicate and refine a program they began last year.

Over the summer, four staff members provided biking and safety instruction to 22 youth ages 5 – 18. Bicycle Rescue for Youth helped select, purchase, build, and deliver the bikes used for the program, even providing more than FFYB paid for to ensure they had enough to fit all participants.



Knowing transportation was a big challenge for the families they serve, program staff offered four educational sessions via Zoom on weekdays followed by four in-person rides on the weekends, so families only had to drive their children to the FFYB office once a week. Eight kids learned or re-learned how to ride a bike, while those more experienced went on group rides on the Interurban Trail. Staff competently handled mechanical issues that arose thanks to their training last year from Bike Works.

The program culminated in a celebratory event with food, school supplies, and water bottles, and each participant got to take home the bicycle and helmet they used during the program. Staff worked with parents to bring bikes to kids' homes, as transporting bikes by personal vehicles proved difficult. Despite this obstacle, 100% of parents surveyed (via Survey Monkey and phone calls) said they were satisfied with the program.



### **Bike Works - \$15k**

Bike Works is a non-profit organization that, since 1996, has promoted the bicycle as a vehicle for change to empower youth and build resilient communities. Their grant award supported their ongoing and successful

BikeMobile and Bikes for All (BFA) programs serving low-income residents and communities of color living in “bike deserts” – neighborhoods where bike shops are absent and have been historically underserved by public investment in transportation and other public services.

During the grant timeline of June 1 through September 30, staff of the BikeMobile – a full-repair bicycle shop on wheels – made 35 visits to 6 sites. They repaired 258 bikes and gave away 89 bicycles (with helmets, lights, and locks).

In addition to these quantitative metrics, Bike Works deepened its ongoing relationship with community partners such as Ella, the Seattle Housing Authority’s Community Builder at High Point. It also developed new fruitful partnerships, including with staff and patrons of the King County Libraries in Renton and Skyway.





## Bicycle Rescue for Youth - \$5k



From May through September 2024, Bicycle Rescue for Youth (BRY), an all-volunteer non-profit organization, provided 50 refurbished bikes, helmets, and locks to low-income youth in South King County as part of its overall yearly goal of 125 bike giveaways. To hold these donation events, BRY partnered with Rainier Middle School in Auburn and food banks in Maple Valley and Covington.



BRY is not just addressing low-income families' financial

barriers to owning bikes; it's also passionate about bridging the bicycle education gap. They partnered with community organizations in South King County to lead four bike rodeos, piloting how best to teach youth skills like starting, braking, stopping, hand signals, and essential bike maintenance. It will use what it learned to sponsor more bike rodeos next year.

Due to the success of their programs, BRY was awarded two large grants from the City of Covington and King County Parks this October to expand their work in 2025.

## Rainier Vista Boys & Girls Club - \$5k



The Rainier Vista Boys & Girls Club (RVBGC), a local affiliate of the Boys & Girls Club of King County, partnered with Sweetlines, a local business dedicated to building a passionate, inclusive, and diverse mountain biking community, to conduct two week-long summer camps for youth at the Rainier Vista Boys & Girls Club in South Seattle. Professional instructors from Sweetlines trained RVBGC staff to co-lead two weekly bicycle safety clinics during the summer, serving 11 youth. The young people learned mountain biking skills and safety measures like wearing helmets correctly and ensuring their bikes were in good working condition. They then practiced what they learned by riding on nearby Cheasty Trails and Bike Park.

Staff noted that all participants expressed enthusiasm and excitement about riding bikes due to their experience. Of the nine youth who completed the post-program survey:

- Eight said they know how to choose a safe bike route
- Eight said biking was a great form of exercise for them
- Seven said they feel confident riding a bike in their neighborhood
- Six said they would like to mountain bike more than they are now





