

School Bus Safety Tips For Parents



School buses are nearly eight times safer than passenger vehicles. However, children must be careful when entering or exiting their bus. Nearly 75% of all school bus fatalities occur when children are outside the bus. Since 1995, 49% of all school age pedestrians in school-transportation related crashes were five to seven years old. Children are killed in the danger zone around the bus either by a passing vehicle or by the school bus itself.

Make sure your children know and follow these rules.

1. Be on time at the bus stop.
2. Never run to or from the bus.
3. Stand back from the curb.
4. Don't push or shove.
5. Stay in your seat.
6. Don't yell or shout.
7. Always obey the driver.
8. Wait for the driver's signal before crossing.
9. Always cross at least 10 feet in front of the bus.
10. Never crawl under a school bus.

Remove drawstrings and shorten long straps. Beware of yellow rain slickers.

Drawstrings and long straps can catch in school bus doors and handrails. Remove, shorten or replace drawstrings with another kind of fastener. Shorten long straps on backpacks.

Yellow rain slickers blend in with the school bus yellow and make the child less noticeable to the school bus driver. Choose a different color rain jacket.

Teach your child to ask the bus driver for help.

Talk to your child about asking the driver for help if he or she drops something near the bus. If a child bends down to pick up something, the driver may not be able to see him or her. Tell your child not to carry loose items but to put everything in his or her backpack and zip it shut.

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THINK SAFETY

Teach your child to get on and off the bus safely.

You are your child's best teacher. Talk to young children about school bus safety before they enter kindergarten.

When getting on the bus, teach your child to stay away from the danger zone and to wait for the driver's signal to cross the street. Teach them to make eye contact with the driver and to board the bus one at a time.

When getting off the bus, tell your child to look before stepping off the bus to be sure no cars are passing on the side of the road. Remind them to move away from the bus.

Teach your child to look left-right-left when coming to the edge of the bus to make sure traffic is stopped and to keep watching traffic when crossing the street.

Get involved in your child's transportation to and from school.

If you think your child's bus stop is in a dangerous location, contact your school's administration office or transportation director about changing the location. Work with your local police department so school bus safety laws are enforced in your community.

Studies in Illinois and Florida found almost 10,000 incidents (per day per state) of motorists illegally passing stopped school buses that were loading or unloading children. Motorists must be alert to school buses and know the school bus laws in their state. Children must be aware of the dangers around their school bus and to learn what they can do to arrive at school and at home safely every day they ride the school bus.



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