

## **Get Prepared for Back to School Safety!**

It's almost back to school time!

As school doors open, traffic gets a little heavier on our streets. People are back from holidays, school buses and public transit are on regular routes, and more people are walking, cycling or driving to school.

To help with the transition and share the roads safely, read our safety tip. Help everyone stay safe this school year!

### **1) Observe School Zone Speeds**

Although you should always obey posted speed limits, it is especially important during the school year. Children crossing the road on their way to and from school can easily get distracted and step into harm's way. Slowing down and being vigilant is crucial to keeping kids safe. Children are often out throughout the day at recess, lunch, and for certain classes, so it's important to drive slowly throughout the day.

### **2) Obey the Crossing Guard**

A crossing guard is there to keep children safe. If you come up to a set of lights, and the light turns green, but the crossing guard still says stop, follow his/her direction and not the traffic light. There might be a child still crossing the street that you can't see.

### **3) Watch for Darting Children**

Kids are small and easily distracted, and for drivers, this can create dangerous situations on the roads. Be vigilant and alert behind the wheel. You never know when a small child might step out from between parked cars or off a sidewalk. Your fast reflexes might be needed to prevent an accident.

### **4) School Buses**

Most mishaps take place outside the bus. Make sure children don't arrive too early at the bus stop where they can wander or get into mischief. Make sure children wait well away from the road and stay back until the school bus makes a full stop and the doors open. Explain that they must walk at least three metres (10 feet) away when crossing in front of the bus so the driver can see them. When driving your car near a school bus please note that extra caution is needed. You shouldn't pass a school bus when the signal lights are flashing (as children are often crossing the road at that time), and drive slowly as a general precaution.

The following information is useful for school bus passengers and their parents.

#### **Rules for getting on the bus safely:**

1. Be at the bus stop on time. Never run to or from the bus.
2. Wait at the designated stop in a safe place well back from the side of the road.
3. Remember the danger zone around the bus. The danger zone is anywhere close enough to touch the bus. The bus driver cannot see you when you are in the danger zone.
4. If you cross the street to get on the bus: when the bus comes, wait until it has come to a complete stop. The bus driver will make sure all the traffic stops. The stop arm will be out and the red lights will be flashing. Watch the driver. When the driver knows it is safe, he or she will signal you to cross, but watch for traffic yourself. Walk, don't run.
5. Hold the hand rail as you get on the bus. Don't push or shove.

**Rules for on the bus:**

1. Take your seat as quickly as possible and sit properly, facing forward at all times.
2. Hold bags and parcels in your lap. Do not put your feet into the aisle: someone might trip.
3. Keep your head, arms and everything inside the bus. Don't throw anything out the windows or around in the bus.
4. Talk quietly. The driver must concentrate to drive the bus safely.
5. Save snacks for snack time at school or for when you get home. They may spill or you may choke if the bus goes over a big bump.
6. No fighting, shouting or playing in or around the bus.
7. Always follow the bus driver's instructions.

**Rules for leaving the bus safely:**

1. When you leave the bus, hold the handrail and step away from the bus.
2. To cross the street in front of the bus, walk ahead at least 10 giant steps (three metres). Cross only when the driver gives a signal. Cross the street in single file.
3. If you drop something near the bus, don't pick it up. Tell the driver or another adult first.
4. If everyone is getting off the bus, the people at the front leave first. Do not push.
5. Be familiar with the bus driver's rules for emergencies.

This safety tip was prepared by Public Safety Canada in collaboration with the [Canada Safety Council](#).

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