

working together...

KIDSAFE alberta
...preventing injuries

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Did you know?

- > Some children have been strangled by their clothing, their bike helmet straps, or by a rope caught on playground equipment.
- > Children under the age of nine are at high risk for being struck by a vehicle because they show little awareness of the dangers of crossing the road and are impulsive.
- > The biggest risk to school bus passengers is during loading and unloading of the bus.

School Safety

Many parents look forward to the day when their children are old enough to begin school. Getting to and from school safely, whether walking or riding, presents real risks that must be managed.

Playgrounds also become a bigger part of the child's environment and must be assessed to reduce the risk of an injury occurring.

Proper supervision, safe environments, hazard awareness, and participating in age-appropriate activities all help reduce the risk of injury to children when they are at or traveling to and from school.

[Learn more... >](#)

Managing the Risks ...

To help manage risks as a pedestrian or on the playground: Look First, Wear the Gear, and Get Trained.

Pedestrian

Look First

- Children under the age of nine should always be accompanied by a responsible adult or an older child, when crossing the street.
- Children should only proceed when there are **no** oncoming vehicles in **either** direction.
- Children should always walk on the sidewalk. If there are no sidewalks, pedestrians should walk facing traffic.
- Walk the route your child takes to school and watch for dangers. Change the route if necessary.
- As a driver, be alert for children and adhere to speed limits.

Get Trained

- Teach children to **Point, Pause, and Proceed** when crossing the street; look left, right, and left again before stepping out on to the street.
- Teach children to watch for turning vehicles.
- Teach children to make eye contact with the driver to ensure the driver can see the child.
- Teach children to cross only at pedestrian crosswalks or at corners.
- Teach children about the dangers of crossing the street between parked cars and never to run onto the street.
- Teach children to recognize pedestrian crossing signals. Remind them to continue across if the light changes to "Don't Walk" while they are in the crosswalk.

Wear the Gear

- Children should wear bright colours to ensure drivers see them well. When walking after dark, children should wear reflective materials.

Did you know?

- Young children can't see out of the corner of their eyes as well as adults.
- It is often difficult for children to determine the direction that sounds are coming from.
- Children lack a sense of vulnerability.
- Children have trouble judging how fast a vehicle is coming towards them or how far away it is.
- Children can easily be distracted and impulsive.
- Children think that if they can see the driver, the driver can see them.
- Children's small stature means that they may not see hazards and drivers may not see them.

Playground

Look First

- Check that there is no hazardous garbage, like broken glass or needles, on equipment or in the surrounding area.
- Check that equipment is in good working order, is free of broken or missing parts, and is well anchored to the ground.
- Check that equipment is free of sharp edges or points that can cut or scrape.
- To prevent strangulation, check that the equipment does not have:
 - > open gaps where a child's clothing can get caught;
 - > spaces, like ladder rungs, that allow a child's body to pass through but trap their head. Safe spaces are smaller than 9 cm (3.5 in) or larger than 22.5 cm (9 in);
 - > any ropes tied to it.
- To prevent falls, make sure platforms, ramps, and other raised surfaces have handrails, barriers, and/or railings.
- Check that the playground has protective surfacing under and around all play equipment. Protective surfacing is a deep, soft surface like pea gravel, shredded rubber or sand.
- If the weather has been cold or wet, check that the protective surfacing is not frozen or slippery.
- Supervise one to four year olds closely and carefully - stand right beside them when they are climbing, swinging, or playing on equipment above the ground.
- Keep young children off equipment over 1.5 m (5 ft) high and all other equipment meant for older children.
- Ask the owners of the playground your child plays in if it meets the current CAN/CSA standard.

Wear the Gear

- Have children wear shoes.
- To prevent strangulation have children do the following:
 - > wear clothing without drawstrings or fixed hoods;
 - > use mitten clips instead of mitten strings;
 - > wear neck warmers instead of scarves;
 - > remove bike helmets and backpacks while playing on playground equipment.

Get Trained

- Teach children how to play:
 - > wait your turn;
 - > no pushing, shoving or tripping;
 - > keep ropes and scarves away from playground equipment and fences;
 - > keep clear of moving things;
 - > hold on with both hands when swinging or climbing;
 - > only one person on the slide at a time;
 - > slide down feet first and sitting up.

School Bus

Look First

- Always stay out of the 'Danger Zone'. If you can touch the bus, you are too close!

Get Trained

- When waiting for the bus, teach children to stand in a group and let younger children get on the bus first.
- Make sure your children are properly dressed for the weather.
- Teach your children to get on the bus one at a time and to use the handrail.
- Teach your children to always listen to the bus driver.
- Teach children to remain seated on the school bus until it comes to a complete stop.
- Children should always face forward, talk quietly, and keep their head, hands, and arms inside the bus. Keep feet out of the aisle.
- Discuss school bus safety rules with your children.
- Plan a safe place for your children to go if they miss the bus.

Manage the risks...

- > look first,
- > wear the gear,
- > get trained,
- > buckle up, and
- > drive sober.