



## **FOR DRIVERS: TRAFFIC SAFETY AROUND SCHOOLS AND PLAYGROUNDS**

At many elementary, middle schools there are literally hundreds of vehicles arriving to drop off or pick up children. By driving children all the way to school, parent-drivers can contribute to dangerous traffic conditions around schools and playgrounds for their own children and other students arriving and leaving school. To establish a safer traffic environment around schools and playgrounds, parents and guardians may be encouraged to consider leaving their car at home or parked safely one or two blocks away.

Parents and caregivers are models for children's behaviour and must set a good example; as pedestrians, cyclists and vehicle drivers.

### **DRIVER AWARENESS**

The following may be useful educational information for drivers in your school community. If you must drive your child to school be a safe and responsible driver. Remember:

- Children's ability to perceive traffic danger is different than adults; they have difficulty judging vehicle speed or movement and are easily distracted. Drivers should be extra cautious when driving near a school or playground as children may enter the roadway suddenly. Respect the speed limits and prepare for the unexpected!
- Do not drive into the school parking lot and let your child out unless your school has a designated drop-off or pick-up area. Leaving children in a school parking lot requires them to negotiate around vehicles when driver visibility may be reduced, particularly on foggy and wet days. If your school has set up a drop-off or 'kiss and ride' area, please respect this specific use and refrain from parking here. By mis-using this space you will contribute to congestion and unsafe traffic conditions for your child and other students.





To avoid congestion, park legally on a street away from the school, facing in the direction of your next destination. Then walk to the school. This saves time and the stress of being caught in traffic and reduces the number of cars at the school, creating fewer conflicts between child pedestrians and vehicle traffic.

Respect all signs and pavement markings that outline safe pick up and drop off practices. These have been designated to provide clear visibility for pedestrians and crossing guards, and for emergency vehicle access to the school for sick or injured children.

It is particularly important to respect crosswalks adjacent to school grounds. Never drop off or pick up children, stop, back up or park vehicles on or near crosswalks. This creates visibility problems for motorists and pedestrians at the crossing.

Never stop where signs are posted or yellow painted curbs indicate a “No Stopping” zone even to load/unload passengers while the driver remains in the vehicle.

It is prohibited to pass a vehicle that is slowed down or stopped at a crosswalk. There may be a pedestrian crossing the street hidden from view.

Drop your child off on the curb side; do not let them open the car door into a traffic lane. When possible, drop a child off on the school side of the street.

Never beckon a child across the road to your vehicle. Children must never cross the road mid-block. Ensure your child knows to walk to the nearest crosswalk and make a safe crossing.

Drive lawfully, calmly and without distraction. Your child will drive one day too.

Ensuring the safety of children and other road users means respecting school zone parking regulations and traffic laws.





## School zone and school journey traffic safety regulations

**Regulation: Travel at 30 km/hr or less in a School or Playground Zone** that is marked as 30km/hr. This regulation is enforced in School Zones from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. schooldays, and in Playground Zones from dawn to dusk every day. Travelling at 30 km/hr or less near a school or playground increases the ability of a driver to stop his/her vehicle to allow a child to cross the road safely.

**Regulation: Do not stop in a “No Stopping” zone** for any reason. “No Stopping” zones are designated in areas where a stopped vehicle could obstruct the visibility of other drivers and pedestrians and increase the likelihood of a traffic collision.

**Regulation: Do not park in a “No Parking” zone.** Stopping briefly to drop off or pick up a passenger is allowed in a “No Parking” zone. Waiting in a vehicle or leaving your vehicle unattended is not allowed. When a driver parks in a “No Parking” zone, they can contribute to traffic congestion, and the possibility of a traffic collision. They may also be obstructing the visibility of other drivers, and pedestrians.

**Regulation: Yield the right-of-way to pedestrians at all intersections and crosswalks.** Drivers must also follow the directions of crossing guards when present.

**Regulation: Do not pass other vehicles in a school zone.** “Do not Pass” restrictions are designated on arterial roads adjacent to elementary schools in order to protect children crossing the roads in these areas.

**Regulation: Give pedestrians the right of way** when they are walking on a roadway with no sidewalks.





**Regulation: Do not make “U-turns”, back up or make 3-point turns in a school zone.** This includes driving into residential or other driveways and then backing out, to change direction. It is difficult for drivers making a “U-turn” or backing up to see small children crossing the street. “U-turns” can be confusing for children as they may not be able to anticipate such irregular vehicle movements.

**Regulation: Do not pass a school bus with red lights flashing.** When overhead red lights are flashing on a stopped school bus, all traffic must stop and must not proceed until the bus has started moving again; this ensures that children disembarking from the bus can make a safe crossing.

THE REAL PENALTY FOR NOT OBEYING TRAFFIC REGULATIONS IS THAT YOU MAY JEOPARDIZE THE SAFETY OF CHILDREN AND OTHER ROAD USERS.

*Be the respected role model you want your child to learn from.*

