

Safe Routes to School

TIPS FOR PARENTS

Walking or biking to establishes a healthy habit that can last a lifetime. Studies show that kids who walk or ride to school:

- Arrive alert and able to focus on school
- Get most of their recommended daily physical activity during the trip to school
- Are more likely to be a healthy body weight
- Demonstrate improved test scores and better school performance
- Are less likely to suffer from depression and anxiety

GETTING TO SCHOOL

WALKING

- Children should always walk with an adult, other students, or a buddy.
- Always follow instruction from crossing guards.
- Cross at corners or marked crosswalks. This is where drivers expect you.
- Look left, right, and left again before crossing a street or driveway. Look over your shoulder for turning cars, especially at intersections.
- Don't assume that drivers see you. Make eye contact before you cross the street.
- Use a sidewalk when available. If there's no sidewalk, walk facing oncoming traffic.

BICYCLING

- Wear a helmet, every time. Helmets should fit snug and level on your head and should always be buckled firmly under your chin.
- Ride on the right, in the direction of traffic. Follow all signs and signals.
- On paths, pass walkers carefully. Ring your bell or call "on your left" before passing.
- When biking on the street, watch for opening car doors and cars turning across your path.
- Don't assume that drivers see you, especially when entering or crossing a street. Make eye contact and signal before you go, even if it is your turn.

RIDING THE SCHOOL BUS

- When waiting for the bus, remind children to be patient, stand back from road, and no running or rowdy behavior.
- When on the bus, kids should stay seated, listen to the driver, and use quiet voices.
- Discuss and demonstrate pedestrian safety to children and reinforce safe crossing after exiting a bus:
 - When getting off a bus, look to be sure no cars are passing on the shoulder (side of the road).
 - Before crossing the street, take five "giant steps" out from the front of the bus, or until the driver's face can be seen.
 - Wait for the driver to signal that it's safe to cross.
 - Look left-right-left when coming to the edge of the bus to make sure traffic is stopped. Keep watching traffic when crossing.

DRIVING + CARPOOLING

- Slow down in school zones. The safe speed may be less than 25 MPH.
- Set a good example by following instructions from crossing guards.
- Yield to pedestrians in crosswalks and at unmarked intersections. Look for children who may be crossing mid-block, too.
- Avoid unsafe maneuvers, such as U-turns.
- Set aside distractions and keep an eye out for unexpected movements by children.
- Park in legal spaces and avoid double parking or blocking neighbors' driveways.
- Consider finding neighbors with whom to carpool.
- If it's too far to walk with your child(ren), consider parking a few blocks away and walking the rest of the way.