

Stay Alert — School is Back in Session

August is the beginning of the new school year for many children. This means an increase in the number of pedestrians crossing streets and sidewalks as children walk to and from school or wait for school buses. Drivers need to take extra precautions to avoid accidents and keep our kids safe by staying alert and driving defensively.

Children are unpredictable. They take risks, ignore hazards, and fail to look both ways when crossing the street, or while walking or riding their bikes. Here are some pre-cautions to adopt while driving through residential areas and near schools:

- Slow down and obey the speed limits.
- Adjust your mirrors so that you can see around your vehicle .
- Avoid backing up your vehicle .
- Avoid distracted driving.

A school zone sign with a flashing yellow light indicates you must reduce your speed to the limit posted on the sign. When you see a school zone sign, do not pass or change lanes and obey the posted speed limit throughout the school zone. Always stay alert and use increased caution.



Like school zones, drivers must also be alert and slow down when near a school bus. A bus with flashing red lights or a stop sign extended means children are getting on or off the bus. Vehicles from both directions must stop at least 10 feet away to allow enough space for children to safely enter and exit the bus. Drivers must remain stopped until:

- The red lights stop flashing,
- The stop sign has been drawn back,
- The driver waves you on, or
- The bus begins to move.

Failure to stop for a school bus with the stop indicators engaged can result in heavy fines. In many states, school buses are also required to stop at railroad crossings. You are breaking the law if you pass a school bus stopped at a railroad crossing. The U.S. Postal Service® makes every effort to promote safe neighborhoods. Whether you are on the clock or off, be alert and aware of your surroundings to keep our kids safe.

*Safety and OSHA Compliance Programs,
Employee Resource Management, 8-17-17*