



Getting To and From School Safely

To ensure maximum safety for all students, the San Diego Unified School District suggests students and parents abide by the following guidelines set by the National Safe Kids Campaign (<http://www.safekids.org/>).

Walking to School

Pedestrian injuries are the second leading cause of unintentional injury-related deaths among children ages 5-14. See the SafeKids.org infographic How Does a Teenager Cross the Road? (<http://www.safekids.org/infographic/how-does-teen-cross-road>).

To avoid injury:

Never let children under age 10 cross the street alone.

Teach children to recognize and obey traffic signals and pavement markings.

Choose the safest route between home and school and practice walking it with children until they can demonstrate traffic safety awareness.

Be mindful when using electronics such as cell phones or MP3 players. See the Moment of Silence video (<http://www.safekids.org/video/moment-silence>) from SafeKids.org.

Remind kids to:

Cross streets only in crosswalks; never enter streets from between parked cars or from behind shrubbery.

Always look both ways before crossing the street.

Walk—don't run—across intersections.

A flashing "walk" signal does not mean it's safe to cross.

Use the same route every day and avoid shortcuts.

Don't speak to strangers; if a stranger approaches, tell a trusted adult such as a parent or teacher.

Riding the Bus

More than 22,000 district students take the bus each day. Although bus travel is one of the safest ways to get to and from school, injuries can still occur, and most of them take place when children are getting on or off the bus.

Some safety tips for riding the bus are:

Arrive at the bus stop at least 10 minutes before the scheduled arrival of the bus.

Stay out of the street and don't horseplay while waiting.

Wait for the bus to come to a complete stop before getting on or off.

Remain seated and keep head and arms inside the bus at all times.

Do not shout or distract the driver.

Do not walk in the driver's "blind spot" -- the area from the front of the bus to about 12 feet in front of the bus.

Riding Bicycles

Bicycles are associated with more childhood injuries than any other consumer product except the car.

To make sure children are safe when riding bicycles to school:

Check with your school principal to make sure bicycles are allowed. Some schools do not allow them.

Wear a helmet! State law requires it, and failure to wear one could result in a traffic citation. More importantly, helmets can reduce the risk of head injury by as much as 85 percent.

Obey rules of the road; the rules are the same for all vehicles, including bicycles.

Stay on the right-hand side of the road and ride in the same direction as traffic.

Know and use appropriate hand signals.

Choose the safest route between home and school and practice it with children until they can demonstrate traffic safety awareness.

Driving

Motor vehicle accidents are the leading cause of unintentional injury-related deaths among children age 14 and under.

To reduce the risk of injury:

Always use child safety seats and safety belts correctly when driving or riding in a car.

Arrive early—especially the first few weeks of school—and use the school's designated student drop-off and pick-up zone.

Do not double park or make u-turns in front of the school. Police officers are issuing citations for traffic violations and there is no warning or grace period.

Children should enter and leave the car on its curb side.