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Press Release

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IMMEDIATE

Metro-North Announces Rail Safety Poster Contest for Children

Contest Aims to Educate and Empower Children to Stay Safe Near Railroad Tracks

Metro-North Railroad is asking kids to get creative about safety. The Metropolitan Transportation Authority today announced that Metro-North is holding a Rail Safety Poster Contest for students who attend schools within Metro-North's territory throughout New York and Connecticut.

The contest asks students, from grades pre-K to 12, to create posters illustrating what they believe is most important about rail safety. Students are encouraged to submit as many poster ideas as they'd like, and they're free to use any art medium they choose for their poster. All artwork must be original.

TRACKS, the railroad's safety outreach and education program, is running overseeing the contest. TRACKS, an acronym for "Together Railroads And Communities Keeping Safe," is run by Metro-North's Office of System Safety; the program earned the Gold Award for Safety, which is the highest safety award presented by the American Public Transportation Association.

This free community outreach program is intended to educate and promote rail safety. TRACKS covers grade crossing safety, rider safety, trespassing and suicide prevention; it's designed for students, drivers, customers, pedestrians and residents who work and live in or around the communities Metro-North Railroad serves.

In addition to organizing the kid friendly poster contest, to help make its safety message resonate with young people, TRACKS introduced special ambassadors, a super-hero known as Metro-Man, and his faithful companion, a dog named Tracks. The characters are incorporated into safety presentations and are featured in coloring and activity books that help reinforce the safety message. Metro-Man - a Metro-North employee dressed in a special costume that features a voice modulator and LED display - and his sidekick Tracks, who is played by a MTA Police Department canine, also make appearances at community events and safety presentations.

Students can submit posters about any of the key themes covered by the TRACKS program, including: train passenger safety, pedestrian safety, grade crossing safety, trespassing on railroad property and gap safety. All posters should incorporate the TRACKS slogan "Learn the Facts, Stay Off the Tracks!", and applicants are encouraged to use hashtags #MNR Tracks and #USRailSafetyWeek.

"Safety is our top priority at Metro-North," said Catherine Rinaldi, President of Metro-North Railroad. "The poster contest is an original, fun way to promote our safety message and help keep students who live in the railroad's territory out of harm's way. Since Metro-North initiated the program in 2016, TRACKS has reached 210,000 people, and the poster contest will only serve to amplify this outreach."

"Our goal is to be out there every day whether it is a school presentation, community or public events and expositions, station or grade crossing outreach events," said Justin Vonashek, Vice President of System Safety. "We average TRACKS outreach about four to five times per week, and will continue to strive to be out there every day."

The deadline for contest registration is October 26, and submissions will be accepted until November 30. One poster will be selected from each grade level group (pre-K, K-3, 4-8 and 9-12). There is no limit to the number of posters a school can submit. A school may choose to submit one poster as a school representation or multiple posters by individual classrooms, small groups of students or individual students to also represent the school. The winners will be decided and revealed on Monday, January 14th, 2019.

For more information about TRACKS and the safety poster contest please visit: <http://web.mta.info/mnr/tracks>.