

Back to School Safety and Sharing the Roads

Slow Down: Back to School Means Sharing the Road

School days bring congestion: Yellow school buses are picking up their charges, kids on bikes are hurrying to get to school before the bell rings, harried parents are trying to drop their kids off before work.

It's never more important for drivers to slow down and pay attention than when kids are present – especially before and after school.

If You're Dropping Off

Schools often have very specific drop-off procedures for the school year. Make sure you know them for the safety of all kids. More children are hit by cars near schools than at any other location, according to the National Safe Routes to School program. The following apply to all school zones:

Don't double park; it blocks visibility for other children and vehicles

Don't load or unload children across the street from the school

Carpool to reduce the number of vehicles at the school



School buses are like traffic signals for drivers

It is back-to-school time and if you are driving to and from school, you'll be sharing the road with school buses doing the same thing. Remember to treat school buses like traffic signals!

Sharing the Road with Young Pedestrians

According to research by the National Safety Council, most of the children who lose their lives in bus-related incidents are 4 to 7 years old, and they're walking. They are hit by the bus, or by a motorist illegally passing a stopped bus. A few precautions go a long way toward keeping children safe:

Don't block the crosswalk when stopped at a red light or waiting to make a turn, forcing pedestrians to go around you; this could put them in the path of moving traffic

In a school zone when flashers are blinking, stop and yield to pedestrians crossing the crosswalk or intersection

Always stop for a school patrol officer or crossing guard holding up a stop sign

Take extra care to look out for children in school zones, near playgrounds and parks, and in all residential areas

Don't honk or rev your engine to scare a pedestrian, even if you have the right of way

Never pass a any vehicle stopped for pedestrians or school bus picking or dropping off children

Always use extreme caution to avoid striking pedestrians wherever they may be, no matter who has the right of way



Timothy K. McGuire
MCWCF Administrator
mcguire@micounties.org



800-258-1152
WWW.MICOUNTIES.ORG



AJ Hale
CompOne Risk Mngt Services
ajhale@compone.net

Getting to School

Whether children walk, ride their bicycle or take the bus to school, it is vitally important that they – and the motorists around them – take proper safety precautions

Back to School Safety Checklist

As summer draws to a close and children start heading back to school, family life can get pretty hectic. It's important to remember – and share with your children – some key tips that will help keep them safe and healthy throughout the school year.

Walkers:

- Walk on the sidewalk; if there is no sidewalk and you must walk in the street, walk facing traffic.
- Before crossing the street, stop and look left, right and left again to see if cars are coming
- Never dart out in front of a parked car
- Parents: Practice walking to school with your child, crossing streets at crosswalks when available
- Never walk while texting or talking on the phone

Bike Riders:

Always wear a helmet that is fitted and secured properly

Children need to know the rules of the road: Ride single file on the right side of the road, come to a complete stop before crossing the street and walk the bike across

- Watch for opening car doors and other hazards
- Use hand signals when turning
- Wear bright-colored clothing

School Bus Riders:

- Teach children the proper way to get on and off the bus
- Line up 6 feet away from the curb as the bus approaches
- If seat belts are available, buckle up
- Wait for the bus to stop completely before standing
- Do not cross in front of the bus if possible, or walk at least 10 feet ahead until you can see the other drivers

Sharing the Road:

- Don't block crosswalks
- Yield to pedestrians in crosswalks, and take extra care in school zones
- Never pass a vehicle stopped for pedestrians
- Never pass a bus loading or unloading children
- The area 10 feet around a school bus is the most dangerous for children; stop far enough back to allow them to safely enter and exit the bus

Eliminate distractions:

- Research shows that taking your eyes off the road for just two seconds doubles your chances of crashing. And children can be quick, crossing the road unexpectedly or emerging suddenly between two parked cars. Reduce risk by not using your **cell phone, adding make-up, texting or eating** while driving

