



SAFETY GUIDE FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN & PARENTS

VISION ZERO ROAD SAFETY PLAN

VISIONZERO

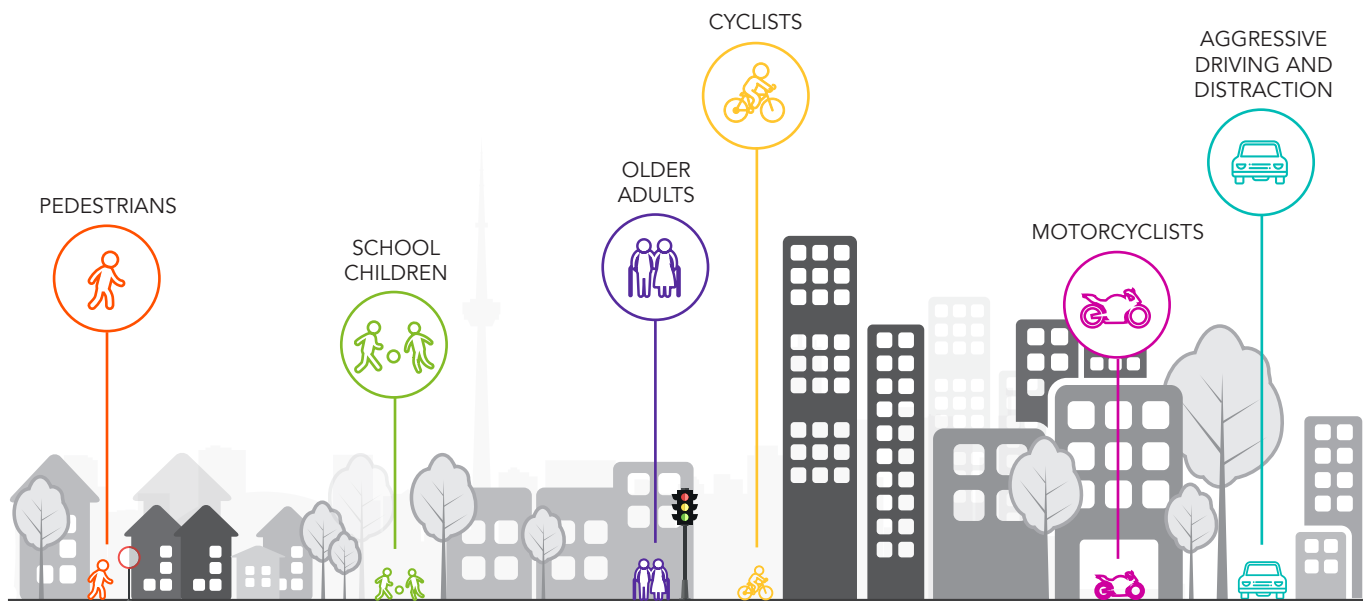
Toronto's Vision Zero Road Safety Plan is a five-year strategy for eliminating traffic-related deaths and serious injuries on City of Toronto roads. The City is committed to Vision Zero and supports its fundamental message: "Fatalities and serious injuries on our roads are preventable, and we must strive to reduce traffic-related deaths and injuries to ZERO".

The Vision Zero Road Safety Plan is a comprehensive plan that includes more than 45 new and enhanced Engineering, Education, Enforcement, Evaluation, Engagement and Technology safety countermeasures associated with six Emphasis Areas.

The six Emphasis Areas identified in the plan focus on vulnerable road users and includes School Children, Pedestrians, Older Adults, Cyclists, Motorcyclist and Aggressive Driving and Distraction in general.

This brochure contains information for parents and school children about getting to and from school safely by:

- Walking or Scootering
- Cycling
- School Bus
- Driving



ACTIVE SCHOOL TRAVEL

WHAT IS ACTIVE SCHOOL TRAVEL?

