

# Family Safety and Legal Tips

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## School Bus Safety Guide



### **Make Sure Your Child Knows These Essential Safety Rules!**

For twenty three million students nationwide, the school day begins and ends with a trip on a school bus. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), the greatest risk is not riding the bus, but approaching or leaving the bus. Before children go back to school or start school for the first time, it is essential for parents and caregivers to teach kids these important safety rules.

### Getting On and Off the Bus

- ✓ Parents and caregivers should supervise children to make sure they get to the bus stop at least five minutes before the bus is scheduled to arrive, and to avoid rough play while waiting.
- ✓ When the bus approaches, remind children to stand at least three “giant steps” (6 feet) away from the curb and to line up away from the street.
- ✓ Teach your child to stay away from the “danger zone”, to wait for the bus driver’s signal to board, and then board one at a time. The “danger zone” is the ten-foot area surrounding the bus where children are in the most danger of being injured.
- ✓ Teach children to never go behind the bus, and warn them that if they drop something near the bus they should never pick it up. Instead, they should tell the bus driver and follow the driver’s instructions. Tell children why this is important—that if they bend over to pick up a dropped object they might not be seen by the bus driver and could be hurt if the bus pulls away from the stop.
- ✓ Teach kids to check to make sure clothing and backpacks have no loose strings or long straps that could get caught in the handrail or bus door.
- ✓ When getting off the bus, teach children to look before stepping off to be sure no cars are passing on the shoulder or side of the road, and to move away from the bus when it is clear.
- ✓ Before crossing the street, take five “giant steps” out from in front of the bus, or until the driver’s face can be seen. Wait for the driver to signal that it is safe to cross,
- ✓ Teach them to look left-right-left when coming to the edge of the bus to make sure traffic is stopped and to keep watching traffic while crossing.

- ✓ If you think a bus stop is in a dangerous place, talk with your school office or transportation director about changing the location.

### Behavior on the Bus

Parents should teach children to be good bus riders by reminding them of the following rules:

- ✓ Be courteous to others and talk quietly
- ✓ Always follow the driver’s directions.
- ✓ Keep the aisles clear.
- ✓ Stay seated for the whole bus ride.



Source: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration



### **Teach Your Child the Correct Way to Cross!**

When crossing a street, the NHTSA recommends that children adhere to the following safety rules:

1. Cross at the corner or at an intersection.
2. Stop at the edge of parked cars, the curb or other vehicles.
3. Look LEFT-RIGHT-LEFT for moving cars.
4. Cross when clear, and keep looking left and right.
5. Walk, don’t run or dart, into the street.
6. Look for signs that a car is about to move (rear lights, exhaust smoke, sound of motor, wheels turning).
7. Walk alertly; use your eyes and your ears to increase your safety.

These are just a few things you can do to protect your family from school bus injuries. Please visit [Montlick.com](http://Montlick.com) or [HelpKeepKidsSafe.org](http://HelpKeepKidsSafe.org) and click on “Family Safety and Legal Tips,” to see our latest safety videos and downloadable materials, and to register for Free Safety Alerts.