



TOOLBOX TALK: BACK TO SCHOOL SAFETY

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It is always good to remind your employees when it's time for school to begin the importance of sharing the roads with buses and school aged children.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, riding a school bus is 13 times safer than riding in a passenger vehicle and 10 times safer than walking to school. More children are hurt outside the bus than as passengers on the bus. The majority of children who died in bus-related accidents were pedestrians, four to seven years old, who were hit by the bus or motorists illegally passing a stopped school bus. Know the proper laws and procedures for sharing the road safely with school buses and school aged children:

School Buses

- All 50 states have a law that makes it illegal to pass a school bus that is stopped to load or unload children.
- Yellow flashing lights on school buses are alerting the motorists that they are preparing to stop to load or unload children. Red flashing lights and an extended stop sign arm tells motorist that the bus is stopped and children are getting on or off the school bus.
- All 50 states require that traffic in both directions stop on undivided roads when children are entering or exiting a school bus (Red lights flashing and stop sign arm is extended).
- Stop your vehicle far enough from the school bus to allow the children enough space to safely enter and exit the school bus. The area 10 feet around a school bus is where children are in the most danger of being hit.
- Be alert and aware of your surroundings. Children can be unpredictable. They can take risks, ignore hazards or fail to look both ways when crossing the street.
- NEVER pass a school bus on the right. It is ILLEGAL and can have tragic consequences.
- Do not text and drive or have other distractions that can cause a tragedy.

Pedestrians

- Drivers should never block crosswalks or portions of the crosswalk when stopped at a red light or waiting to make a turn.
- When warning flashers are blinking in a school zone, you must stop to yield the right-of-way to a pedestrian crossing the road in a marked crosswalk or at an intersection with no marked crosswalk.
- Be on alert and follow directions given by school patrol signs, school patrol officers or designated crossing guards.
- Take extra care during school times to watch out for children not only in school zones, but also in residential areas, playgrounds and parks.
- Do not honk your horn, rev your engine or scream at them to make the children go faster.

As drivers we must simply use common sense, be courteous and stay within the law. When you see a school bus, think caution! No one ever likes to have to deal with school traffic. So if it becomes an issue with you, plan to go a different route, leave a little earlier or later to avoid the school traffic. Getting to and from your job or anywhere else is never as important as getting our children home safely at the end of each day.

Also, as parents, we should instruct our children about the dos and don'ts of school traffic and how to behave when on a school bus!

www.gribbins.com/back-to-school-safety-tips-for-motorists

