

National School bus Safety Week: October 16-20, 2023



"BEEP!BEEP! School bus safety starts with me" The theme of the 2023 National School Bus Safety Week is a unique reminder to motorists and students about the dangers that exist outside the school bus.

There are 14,800 Ohio school bus drivers. They drive over a million miles every day, transporting more than 750,000 students.

Last school year NASDPTS estimated that

over 41 million motorists nationwide illegally passed school buses while they were stopped to pick up and drop off students. Ohio school bus drivers, mechanics, secretaries, and supervisors work hard to provide safe transportation for Ohio children.

Ensuring the safety of our students is critical. Our school bus drivers are highly trained, but we need help from parents and the community to make sure children get to and from school safely. National School Bus Safety Week serves as a reminder for students, parents, teachers, and the community to keep school bus safety in the forefront of their minds.

Here are tips to keep our children safe at the bus stop:

1) Get to the bus stop early!

- Wait at your designated place of safety. Students should arrive at the bus stop at least five minutes early (know your district policy) . Running after or in front of a bus is dangerous. Never chase the bus.
- OAC 3301-83-08 C(1): Pupils shall arrive at the bus stop before the bus is scheduled to arrive. (This allows the school bus driver to see the students and count them).
- OAC 3301-83-08 C(2): Pupils must wait in a location clear of traffic and away from the bus stops.(The school bus driver will assign the student a designated place of safety designed to protect them at the bus stop).

2) Walking to the Bus Stop

- Encourage students to wear bright, contrasting colors so they will be more easily seen by drivers.
- Practice good pedestrian behavior: walk on the sidewalk, and if there is no sidewalk stay out of the street. If you must walk in the street, walk single file, face traffic, and stay as close to the edge of the road as you can.
- Stop and look left, right, and then left again if you must cross the street. Do the same thing at driveways and alleys. Exaggerate your head turns and narrate your actions so your child knows you are looking left, right, and left.

- Put all cell phones and electronics away while walking to and from the bus stop. Do not wear air pods, headphones, or any item which may impair hearing.

3) At the Bus Stop

- Students should wait in a location where the driver can see them while driving down the street. Avoid waiting in a house or car. The school bus driver cannot see you, and you are not able to see the school bus driver's hand signal.
- Do not play in the street. Playing with balls or other toys that could roll into the street is also dangerous.
- Be aware of strangers

4) Getting on and off the bus

- Always follow the school bus driver's instructions.
- In the morning remain in your designated place of safety until the school Bus Driver signals you to the bus. Then re-check traffic on your own.
- When exiting the school bus, check traffic on your own before stepping off the bus
- If you need to cross the street after exiting the bus, walk 10 giant steps or more along the side of the roadway to the front of the bus. Wait for your school bus driver's hand signal. Make sure to stop at the center of the road and check traffic on your own! Remain in your designated place of safety until the bus pulls away!
- The horn means danger, Re-Check traffic, if you see nothing, then look back to the school bus driver for further instructions.

Safety Reminders for Motorists

- Yellow flashing lights indicate the bus is preparing to stop and load or unload students. Motorists should slow down and prepare to stop their vehicles.
- Motorists may begin moving only when the red flashing lights are turned off, the stop arm is withdrawn, and the bus begins to move. · Never pass on the right side of the bus, where children enter or exit. This is illegal and can have tragic results. · The greatest risk to a child is not riding a school bus but approaching or leaving one. That is why, as a vehicle driver, it is especially important to pay attention. Students' lives are on the line.
- Slow Down. Watch for children walking in the street, especially if there are no sidewalks in the neighborhood. Watch for children playing and gathering near bus stops.
- Do not drive distracted. Be alert. Children arriving for the bus may dart into the street without looking for traffic.

#BeSafeCardinals