

## **American Association for Physical Activity and Recreation Wins Major Bicycle Safety Grant**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Reston, VA** – In September the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) awarded the American Association for Physical Activity (AAPAR) \$324,000 to develop and implement a bicycle safety program. Known as a cooperative agreement, this award empowers AAPAR to work in partnership with NHTSA to develop a fun, engaging curriculum that teachers and recreation professionals will use to teach safe bicycling to children in elementary school, middle school, high school, and recreation centers.

The project will include a train-the-trainers model, a pilot program and evaluation, a new certification, and collaboration with the federal government's Safe Routes to School program. The project will span nationwide and extend for more than three years.

“Children love the freedom and exhilaration of riding a bike,” Mariah Burton Nelson, Executive Director of AAPAR, said. “Early bicycle adventures can lead to a lifelong commitment to physical activity and energy-efficient transportation. But bike riding is one of the most frequent causes of injury-related death for young children. We’re excited about this opportunity to use our members’ expertise to increase fitness and reduce injuries.”

AAPAR was well positioned to receive this noncompetitive award because of its successful 2007 *Get Out!* national conference that included a bicycle safety program, its Paddle Safe Paddle Smart Canoe and Kayaking program, and its numerous relevant special interest groups such as the Safety and Risk Management Council, the Lifelong Recreational Sport Council, the Measurement & Evaluation Council, and the Council for Adventure and Outdoor Education/Recreation.

With financial and technical assistance from NHTSA, AAPAR plans to create a program that will increase safe ridership, decrease accidents, and make a significant contribution to national traffic safety.

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### **About AAPAR & AAHPERD**

The American Association for Physical Activity and Recreation (AAPAR) serves more than 8,600 professors, teachers, trainers, and community leaders who promote lifelong physical activity and recreation for all. AAPAR is one of five national associations that make up the American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (AAHPERD), which

was founded in 1885 and is the largest organization of professionals committed to achieving a healthy lifestyle. For more information, visit [www.aapar.org](http://www.aapar.org).

**About the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration**

NHTSA was established by the Highway Safety Act of 1970 to carry out safety programs previously administered by the National Highway Safety Bureau. The agency directs the highway safety and consumer programs established by the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 1966, the Highway Safety Act of 1966, the 1972 Motor Vehicle Information and Cost Savings Act, and succeeding amendments to these laws. For more information, visit [www.nhtsa.dot.gov](http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov).

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