



# MSU-ES Dawg Tracks

August, 2014



Back to School &  
School Bus Safety



It's hard to think that we are about to complete another summer. Where does the time go? I am beginning to believe that the old adage, "time flies when you're having fun," must be true. It seems like only a day or so ago that we returned from Christmas Holidays!

## SHORT FACTS REGARDING SCHOOL SAFETY-

- Approximately 25% of the more than 14 million unintentional injuries to children happen in and around schools. Not surprising since about 53 million kids in the USA spend almost a quarter of their waking hours on school property.
- The National **SAFE KIDS** Campaign in a study revealed that 2.2 million kids age 14 years and under are injured in school-related injuries each year.
- Accidents can be prevented if parents are on the lookout for potential hazards.

The SAFE KIDS, the Consumer Product Safety Commission and the American Academy of Pediatrics have developed the following tips to help in keeping kids safe:

- ✓ **Plan a walking route to school or to the bus stop** – Choose the most direct route with the fewest crossings. If it is possible, use crossings with crossing guards.
- ✓ **Walk the route with your child beforehand** – Caution them to stay away from parks, fields, vacant lots and other places where there aren't many people around.
- ✓ **Teach your child to never talk to strangers** – Do not accept gift or offers of rides. Remember – a stranger is anyone that the family doesn't know or trust.
- ✓ **Be sure that your child walks to school with a friend, sibling or neighbor.**
- ✓ **Teach your child to - whether they are walking, biking, or riding a bus to school - to obey all traffic signals and officers.**
- ✓ **Remind them to be extra careful in bad weather.**
- ✓ **When driving kids, park and pick up as close to the school as possible** - don't leave until they are in the building or schoolyard.
- ✓ **If the child rides a bike to school, make sure that they wear a helmet that meets safety standards.** Research has proven that a helmet reduces the chance of a head injury by up to 85%.
- ✓ **If the child rides a scooter to school, make sure that they wear sturdy shoes, a helmet, kneepads and elbow pads.** The Consumer Product Safety Commission recommends that no child under 12 years should ride a motorized scooter.
- ✓ **Teach children to arrive at the bus stop early** – Stay out of the street, wait for the bus to completely stop before approaching the street, watch for cars and avoid the driver's blind spot.
- ✓ **Remind the children to stay seated at all times** – Keep their head and arms inside the bus while riding. When exiting the bus – wait until it comes to a complete stop and then exit from the front using the handrail to avoid falls. Cross the street at least 10 feet in front of the bus.

- ✓ **Tell your child to not bend down in front of the bus to tie their shoes or pick up objects.** The driver may not be able to see them before he starts to move.
- ✓ **Be sure that the child knows their home phone or business phone number – address and the number of a trusted adult; also, how to call 9-1-1 for emergencies.**

## SCHOOL BUS SAFETY TIPS -

School busses are the safest mode of motorized transportation for getting kids to school. However, kids can still get hurt if they aren't careful and stay focused on getting on and off of the bus.

- School buses keep an estimated 17.3 million cars off the roads surrounding schools.
- School transportation-related crashes – An average of 24 school-age kids die each year in school transportation-related traffic crashes year. (11 occupants of school transportation- vehicles and 13 pedestrians)

### **Review the following tips with kids to help them maintain their safety:**

- Walk with your kids to the bus stop and wait with them until the bus arrives. Remind them to stand at least 3 giant steps, or at least 6 feet, from the curb as the bus approaches and board the bus one at a time.
- Teach kids to wait for the bus to come to a complete stop before getting off.
- Do not ever walk behind the bus.
- If the child needs to cross the street after getting off the bus, they should take 6 giant steps in front of the bus, look up at the driver or make eye contact with him and cross when the driver indicates that it is okay.
- Teach and emphasize to the kids to look left and right, then look left and right the second time before crossing the street.
- Instruct kids to, especially younger ones, to use the handrail when mounting or dismounting the bus.
- Be careful to keep drawstrings from jackets or hoodies from getting caught in the bus door.
- If they drop an object be sure to let the bus driver know, and that he is watching them before they attempt to retrieve the object.
- Bus drivers should always observe speed limit signs and drive slow in school zones and near bus stops.
- The bus driver should always remain alert and looking out for kids who may be getting on or off the bus.
- Slow down and stop if you're driving near a school bus that is flashing yellow or red lights. This means that the bus is preparing to stop or already has stopped for a pick up or a drop-off. (Mississippi law requires stopping a minimum of 50 feet from the stopped bus.)

**AT WORK, SCHOOL OR PLAY-**  
**LET SAFETY LEAD THE WAY!!**

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**BE ALERT <><><> ACCIDENTS HURT!**