

Safety Tip of the Month: Back-to-School Bus Safety Checklist

Do you ride the bus to school every day? If you do, you're like 23 million other students across the country who wake up (yawn!), head over to the bus stop and catch the big yellow bus that comes cruising down the street.

Did you know that school buses are one of the safest forms of transportation around? The greatest potential danger is not riding the bus; it's before and after — before you get on and after you get off.

Getting to the Bus Stop

- Always get to the bus stop at least 5 minutes before the bus is due to arrive.
- Running across the road to catch the bus isn't smart.
- If you have to walk on roads where there's no sidewalk, always walk against traffic. Try to stay off the road as much as possible.
- When crossing the street to get to the bus, always look left, then right, then left again. Cars will approach on the left first. If there are parked cars blocking your view, go to the nearest corner cross walk.

Getting on the Bus

- When the bus approaches, do the smart thing: Step back and stand at least THREE GIANT STEPS away from the curb. That way, the bus driver can pull up to the curb so you won't have to walk out in the street to get on.
- Wait until the bus stops, the door opens and the driver says it's okay to board before stepping onto the bus.
- Never walk behind the bus or close to the side of the bus. You could be in the driver's blind spot.
- If you drop something near the bus, don't pick it up until you tell the bus driver because he or she may not see you.
- When you get on the bus, take your seat quickly.

While You're Riding the Bus

- When the bus is moving, always stay in your seat.
- Let the bus driver concentrate on the road. Just imagine how hard it would be to pay attention to the road with 30 students TALKING, TALKING, TALKING, TALKING all at once! Remember: The bus driver's job is to get you to and from school safely.

Getting Off the Bus

- When you leave the bus, use the handrail. It'll help you avoid a crash if you stumble.

- **Now this is really important:** Make sure there's nothing sticking out on you (your clothes, the hood of your coat, key chains, etc.) or your backpack (straps, drawstrings, or anything else) that could get caught in the handrail on the bus or the bus door. What if the bus driver takes off while you're still trying to get off the bus? Ouch!
- If you have to cross the street in front of the bus, walk on the sidewalk (or along the side of the road) to a point that's at least 5 GIANT STEPS ahead of the bus before you cross. Be sure that the bus driver can see you, and you can see the bus driver.