Active School Travel is defined as any form of non-motorized school travel, such as walking, scootering and cycling. It also includes walking and wheeling using mobility devices.

WHY SHOULD YOU AND YOUR CHILDREN PARTICIPATE IN ACTIVE SCHOOL TRAVEL?



Improves your Family's Health

It's a great way to contribute to a healthy lifestyle.



Improves Safety

Active School Travel reduces the number of cars around schools.



Helps the Environment

Fewer cars means less emissions and air pollution.



Influences School Performance

Increasing exercise levels has been linked with decreasing stress and boosting academic performance.



It's Faster than You Think

Many families live within 300 metres of the school which is a 5-minute walk for most pedestrians or a 2-minute bike ride for most cyclists.

DID YOU KNOW?

Between 1986 and 2011 in the GTA, 17% less children are walking to school, whereas 20% more children are being driven to school. This has increased traffic congestion in school zones.



HOW TO BE SAFE WALKING OR SCOOTERING TO SCHOOL



ON THE SIDEWALK

- Walk on the sidewalks if available.
- Watch out for vehicles coming out from driveways and laneways. Drivers may not be able to see pedestrians, especially if they are small children or if objects (fences, bushes, etc.) block their vision.

WHERE THERE ARE NO SIDEWALKS

- It's safer to walk in a single file, facing traffic on the shoulder as far away from the edge of the traffic lane as possible.

WHEN CROSSING STREETS

- Wherever possible, cross at stop signs, traffic signals, pedestrian crossovers and where school crossing guards are present. Always obey school crossing guards.
- Avoid crossing in the middle of the block. Drivers do not expect pedestrians to cross mid-block. Do not cross the street from in between parked cars.
- Do not wear headphones or look at your phone or tablet while you are crossing the street.
- Always STOP, LOOK AND LISTEN for traffic before stepping out onto the road. Look left, right, and left again to ensure it is safe to cross. Try to make eye contact with drivers if possible.
- Walk, do not run across the street.





HOW TO BE SAFE WALKING OR SCOOTERING TO SCHOOL

AT INTERSECTIONS WITH TRAFFIC SIGNALS

- Push the pedestrian push button if there is one. At some intersections, the “Walk” signal will not appear if the button is not pushed.
- Always obey the pedestrian signals:



Walk

Start crossing.
Stay alert for turning vehicles.



Flashing Don't Walk

Do not start crossing.
Finish crossing if already started.



Don't Walk

Do not cross. Push the button if one is present.
Wait for the next “Walk” signal.

AT PEDESTRIAN CROSSOVERS

- Push the pedestrian push button.
- Wait for traffic to stop or for a safe gap between traffic in both directions.
- Start crossing and stay within the crossover area.



HOW TO MAKE WALKING TO SCHOOL PART OF YOUR FAMILY'S DAILY ROUTINE:



Map out a route: Decide on and map out the best route to school with your child. Walk together and point out crossing guards, crosswalks, stop signs, landmarks, safety hazards and friends' homes, in case of emergency.



Buddy up: Find walking buddies, such as a sibling or neighbour, and have a parent or older student lead the walk. The larger the group, the more visible you will be to drivers.

Teach children to judge the speed of traffic and to look for a safe gap between traffic in both directions before crossing a street.

The decision as to when your children are mature enough and responsible enough to walk to school by themselves is best left up to you. Start by walking them halfway to increase their confidence.



HOW TO BE SAFE CYCLING TO SCHOOL



CYCLING SAFETY TIPS

- **Be visible:** Use your headlight and rear red light or reflector at night.
- **Avoid distraction:** Do not wear headphones or look at your phone or tablet while cycling.

CYCLING ON SIDEWALKS

- In Toronto, children under 14 years of age may ride bicycles on the sidewalk. Until children learn important cycling skills, such as riding in a straight line, shoulder checks and signalling and stopping/starting using gears, they are safest riding on sidewalks.
- Watch out for vehicles exiting driveways and laneways. Drivers may have difficulty seeing children on sidewalks.

