



MSU-ES Dawg Tracks

August, 2015



*Back to School -
Bus Safety Tips*



School buses are one of the safest forms of transportation on the road today. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), riding a bus is 13 times safer than riding in a passenger vehicle and 10 times safer than walking to school.

FACTS-

- All 50 states have a law making it illegal to pass a school bus that is stopped to load or unload kids.
- School buses use:
 - ~Yellow flashing lights to warn motorists that they are preparing to stop to load or unload children.
 - ~Red flashing lights and an extended arm signal to warn motorists that the bus is stopped and children are getting on or off the bus.
- All 50 states have laws that require traffic in both directions and on divided highways to stop when students are entering or exiting a school bus.
- Some states have laws that vary on what is required on a divided highway, but in all cases traffic must stop behind the bus. (traveling in the same direction as the bus)
- The area of 10 feet around the school bus is the most dangerous where kids can get hit. Stop your vehicle far enough from the bus to allow the kids safe entry and exit in the bus.
- **Be alert!** Children are unpredictable – walking to or from their bus they are usually comfortable with their surroundings. This makes them more likely to take risks, ignore hazards or not looking both ways when crossing the street.
- **Never pass a school bus on the right.** It is illegal and could have tragic consequences.

SHARING THE ROAD SAFELY WITH CHILD PEDESTRIANS-

- ✓ Drivers should not block the crosswalk when stopped at a red light or waiting to make a turn. Do not stop with a portion of your vehicle in the crosswalk. Blocking the crosswalk makes the children have to walk around and out of the crosswalk placing them in a potentially dangerous situation.
- ✓ In school zones when a warning light is flashing, you must stop to allow the pedestrian to cross (they have the right-of-way) in a marked or intersection.
- ✓ Always stop when directed by a school patrol officer or a designated crossing guard.
- ✓ As stated earlier, children are unpredictable, so take great precautions to watch for them in school zones, residential areas, playgrounds and parks.
- ✓ Don't honk your horn, rev your engine or do anything that might alarm or scare a pedestrian, even if you have the right-of-way.

TIPS FOR A SAFER BUS RIDE-

- ✓ Be aware of moving traffic.
- ✓ Leave in plenty of time to get to the bus stop. Don't rush!
- ✓ Pay attention to your surroundings; listening to your music player or playing handheld video games may lead to distractions and potential injury.
- ✓ Don't wear a hood- it makes it more difficult to hear or see traffic.
- ✓ Stay at a safe distance from the street and don't play around while waiting for the bus.
- ✓ Stay at least 10 giant steps from the bus as it is pulling up so the driver can see you.
- ✓ Wait for the bus to come to a complete stop before you move towards it to get on - and also to stand up to get off.
- ✓ Be cautious of clothing, backpacks with drawstrings, toggles or key chains that can get caught on the bus handrails or doors.
- ✓ Hold on to the handrail entering and exiting the bus so you don't fall or trip.
- ✓ Find a seat and sit down as soon as you're on the bus.
- ✓ Be courteous and respectful to your bus driver. Listen to his directions.
- ✓ Don't put your arms, head or papers out of the bus window.
- ✓ Don't pick up anything that you drop near the bus. The driver may not see you. Instead ask the driver for help in retrieving the article.
- ✓ Wait when crossing the street until the driver tells you it is ok.
- ✓ Stay away from the bus wheels at all times – the driver can't see you.
- ✓ If you have a parent meeting you at the bus stop, make sure that he or she waits at the same side of the street where you will be dropped off so you won't have to cross the street.
- ✓ On the bus- talk quietly so you won't distract the driver.
- ✓ Never throw things on the bus or out of the window.
- ✓ Never play with the emergency exits.
- ✓ Keep the aisles clear at all times.
- ✓ If you need to talk to the bus driver, wait until he stops the bus, raise your hand and call the driver's name.
- ✓ Never speak to strangers at the bus stop and never get in the car with a stranger. Always go straight home and tell your parents if a stranger tries to talk to you or pick you up.
- ✓ If you leave something on the bus, don't go back after it, the driver may not see you and begin to move the bus.

Ted Gordon-Risk Mgmt. / Loss Control Mgr.
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Excerpts: www.aap.org/en-us

www.abouthschool.com/busstop.htm

National Safety Council

**DRIVE AS IF EVERY CHILD IS
YOUR OWN
&
DRIVE WITH REASON DURING
THIS "BACK TO SCHOOL"
SEASON!!**