## Other Outreach and Education Projects

- During Bicycle Safety Month in May, VIP staff partnered with King County Parks to showcase four family-friendly bicycle trails. Staff posted four blogs highlighting one trail per week and offering simple bicycle safety tips.
  - May 30: <https://publichealthinsider.com/2024/05/30/a-cyclists-haven-take-a-bike-ride-on-the-burke-gilman-trail/>
  - May 24: <https://publichealthinsider.com/2024/05/24/bike-safety-month-spotlight-on-soos-creek-trail/>
  - May 17: Amplified posts from Cascade Bicycle Club -- Bike Everywhere Day!
  - May 8: [A Playground for Biking: Top tips for safe family bike rides – PUBLIC HEALTH INSIDER](#)
  - On Friday, May 17, during Bike Everywhere Day, VIP staff joined King County Parks staff at a booth at Log Boom Park on the Burke-Gilman Trail in Kenmore to give out fun, free items and bicycle safety materials while promoting King County Parks. Approximately 50 bicyclists stopped to interact.
- VIP staff provided other bicycle safety outreach and messaging to the public in several ways:
  - Updating the PHSKC Bike Helmets and Bicycle Safety webpage: [Bike helmets and bicycle safety - King County, Washington](#)
  - Working closely with data partners, such as the Washington Traffic Safety Commission (WTSC), Washington Department of Transportation (WSDOT), King County Emergency Medical Services (EMS), and the Harborview Trauma Registry, VIP staff compiled information on bicycle-related injuries and fatalities and shared them with the public via the website. As of October 2024, the webpage received **over 1,000 views**, three times more than last year at the same time.
  - Updating the list of free and low-cost bicycle helmet resources on the webpage [Free and Low-Cost Bicycle Helmets in King County, updated April 25, 2023](#)
- As part of its ongoing communication strategy, VIP staff managed an email list of over 200 individuals and organizations involved and/or interested in bicycle safety in King County to share information, resources, and funding opportunities.
- VIP staff participated in several community events throughout the year
  - We Love Our City, an all-volunteer community group in Federal Way, put on its first bicycle safety event in July. VIP staff provided helmets and connected the organizer to other bike-related organizations. Besides fitting kids with free helmets, the event also included a bike rodeo, bike



giveaways, free bike repairs, snacks for kids and families, and a chance to win a raffle prize for filling out a bicycle safety quiz handed out when participants arrived.



- A reporter interviewed VIP staff for the Federal Way Mirror after the event. An article in the neighborhood paper followed: [We Love Our City hosts its first Bike Safety Event | Federal Way Mirror](#)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

1. What is the name of the fire engine? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What must you always wear when riding a bike? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Before crossing the street you must look \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_
4. Go to the Red Canoe Credit Union booth. Bounce a beach ball 10 times without stopping
5. If you have an emergency while riding a bike, who do you call?
6. Show the 3 bike hand signals to an adult at the recycle station \_\_\_\_\_ (volunteer initial)
7. Always use the \_\_\_\_\_ when crossing the street
8. What side of the road should you always ride on? \_\_\_\_\_
9. Before riding check your bike \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_
10. See Jason for a sticker and put it here

Complete & return to the sign in station for a chance to win a prize. Winners will receive a text. Pick up by 12 noon

- Seattle Housing Authority's Community Builder invited VIP staff to speak to the High Point community about bicycle safety after a crash between a young resident riding a bike and a motorist. Staff called upon Bike Works, which already has a regular Bike Mobile presence there, to do most of the educational presentation. About 35 residents of all ages attended.



- Partners at the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration invited VIP staff to co-staff an educational table at the National Christmas Tree display event at Gene Coulon Memorial Beach Park in early November.

- The VIP Educator created a short, creative bicycle helmet video posted on social media. The video guided the audience through finding and fitting the right helmet.
  - Instagram link: [https://www.instagram.com/reel/DAY8AR\\_Srv3/?utm\\_source=ig\\_web\\_copy\\_link&igsh=MzRIODBiNWFIZA==](https://www.instagram.com/reel/DAY8AR_Srv3/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=MzRIODBiNWFIZA==)
  - Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/share/r/15nsT34oXP/>



- In the fall, the VIP team partnered with Cascade Bicycle Club (CBC) to develop a social media campaign aimed at King County male drivers aged 25-44 to remind them to share the road safely with people on bikes. Findings from an analysis of WSDOT data informed the project. The data described the characteristics of drivers involved in motor vehicle crashes with bicyclists in King County over the 5-years 2019 – 2023.

