

MSU-ES Dawg Tracks



August, 2009 School Bus & Back to School Safety



In the very near future approximately 22 million kids will be returning to school throughout the country. The majority of these kids will be getting on and off a bus each day. Sad, but true, some of these kids will be injured or even killed in school bus related incidents. In 1999, there were 164 children killed in school bus related accidents and another 18,000 injured. These figures are from statistics released by the National Highway Safety Traffic Administration Reporting System (FARS) and the General Estimates System (GES).

As we know, all drivers of any vehicle are supposed to stop for all school bus stops. But, you can't rely on what they are supposed to do. The National Safety Council (NSC) encourages parents to train their children to be aware of the vehicles, to look and not rely on what they are supposed to do and also the rules for **Getting on and off buses**. Following are the rules handed down by the NSC:

- When waiting for the bus, stay away from traffic and avoid horseplay, as this could lead to a careless accident.
- Line up away from the street or road as the bus approaches.
- Wait until the bus has stopped and the door is open before stepping into the roadway to enter.
- Use the handrail when entering the bus for added safety.

BEHAVIOR ON THE BUS

- When you are on the bus, get a seat and remain seated. Loud talk, noise or movement will distract the driver and are against the rules.
- Keep all your body parts inside the window.
- Keep the aisles clear. Backpacks or books in the aisles create the potential for a trip or fall hazard.
- Anticipate your stop point by having your books, satchel or backpack ready to dismount.
- When the bus completely stops, walk to the front orderly and dismount using the hand rail for extra security.

GETTING OFF THE BUS

- If you have to cross the street in the front of the bus, do so by walking at least 10 feet in front of the bus along the side of the road, until you can see the driver.
- Make sure that the driver can see you.
- When the driver signals, walk across the road, keeping your eyes out for sudden traffic changes.
- Do not cross the center line of the road until the driver signals that it is okay.
- Stay away from the back wheels of the bus at all times.

CORRECT WAY TO CROSS THE STREET

- Children should always stop at the curb or edge of the road. Look in both directions twice before crossing.
- They should continue to look both ways until they are safely across the road.

- Stay away from the bus's back wheels at all times.

CORRECT WAY TO CROSS THE STREET

- Children should always stop at the edge of the road and look in both directions several times before crossing. They should continue looking both ways until they are safely across the street.
- If the student's vision is blocked by a parked car or other obstacle they should move to a location where the driver can see them and they can see other vehicles—again looking in both directions before crossing.

MORE SAFETY TIPS

Walking to School -

~If your child is walking to school make sure that they have a safe route to travel and that there are well-trained crossing guards at the intersections.

~Be realistic about your child's pedestrian skills. Small children are sometimes impulsive and don't realize what can happen around traffic. You should give strong consideration to determine if the child is mature or familiar with the route enough to walk to school without adult supervision.

~If you can use bright colored clothing for the child it makes them more visible to other drivers of vehicles.

Backpack Safety -

~When purchasing a backpack, look for one with wide, padded shoulder straps and the underside padded.

~Teach your child to organize the pack with heavier items to the center of the pack. Distribute the contents by using all available compartments. It is recommended that the weight of the backpack should not be any more than 10 to 20% of the child's weight.

~Teach them to use both shoulder straps to equalize the weight. Using one strap can cause muscle strain.

~For students carrying heavier loads, you might consider a mobile pack with wheels. However, they still have to be carried up and down stairways and it may be hard to roll in inclement weather, especially in snow.

Bicycle Safety -

~Always wear a helmet, no matter what the distance of the ride.

~Ride on the right side of the road, in the same direction of the traffic.

~Use appropriate hand signals.

~When possible, wear bright colored clothing to increase your visibility.

~Know the "Rules of the Road."

**WORK SAFE TODAY-
HEAVEN CAN WAIT ~**

**SAFETY IS EVERYONE'S
RESPONSIBILITY!!**