

Back to School Means SHARING the Road

SLOW DOWN!

School days bring congestion. Yellow school buses are picking up and letting off their charges. Hurried parents are scouting out the closest parking places to drop off or pick up kids. Children on bikes are riding fast to get to school before the bell rings. Other children may be walking or running to be in class on time.



As school resumes, drivers are reminded to ***slow down and pay attention*** whenever and wherever kids are present – especially before and after school.

- More children are hit by cars near schools than at any other location, according to the National Safe Routes to School program.
- Children on bikes are often difficult to see; they create special problems for drivers because they may not be able to properly determine traffic conditions.
- Most of the children who lose their lives in bus-related incidents are walkers, 4 to 7 years old, according to the National Safety Council.

Sharing the Road with School Buses (and the children who ride them)

- Never pass a bus from behind – or from either direction if you're on an undivided road – if it is stopped to load or unload children.
- If the yellow or red lights are flashing and the stop arm is extended, traffic must stop.
- The area 10 feet around a school bus is the most dangerous for children; stop far enough back to allow them space to safely enter and exit the bus.
- Be alert; children often are unpredictable, and they tend to ignore hazards and take risks.

Sharing the Road with Other Parents Who are Dropping Off or Picking Up

- Don't double park; it blocks visibility for other children and vehicles.
- Don't load or unload children across the street from the school.
- Pay attention to marked school zones and speed limits.
- Carpool to reduce the number of vehicles at the school.

Sharing the Road with Bicyclists

- When passing a bicyclist, proceed in the same direction slowly; leave 3 feet between your car and the cyclist.
- When turning left and a bicyclist is approaching in the opposite direction, wait for the rider to pass.
- If you're turning right and a bicyclist is approaching from behind on the right, let the rider go through the intersection first; always use your turn signals.
- Watch for bike riders turning in front of you without looking or signaling.

- Be extra vigilant in school zones and residential neighborhoods.
- Watch for bikes coming from driveways or behind parked cars.
- Check side mirrors before opening your door.

Sharing the Road with Young Pedestrians

- Don't block the crosswalk when stopped at a red light or waiting to make a turn; it encourages walkers to go around the vehicle and may put them in the path of moving traffic.
- In a school zone when flashers are blinking, stop and yield to pedestrians crossing at 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 vehicle stopped for pedestrians.

<http://www.nsc.org/learn/safety-knowledge/Pages/back-to-school-safety-tips-for-drivers.aspx>