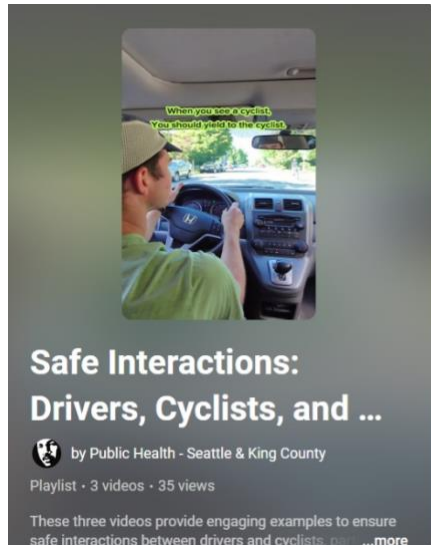
CBC staff and volunteers filmed and edited three videos for the Meta platform (Facebook and Instagram) that contained messages about:

- 1) how drivers should pass people on bikes safely (12-second video)
- 2) how drivers should yield to bicyclists when crossing paths at an intersection (19-second video)
- 3) how to behave as drivers, bicyclists, and pedestrians at intersections (41-second video)

The videos aimed to give engaging examples of how drivers and cyclists should interact to ensure everyone’s safety, especially since intersections are the most dangerous places for biking and walking.

CBC posted each video ad to Facebook and Instagram and tagged PHSKC as a collaborator. PHSKC was then able to post the videos to YouTube: [Safe Interactions: Drivers, Cyclists, and Pedestrians Guide - YouTube](#)





***The three videos, posted in sequence, engaged 350,000 viewers in a three-week period.***

- With special funding from the VIP Unit, Mother Africa, a non-profit working with African and Middle Eastern refugee and immigrant families in South King County, developed a program to teach 20 youth ages 6 – 12 how to ride bikes safely. First Five Years and Beyond, a grantee in 2023 and 2024, offered their expertise in designing Mother Africa’s program after their own: kids and families completed bicycle safety lessons online. Then, they came to a two-hour outdoor event in Kent where each participant was fitted with a new helmet and received a new bike provided by and fitted by Bicycle Rescue for Youth. For some youth, this was their first time riding a bike.
- The VIP Unit also supported the work of Seattle Public Schools’ Safe Routes to School Program in the fall. Coordinator Brooke Nelson and school and community partners designed community events at or around five schools to promote riding and walking to school and celebrate some newly created street art and school traffic gardens.
  - At **Olympic Hills Elementary**, Brooke partnered with Mello Fellos Mobile Bike Repair to attend the school’s Family Movie Night and provide fee minor bike repairs for students and their families. Brooke also gave away 30 reflective safety vests to students at the event.
  - **Beacon Hill International School’s** PE teacher and other staff hosted a Bike Rodeo for youth and family members after school one day. Odessa Brown Children’s Clinic and Public Health staff fitted and gave away 140 new helmets. Public Health funds paid for half of the helmets, decorative stickers, bike decorations, a Traffic Garden banner, safety games, and staff time.



- To celebrate new, student-designed street art done by **Dunlap Elementary** and **South Shore PK-8** Bike Bus and Walk Groups, Seattle Public Schools Safe Routes to School and Seattle Department of Transportation hosted a group costume walk and bike ride from Othello park to Harvest Fest at Rainier Beach Community Center. Approximately 40 walkers and bike riders participated in the “Dash to the Bash” event. Public Health helped to sponsor the Harvest Fest organizing group, CHAMPS Community Resource Center—funds paid for food vendors, entertainment, and family activities.







- Public Health dollars also provided stipends for several adults who live in the Seattle Housing Authority community of High Point to lead the **West Seattle Elementary** Walking and Biking School bus program.



## Conclusion

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The VIP Program's work in 2024 accomplished the directives of the King County Council by increasing access to bicycle helmets and bicycle safety within traditionally underserved and underrepresented communities in King County.

The VIP Program employed multiple educational and outreach strategies to meet its social and racial equity goals, including distributing bicycle helmets, ensuring organization staff received helmet fit training, using social media to educate about safer driving, investing money back into communities to design and implement programs, and keeping the public informed of bicycle safety practices.

The VIP Team extends heartfelt gratitude to Lisa Watson for her dedicated leadership in advancing bike helmet safety. Lisa's unwavering commitment and tireless efforts have been instrumental in achieving these milestones.

We also thank the PHSKC leaders for their support and the King County Council for funding these activities.

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