

# Picking The Safest Route To School

Children need safe routes to school. This means a route with slower traffic, more crosswalks and crossing guards, and more sidewalks with wider surfaces and unobstructed views. In fact, routes that are safe for children benefit everyone in the community, especially disabled and elderly pedestrians.

## Crossing the Street

Children need to learn traffic safety rules at an early age. Parents should teach their children to follow these steps whenever they cross the street:

Cross at an intersection or crosswalk, if available.

Stop at the curb, the edge of the road, or the corner before proceeding. Look left, then right, then left again for traffic in all directions. If you see a car, wait until it goes by. Then look left, right, left again.

When no cars are coming, walk – do not run – across the road. Keep looking for cars when you are crossing.

If a car is parked where you are crossing, look to make sure there is no driver and that the car is not running. Then go to the edge of the car and look left-right-left to see if cars are coming.

At intersections with traffic lights, watch for turning cars and obey all traffic signals. Wait until you see the WALK signal and the green traffic light, then follow the basic rules for crossing. (The WALK signal and the green light mean that it's your turn

to cross the street, but they do not mean it is SAFE to cross. You need to LOOK, and then go if no traffic is coming your way.)

A flashing DON'T WALK signal means you shouldn't start to cross the street. However, if you have already started crossing when it begins flashing, continue walking. The timing mechanism in the signal device allows you time to cross before it changes to a steady DON'T WALK signal.

If you see a steady DON'T WALK signal, don't begin to cross the street! Wait for the next WALK signal.

Walk on the sidewalk if there is one. If there is no sidewalk and you have to walk on the road, be sure to walk facing traffic so you can see what's coming.

If you must walk through parked traffic, stop and look carefully before stepping out from between vehicles. Don't run between parked cars and buses. Don't run across the street or through a parking lot.

