



AAP News Parent Plus

INFORMATION FROM YOUR PEDIATRICIAN

Keep kids safe while traveling to and from school

Whatever the mode of transportation to and from school, parents should teach their children how to be safe. Following are tips from the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Walking

Walking to school is a great form of exercise. Teach your children to be safe when crossing the street or playing near traffic.

- *Stop* at the curb and look left-right-left for traffic before stepping into the street, and watch for other cars as you cross.
- *Look* for signs that a car is about to move from a parking space or driveway, such as rear lights, exhaust smoke, sound of a motor or wheels turning.
- *Listen* to the directions of a crossing guard.

Biking

Before heading out on a bike, make sure it is in working condition and that the rider is wearing a helmet.

Make sure the route to and from school is safe. Avoid heavy traffic, hills, sharp turns and streets with many bumps or potholes. Remember to obey the rules of the road and use hand signals to communicate turns and stops. If allowed, children should ride on the sidewalk away from cars and other fast traffic.

Driving

Parents should require everyone in the car to wear a seat-belt at all times. Younger children should be safely secured in an age-appropriate car seat or booster seat, and children under age 13 should always ride in the back seat.



All drivers should be extra alert when driving in school zones and avoid distractions, such as eating, drinking and using a cellphone.

Parents can help keep their teen safe while driving by setting restrictions on number of passengers and eliminating distractions.

Riding a bus

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, riding a school bus is the safest way for a child to get to school. Teach your children to be safe while boarding and riding the bus.

- *Stop* at the curb and wait for the bus to come to a complete stop.
- *Look* both ways before crossing the street to get to or from the bus.
- *Listen* to the bus driver's instructions at all times.

— Jennifer Haderspeck

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