



Best Foot Forward for Pedestrian Safety (BFF)

OVERVIEW

Every seven minutes in America, a pedestrian is struck by driver. Nowhere is the problem more severe than Metro Orlando, where two pedestrians are injured every day, and one is killed each week. The Orlando-Kissimmee MSA continues to be ranked as the “Most Dangerous” pedestrian metro of the past decade, according to the *Dangerous by Design* report, released by the National Complete Streets Coalition.

Over [60%](#) of all pedestrian injuries and fatalities occurred while pedestrians were crossing at a marked crosswalk. (2011-2015). [Over 30%](#) of all pedestrian injuries and fatalities were caused by drivers failing to yield to pedestrians in marked and unmarked crosswalks. (2011-2015 pg. 44)

PEDESTRIANS						
Fatalities + Injuries	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Lake	65	79	79	94	106	120
Orange	530	578	640	592	679	781
Osceola	87	97	99	143	166	143
Seminole	101	115	114	105	133	155
Total	783	869	932	934	1,084	1,199
BICYCLISTS						
Fatalities + Injuries	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Lake	50	45	50	46	41	49
Orange	441	483	481	486	462	453
Osceola	66	88	73	99	102	90
Seminole	101	141	117	140	104	119
Total	658	757	721	771	709	711



Equivalent to two 747 jumbo jets crashing in Central Florida every year

The Best Foot Forward pedestrian safety initiative was launched in May 2012 to reverse this conflict between pedestrians and drivers by focusing on one specific behavior change - get more drivers to yield and stop for pedestrians at marked crosswalks as [Florida law requires](#).

More than a campaign, this “Triple-E” approach seeks to create individual behavior change and lasting social good through the persistent and persuasive application of low-cost engineering, individualized marketing (education), and dual high-visibility enforcement at the observed crosswalks three to four times a year.

SHORT TERM OBJECTIVE: [Measuring Progress](#)

At Observed Marked Crosswalks

65%: yield rate at the observed marked crosswalks on roads 35mph and less

5% increase in yield rates at each observed marked crosswalks on roads posted 40mph and higher

County-wide

50%: average yearly yield rate on roads 35mph and less

25%: average yearly yield rate on roads 40mph and higher



LONG TERM OBJECTIVE

Reduce pedestrian injuries and fatalities within a 1-mile radius of observed crosswalks

TIMING

To build and launch the program: ten to 15 months.

BUDGET:

To build, hire/train and launch the program in Orange County and the city of Orlando: \$175,000 to \$200,000.

To conduct research, build the coalition, develop the program, and launch was funded by MetroPlan Orlando and Winter Park Health Foundation.

METHODOLOGY:

Adopted from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration’s “High-Visibility Enforcement on Driver Compliance with Pedestrian Right-of-Way Laws,” the “[4-Year Follow-Up](#),” and NHTSA’s “Countermeasures That Work.”

PROCESS: STEPPING UP TO ADDRESS A VERY REAL NEED

BUILDING THE PROGRAM - BFF PHASE I

Goals:

- (1) Have a clear rationale understood by the public for the specific behavior change (call to action) you are asking people to adopt
- (2) Ensure tracking driver yielding behavior is easy to monitor and within competence for individuals to comply (and to know that they are doing so - reward)
- (3) Determine organizational structure, management and resources
- (4) Build a grassroots coalition of community leaders representing engineering, enforcement and education (Top-Down Approach)
- (5) Identify staff to represent and be responsible for each coalition partners’ deliverables

STRATEGIC APPROACH:

- Identify an outside group (non-profit) to administer, localize and manage the program on behalf of coalition partners (Boots on the ground)
- Seek resolution of support from each coalition member – such as cities, counties, local law enforcement agencies, police chief associations, metroplanning organizations, transit agencies, public schools, health departments and non-profits.
- Recruit BFF champions from key stakeholder groups, including elected officials, traffic planners, law enforcement, public transit, tourism, trauma, education and advocacy to be





ambassadors – write opinion pieces, website content and newsletter articles; serve as a media spokesperson; speak publically; host events; become an ambassador.

- Schedule and commit to monthly face-to-face meetings with the coalition staff (steering committee)
- Develop a branded, grassroots campaign to encourage and persuade individuals to choose to *do the right thing* and stop for people crossing the street using crosswalks
- Stand-out in a sea of safety slogans with the attention-grabbing campaign name: Best Foot Forward. It's positive, short and grabs attention.
- Bring the same concerted effort and resources that propelled seat belt usage to 85% compliance. (Time & Money)

BUILDING THE PROGRAM – BFF PHASE II

Goals:

- (1) BFF Steering Committee to identify five to fifteen marked crosswalks to enforce, track and measure driver yielding behavior
- (2) Calculate the number of drivers yielding to a pedestrian in a marked crosswalk to determine baseline data
- (3) Determine engineering changes needed at observed crosswalks

STRATEGIC APPROACH

- Use specific criteria to determine crosswalk eligibility: located mid-block, enforceability, engineering upgrades required, located within 2-miles of a public schools, walking distance of a transit stop, located within each city or county district, cross section of road speeds and recent incidents of pedestrian and driver collisions.
- Local law enforcement confirms crosswalks are enforceable
- Use the [driver yield rate methodology](#) to calculate the driver yield rates:
 - Employ the signal timing formula from the Institute of Traffic Engineers (1985) to determine if drivers can safely stop. This formula accounts for driver reaction time, safe deceleration rate, the posted speed, and the grade of the road.
 - Use this approach: place a landmark at the safe distance on each side of each crosswalk. If driver passes this landmark when a person started to cross could be scored as yielding to pedestrian but not failure to yield. If pedestrian entered the crosswalk before driver crossed the landmark, the score could be yielding or failure to yield because the driver had sufficient distance to stop.
- Identify low-cost, easily implementable crosswalk upgrades for each crosswalk such as additional crosswalk paint, pedestrian crossing W11-2 signs, advanced stop lines or yield markings, RRFBs, or school crossing signs.