CROSSING AT INTERSECTIONS AND PEDESTRIAN CROSSOVERS:

- Wherever possible, cross at stop signs, traffic signals, pedestrian crossover and where school crossing guards are present. Always obey school crossing guards.
- Follow all traffic rules and signals when going through intersections and check for traffic in all directions.
- Stop for pedestrians at a pedestrian crossover.
- You are allowed to ride a bike alongside a pedestrian crossover, but you must dismount to cross at a pedestrian crossover.
- You may also wish to dismount and walk at busy intersections.

WHEN YOU'RE READY TO RIDE ON THE ROAD

- Ride in the same direction as traffic on the right-hand side of the road in a straight line.
- Ride single file when cycling in groups.
- It is illegal and dangerous to carry a passenger while riding a one-person bicycle except for bikes with a baby seat or stroller at the back.
- Cyclists must follow the rules of the road. For more information, go to mto.gov.on.ca to find the Young Cyclist's Guide.
- Consider taking Toronto's Learn to Bike or a CAN BIKE course to improve your riding skills. For more information, go to toronto.ca/cycling.



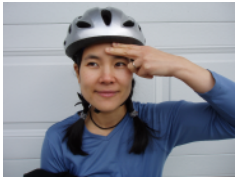
HOW TO BE SAFE CYCLING TO SCHOOL

USE THE RIGHT CYCLING EQUIPMENT

Helmets:

Ontario's bike helmet law requires everyone under 18 years of age to wear an approved bike helmet while riding a bicycle. Make sure helmets are worn properly and in good working order.

Follow the "2V1" Rule:



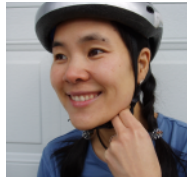
2:

You should be able to fit two fingers above your eyebrows.



V:

Straps should form a V under your ears.



1:

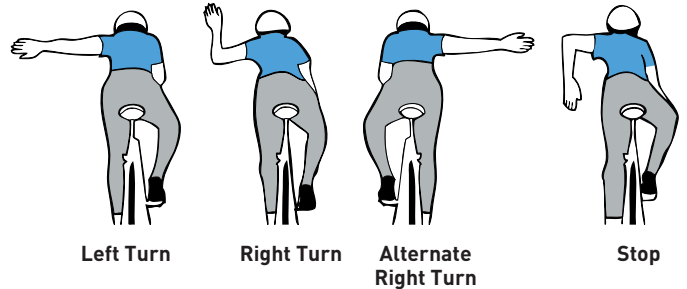
You should be able to fit one finger between the strap and your chin.

Be seen and be heard:

Ontario's laws require bikes to be fitted with:

- A bell or horn.
- A white front light, a rear red reflector or red light when riding at night.
- White reflective tape on the front forks and red reflective tape on rear forks.

DO YOU KNOW YOUR HAND SIGNALS?



Left Turn

Right Turn

Alternate Right Turn

Stop

THE ABC QUICK CHECK

Make sure your bike is in good working order including bell and lights. The "ABC Quick Check" is an easy way to inspect your bike before you head out:

- Check your tires for **Air**
- Check your **Brakes**
- Check your **Cranks, Chain** and **Cogs**

HOW TO MAKE CYCLING TO SCHOOL PART OF YOUR FAMILY'S DAILY ROUTINE:



Map out a route: Decide on and map out the best route to school with trails, quiet streets and separated bike lanes.



Buddy up: Cycle as a group to make the trip safer and more comfortable.



HOW TO BE SAFE TAKING THE SCHOOL BUS TO SCHOOL



SCHOOL BUS SAFETY

In Toronto, elementary school-aged children living further than 1.5km in Toronto Catholic District School Board and 1.6km in Toronto District School Board are considered to live beyond “walking distance”, and most are provided with school bussing. Whether your child is on the bus or you are sharing the road with one, it is important to practice safety on the journey to school.

