

# SCHOOL ZONE SAFETY

*Students returned from their holiday break several weeks ago. But it's always good to consider these reminders to be especially cautious in school zones.*

Motorists should be on the lookout for young pedestrians and bicyclists. Also, be particularly cautious when traveling through school zones and near school bus stops. Children can be unpredictable. You never know when a child will hastily cross the street when they are not supposed to. In addition, there will be school buses entering or exiting the school.

Therefore, the following are basic school zone safety tips for drivers:

- Slow down and obey all traffic laws and speed limits.
- Stop for school buses that are loading or unloading children. Watch for red flashing lights and the extended stop arm on the bus.
- Stop and obey signals from school crossing guards in the roadway.
- Be alert and watch for children near schools, bus stops and in school parking lots.
- Watch for school zone signals and obey the 20 mph speed limit.
- Do not pass other vehicles in school zones or at crosswalks.
- Do not change lanes or make U-turns in school zones.
- Do not use handicap or emergency vehicle lanes or spaces to drop off children at school.
- Expect the unexpected. Children may cross the street at the wrong place or unexpectedly run or ride in front of you.
- Know your surroundings. It's easier to anticipate that children (or parents) will do that which is unexpected if you're aware that they are there.
- Don't be distracted. Put down the coffee, put away the cell phone, and put both hands on the wheel.

No preoccupation, personal agenda, or impatience is worth causing children to be injured in a motor vehicle crash. By having that thought process while we drive, we can be key stakeholders in keeping our children safe in school zones.

*Vincent Davis, HR Safety*

ZERO IS POSSIBLE

City of Houston Safety Program

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