

## Back to School Road Safety Tips

Written by JIS

Monday, 10 January 2011 14:35

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September is back to school month which means that roads will be much more populated by young children travelling to and from school. With all the excitement and eagerness to be back in class, persons should remember that roads can be a dangerous place. Parents and children are being reminded to take special care when travelling on the road. Here are a few road safety tips which can help you protect yourself while travelling.

### STOP! LOOK! AND LISTEN!

This is the number one rule when crossing the road. Always remember to stop, look both ways and listen for oncoming traffic. Never attempt to cross a road without first looking in both directions. It is important not only to look for moving vehicles but also pay attention to parked vehicles on oncoming bikes and motorcycles. Parents should teach their children this 'golden' rule. As much as is possible, parents should practice the crossing of roads with their child/children.

### ACCOMPANY CHILDREN TO SCHOOL

Parents should accompany children to school until they become familiar with the routes they are travelling especially if it is the first time their child/children are going to school. Children should not be left alone at bus stops and always make sure they know who to contact in case of emergency.

### AVOID USING CELL PHONES

Some children especially the older ones carry cellphones. Not only does the use of cell phones affect the concentration of drivers it also reduces pedestrian's awareness of activities going on around them. Children should therefore avoid using cell phones especially when crossing roads.

### PLAYING BY THE ROADSIDE

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Playing by busy roads can be a dangerous practice. It's easy to get carried away when you are engaged in playing by busy roads. This can lead to accidents with children running carelessly into traffic. Parents must make their children aware of the dangers of playing on busy roads.

### USE PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS

Parents must familiarize their children with Pedestrian Crossings. Always use pedestrian crossings when possible. If none are nearby try to avoid intersections and blind spots.

### AVOID WALKING ALONE

Parents must teach their children that when going to and from school to try to avoid walking alone and lonely roads. Children are especially vulnerable to kidnapping. Children are advised to travel in groups whenever possible and remember children less than 9 years of age should never walk or be left alone!

### AVOID STRANGERS

Children should never talk to strangers especially in a vehicle. Try to avoid strange people and vehicle when walking on the street. If you feel like you are being followed go to a well populated area or find a police officer and inform him/ her of your concern.

### WALK FACING ONCOMING TRAFFIC

Children should always walk facing oncoming traffic. When walking down on one-way roads

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you should be extremely vigilant of traffic coming from behind.

### BEHAVE RESPONSIBLY

Parents must teach their children to behave on the road as they would in the playground. The road is not a play area and serious injury or death can result from carelessness and irresponsibility.

### WALK ONLY ON PAVEMENTS

Children should only walk on pavements or footpaths. If no pavements or footpaths are available walk on the right hand side of the road in order to see oncoming traffic.

### AVOID BAD WEATHER

Roads can easily become flooded and impassable in a matter of minutes. Try to avoid going out in bad weather as it is much harder for vehicle to stop on wet surfaces. Also roads and pathways can quickly become flooded.

### NOTE TO PARENTS

Children learn what they live so it is your responsibility to set a good example for them to follow. If they see you behaving carelessly on the road they are likely to do the same. They should be encouraged to obey safety rules at all times, so when walking try to obey the road code as children could be watching you looking for an example! Young children should never be

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sent out alone, especially at night. All children should be encouraged to travel in groups and avoid lonely routes and dark alleyways. Remember it is your responsibility to know where and when your children are at all times!