IF YOU ARE SHARING THE ROAD WITH A SCHOOL BUS:

When you approach the bus with its red lights flashing from either direction, stop at a safe distance to let children get on or off the bus and cross the road.

Don't move forward until the red lights have stopped flashing or the bus has moved forward.

IF YOUR CHILD IS TAKING A SCHOOL BUS, TEACH THEM:

Before you get on the bus:

- Be at the bus stop before the bus arrives.
- Wait for the bus at a safe place away from the road.

After you get off the bus:

- Walk, do not run away from the bus and never run across the road.
- Always cross the road in front of the bus, never behind.
- Try to make eye contact with the bus driver if possible and wait for a signal that it's okay to cross.
- Look both directions before crossing the street.
- Respect the “danger zone” that surrounds the bus- ten steps away from the bus on all sides. If you are walking or standing in the “danger zone”, the bus driver cannot see you.

DRIVING ON A ROAD WITH & WITHOUT A MEDIAN

Driving on a road WITHOUT a median: Drivers travelling in both directions must stop for a stopped school bus that has its red lights flashing.

Driving on a road WITH a median: Traffic coming from the opposite direction is not required to stop.



HOW TO BE SAFE DRIVING TO SCHOOL



WHAT ARE SCHOOL SAFETY ZONES?

School Safety Zones aim to improve the visibility of school zones, improve driver attention, and encourage respect for the rules of the road while driving through school zones. Safety zones feature additional signage and pavement markings for all road users.



New School Zone Signs with Flashing Beacon



Zebra Crosswalk Markings



Watch Your Speed Driver Feedback Signs



School & Speed Limit Pavement Markings



Do...

- Drive slow! Children's movements can be unpredictable and they may cross without warning.
- Look out for children who may cross unexpectedly. For example, from between parked cars.
- Yield the right-of-way to pedestrians when turning at all intersections and crosswalks. Follow the directions of crossing guards when present.
- Stop fully at crosswalks when lights are flashing. Use extra caution when approaching a pedestrian crossover and be prepared to stop when pedestrians are present or when flashers are activated.
- Obey "no parking" (within 15 metres) and "no passing" (within 30 metres) regulations at crossovers.



Don't...

- Engage in aggressive driving such as: speeding, overtaking, disobeying traffic controls, making u-turns, parking near stop signs, double parking, dropping children off mid-block and failing to yield right-of-way.
- Pass a school bus when its stop sign is out and red lights are flashing.
- Text or talk on the phone or engage any other form of distracted driving.
- Stop in "no stopping zones", even if only for a moment to drop off your child.
- Double park or stop within crosswalks. This can block visibility of pedestrians and drivers.



HOW TO BE SAFE DRIVING TO SCHOOL

CHANGING YOUR FAMILY'S DAILY ROUTINE

Walking and cycling are active and convenient ways for your child to travel to school, but on some days you may need to drive. Here are some things to consider:



Walk a block or two: On days when walking the whole way to school is not an option, consider parking a block or two away from the school drop off area and walk the rest of the way with your child. This reduces congestion at the school site while also offering some physical activity.



Carpool: Reduce the number of cars in the school zone by sharing a ride to school. Consider taking turns with a neighbour.

RULES OF THE ROAD AND PARKING REGULATIONS

On days when walking a block or two is not an option, minimize risk by following the rules of the road and parking regulations:

- Parking is prohibited within nine metres of any intersection in Toronto.
- Automated speed legislation has been passed in Ontario. School zones in Toronto may be equipped to enforce speeding violations.
- In Ontario, drivers in both directions must wait until pedestrians have fully cleared the entire width of the road before moving forward at a pedestrian crossover and school crossing guard locations.

DID YOU KNOW?

It is recommended that the child exit the car on the sidewalk side.

