

# **Enforcing School Bus Rider Safety Rules for Students of All Ages**

Each year more than 20 million American school students begin and end their school day with a school bus ride. While most arrive safely to their destinations each day, it is still important to enforce school bus safety rules.

School bus safety does not begin when the student is seated on the bus. School bus safety begins with the student's preparation to leave for the school bus stop and ends when the student arrives at home or any other alternate destination.

Whether your school bus rider is headed for the first day of Head Start or the final day of senior year, following school bus rider safety measures will help prevent frustrations and accidents.

## **Prepare for the daily school bus stop walk.**

An established wake up time should be set each morning. Using an alarm clock that runs on electricity with a battery power option is a wonderful idea. Don't let unexpected power outages be the cause of a late start to the school day.

Your student's backpack should be fitted with the needed school supplies prior to leaving for the school bus stop. This can be more easily accomplished the night before. Having supplies safely zipped inside a backpack will prevent dropping materials on the way to the bus stop. Stopping to pick up books and papers will not only lose time on the school bus stop trip, it can be deadly. Bending down to retrieve dropped items may result in fatal traffic accidents.

## **Know the school bus arrival time.**

Your student should leave for the school bus stop early enough to have a safe walk. It is recommended that your student arrive at the bus stop 10 minutes prior to the scheduled school bus stop time. Ensure that your student is properly prepared for inclement weather conditions prior to leaving for the school bus stop.

## **Safely walk to the school bus stop.**

Your school bus rider should maintain acute awareness of all surroundings while walking to the school bus stop. Attention to traffic, stray animals, and strangers should be stressed. Your school bus rider should be instructed on how to handle unexpected situations while walking to the school bus stop.

Younger students should be accompanied to and from the school bus stop by a responsible guardian. You may be able to establish a plan with nearby neighbors who take turns walking young students to and from the school bus stop. Older students should be encouraged to walk to and from the school bus stop in small groups. There is more safety in numbers.

Ensure that your school bus rider uses sidewalks and follows all pedestrian traffic rules. Discourage running and horseplay on the walk to and from the school bus stop.

Monitor the school bus stop location. If a school bus stop seems unsafe, contact your school bus rider's transportation official and request a change of school bus stop location.

### **Safely wait at the school bus stop.**

Your school bus rider should stand at least 10 feet from the road while waiting at the school bus stop. Oncoming traffic could prove deadly to school bus rider's waiting too close to the road. There should be no horseplay at the school bus stop. Your school bus rider should be familiar with and adhere to these rules with or without adult supervision.

Your school bus rider should wait for the school bus to come to a complete stop before moving from the school bus stop location. School bus riders should form a single line upon approach of the school bus.

### **Safely enter the school bus.**

Your school bus rider should enter the school bus in an orderly manner. No running or pushing should take place. The side handrail should be used and care should be taken to carefully negotiate each school bus step.

Your school bus rider should carefully negotiate the school bus aisle in a cautious and orderly manner. A seat should be chosen and occupied as quickly as possible. Some school bus drivers have started giving school bus rider's assigned seats to facilitate a speedy seating process.

### **Follow school bus rider safety rules.**

There should be no loud talking or rough housing while riding the school bus. Engaging in unruly behavior could distract the school bus driver leading to serious accidents. School bus safety rules are

posted in the front area of the school bus. These rules are enforced for each school bus rider's safety. Violating school bus safety rules could result in school bus suspension or other appropriate actions

School bus riders should maintain a seated position unless entering or exiting the school bus or allowing other passengers access to the aisles to exit the school bus.

Your school bus rider should be reminded to never dangle body parts or personal property out of school bus windows. Body parts could be damaged or even lost due to collision with nearby obstructions. Property such as backpacks or books could be dropped and cause serious harm to vehicles, vehicle occupants, and pedestrians.

Your school bus rider should take care to gather all of their personal belongings before the school bus comes to a complete stop at their designated school bus stop. When the school bus reaches the designated school bus stop, the school bus rider should exit the school bus in an orderly fashion still remembering to use the handrail and to negotiate each school bus step.

### **Safely exit the school bus.**

Your school bus rider should always ensure that the school bus driver can see them while exiting the school bus.

While crossing the street in front of the school bus, it is important to stay at least 10 feet ahead of the school bus. Most school buses are equipped with safety measuring devices that are deployed by the school bus driver when the school bus stops. It is not recommended that the school bus driver cross the street behind the school bus.

Your school bus rider should always look left and right before crossing any street. Teach your school bus rider to continue looking left and right until it is completely safe to cross the street.

### **Safely walk from the school bus stop.**

Your school bus rider should follow all pedestrian safety rules when walking home from the school bus stop. Students may be more active when walking home from school. There should be no running or horseplay on the walk home. The same care that was used to begin the day should be taken to ensure a safe arrival at the school bus rider's final destination.