BUILDING THE PROGRAM - Phase III

Goals:



- (1) Confirm county and city local law enforcement agencies are committed to dual-HVE enforcement actions – same day, same time
- (2) Train enforcement and start issuing warnings three months in advance of the first high-visibility enforcement operation
- (3) Develop, localize and launch the Best Foot Forward public campaign
- (4) Train and hire program staff

Strategic Approach:

- Enforcement training: follow the [High Visibility Enforcement on Driver Compliance with Pedestrian Right-of-Way Laws](#) , watch roll call videos and conduct a training operation
- Hire a full or part time community outreach specialists through the non-profit
- Hire a full-time program manager through the non-profit
- Localize educational materials, messaging and build a digital presence
- Bring the message “home” for residents of Orlando/Orange County by partnering with existing neighborhood safety organizations, homeowner associations and local schools.
- Leverage emerging media to extend the brand, establish dialogue and build good-will in the community.
- Issue warnings at the observed crosswalks a minimum of five times prior to the first HVE; Give all drivers stopped for a violation a flyer about the driver yield law.
- Invite media to enforcement operations, giving warnings to drivers
- Leverage all media across multiple platforms, ensure that all BFF coalition partners are interviewed and/or cited in media
- Produce content for website, social media and newsletters to celebrate BFF coalition partners role and commitment to getting more drivers to comply with Florida’s right-of-way law



LAUNCHING THE PROGRAM

- (1) Press conference with all [BFF coalition partners](#)
- (2) Organize first High-Visibility Enforcement Action and [invite the media](#) ; Schedule three to four high-visibility enforcement actions a year where county sheriff and local police departments conduct operations on the same day, same time. Call the HVE “Operation Best Foot Forward.”
- (3) Before and after each Operation Best Foot Forward, measure driver yielding behavior to show progress.
- (4) Outreach, Education, Outreach
- (5) Quarterly newsletters – stories about each partner and community outreach
- (6) [Track, Track, & Measure](#)
- (7) Celebrate yield rate progress
- (8) Invite locals to join the BFF movement
- (9) Schedule Mayors to be interviewed



EFFECTIVENESS (EVALUATION)-

In Central Florida, BFF has recognized a definitive cycle where more drivers are slowing down and stopping for pedestrians following high-visibility enforcement actions and engineering upgrades.

What has helped BFF sustain is the seeing positive progress being made in an area where improving street safety seems daunting.

Increasing driver yield rates across the county is a result of BFF coalition’s long term commitment, the consistency in messaging and sharing positive localized stories, and the flexibility provided by a non-profit managing this program. The non-profit can adapt quickly, work weekends, stay focus and avoid the burdens of bureaucratic decision making.



Through constant tracking, we have seen the percentage of drivers yielding to pedestrians in crosswalks 40 mph and higher jump from 2% to 35%. In crosswalks 35 mph and lower, we have seen a percentage increase from 17% to 55%.

In the Numbers: Triple E Progress



Over the past six years, BFF has given 7,485 citations and warnings during 360 enforcement details at 56 marked and monitored crosswalks.

Our 333 presentations and events have reached 11 million people and our earned media has reached over 100 million viewers.



To date, the Best Foot Forward has earned more than **\$3M in media coverage value**. This value denotes what it would have costed BFF to advertise for every positive press mention or story in radio, print or TV. It doesn't include the costs for digital or social media advertising. Through leveraging traditional and non-traditional media, Best Foot Forward has established dialogue that can effectively speak to pedestrian safety in Central Florida.

EVALUATION

- 100% active support at the highest levels of the community.
- 7 official resolutions of support from Orange County and most of its incorporated cities and towns
- MetroPlan Orlando made ped safety (BFF) its top priority and approved a pedestrian safety action plan.
- [Orange County Mayor](#) Teresa Jacobs joins the nationwide effort to make streets more pedestrian friendly, referencing the Best Foot Forward Program.
- Orange County Mayor Teresa Jacobs [Orlando Sentinel article](#) to announce Walk Ride Thrive, five-year, \$15 million initiative to improve streets for walkers and bikers, referenced Best Foot Forward program.
- Orange County Mayor Teresa Jacobs includes Best Foot Forward in her [State of the Orange County \(2015\)](#) address
- Orlando Mayor Buddy Dyer included the issue in his annual State of the City address.
- Orlando Sentinel identified ped safety as a top editorial priority.
- Sentinel reader poll: 80% in favor of ticketing drivers for failure to yield to pedestrians.
- Orange County Public Schools includes the WalkSafe curriculum in K-2 PE classes.
- The area's only Level One Trauma Center made pedestrian safety (BFF) the focus of its philanthropic event to raise awareness for this critical, life-saving resource.
- Lynx bus service placed iYieldforPeds bumper stickers on 300 buses.
- More than 7,500 drivers warned or cited \$164 tickets and 3 points on license.



[WFTV Traffic Reporter, Racquel Asa](#), now includes Operation Best Foot Forward crosswalk enforcement as part of WFTV's traffic updates.