



Increased child pedestrian activity and school zone congestion

In 2008, 20% of all children between 5 and 9 killed nationwide in traffic crashes were pedestrians, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. That's 78 deaths. There were 4000 pedestrians in that age group injure in 2008. **Riverside Police** remind you to be alert to increased traffic congestion in an around neighborhoods and school zones as well as increased child pedestrian activity.

- **Slow down and follow the speed limit.** Whether in a school zone or residential neighborhood, motorists should keep their speed low and be prepared to stop quickly for school buses and for increased vehicle or pedestrian traffic.
- **Come to a complete stop at intersections with stop signs.** Research shows that more than one third of drivers roll through stop signs in school zones or neighborhoods.
- **Look for clues of children nearby.** Keep an eye out for clues that children are likely nearby such as safety patrol members, crossing guards, bicycles and playgrounds.
- **Scan between parked cars.** Nearly 40 percent of child pedestrian fatalities occurred between the hours of 4 p.m. and 8 p.m., mostly at non-intersection locations, according to NHTSA. Children can quickly dart out between parked cars or other objects along the roadway. Motorists should pay close attention not only at intersections, but along any residential roadways where children could be present.
- **Always stop for loading or unloading school busses.** It may be tempting to drive around stopped school busses, but not only is it dangerous, it's against the law. Flashing yellow lights on a school bus indicate it is preparing to stop to load or unload children, and motorists should slow down and prepare to stop. Red flashing lights and extended stop arms indicate the bus has stopped, and children are getting on and off. Motorists are required to stop their vehicles from either direction of the road, and wait until the red lights stop flashing, the extended stop sign is withdrawn and the bus begins moving before they can start driving again.
- **Eliminate driver distraction.** Motorists should always avoid distractions while driving, but it's particularly important in school zones and residential neighborhoods. Looking away from the roadway for just two seconds doubles the chance of being involved in a crash. Avoid talking on mobile phones, adjusting the radio or any other activities that might take attention away from the roadway. Never text while driving.
- **Plan ahead and allot extra travel time.** Leave early for your destination and build in extra time for congestion. Modify your route to avoid school zones and traffic.

The Riverside Police Department also urges parents and caregivers to

instruct children in the "A-B-Cs" of traffic safety:

A – Always obey school crossing guards and AAA school safety patrols.

B – Look both ways every time you cross the street.

C – Use crosswalks and corners to cross the roads even when cars are not around.

D – Don't run or rush, and **do** remember that drivers can't always see you.

E – Even and **especially** when it is raining, snowing, or cold, follow the safety rules.

F – Face it: you are no match for a car. They are faster and bigger, and they can be a danger to kids, so watch out!