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Newsletter

August 2010

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Dear Reader

It's that time of year again - time to get ready to go back to school! Parents always worry about the safety of their children, and particularly when walking or travelling to school. Nationwide, injury to pedestrians is the second-leading cause of unintentional injury and related death among children age 5 to 14 years old, but if parents educate their children about safety on the way to school, these risks can be significantly reduced. ***You'll have greater peace of mind if you follow these suggestions.....***

SAFETY AT SCHOOL & AT PLAY



Here are some tips that will help keep children and teenagers safe when they are away from home:

- Encourage them to stick with their friends rather than walking or playing alone.
- Teach them how to spot dangerous places, like empty buildings, alleys, deteriorated playgrounds and parks.
- Explain how taunting, teasing and arguing damage friendships and to settle disagreements through talking not fighting.
- Walk routes to school, shops and friends' houses so you can make sure they are safe and point out where they can get help in an emergency.

WALKING TO SCHOOL



- Spend time walking with your children and observe how they deal with traffic.
- Choose the route to school or the bus stop that is the safest for your child. Take the same route every day and avoid short cuts.
- Remind your children to demonstrate proper pedestrian behaviour. It is extremely important for them to look right-left-right, and always walk facing traffic if no footpath is available.
- Pick the place where your child will cross the street. Never enter the street from between parked cars or from behind bushes. Cross streets at pedestrian crossings or where School Crossing Patrol ('Lollipop') people are situated whenever possible.
- Provide your children with bright clothing so motorists can easily see them.

GETTING A BUS TO SCHOOL

If possible, an adult should be close to the bus stop at all times, and children should remember the rules of the road:

- Stay out of the street and avoid horseplay while waiting for the bus.
- Wait for the bus to come to a complete stop before approaching.
- Walk immediately onto the footpath and out of traffic after getting off the bus.
- Finally, never cross the street behind a school bus.

KEEPING BELONGINGS SAFE AT SCHOOL

- Teach them to be conscious of criminal or suspicious behaviour and to tell an adult when they see such activities.
- Make sure your school has a policy of calling the parents when a child is absent from school.
- If you use daycare or after-school clubs, check their credentials carefully, e.g. certifications, staff qualifications, policies regarding field trips and parental visits, and reputation in the community.

To keep lost personal belongings and items of clothing to a minimum, there are things which can be done to help:

- Encourage your child to look after their belongings and store them in the correct place, e.g. their own tray or peg in the cloakroom.
- Label all items of your child's property with their name. This is a very effective way of ensuring similar items of clothing etc can be identified with ease.
- Check your child's bag/clothing regularly to make sure items have not been mixed up.
- Stop your child bringing valuables to school.
- Laptops and iPods should be marked with your postcode, or similar personal identifier. Do it with a marker, or with an invisible UV pen.

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