



Colorado  
Safe Routes  
to School

Futures in motion



## Pedestrian Safety Lesson Plans Kindergarten through Second Grade



**COLORADO**

Department of Transportation

# Colorado Safe Routes to School Pedestrian Safety Lessons Kindergarten through Second Grade

Introduction.....	3
How to Use These Lesson Plans .....	4
Relationship to Colorado Academic Standards .....	4
Bicycle and Pedestrian-Friendly Driving Resource .....	5
Acknowledgements .....	5
Lesson 1: What is Traffic?.....	6
Lesson 2: What Does it Mean to be Visible?.....	8
Lesson 3: Being Visible .....	9
Lesson 4: Stopping at the Edge; Stopping and Searching.....	12
Lesson 5: Crossing the Street .....	15
Lesson 6: Visual Barriers and Model Street Crossing.....	19
Lesson 7: Crossing Intersections Part 1.....	22
Lesson 8: Crossing Intersections Part 2.....	24
Lesson 9: Crossing Intersections Part 3.....	27
Lesson 10: Parking Lot Safety .....	28
Lesson 11: School Bus Safety Part 1 .....	30
Lesson 12: School Bus Safety Part 2 (Outdoor) .....	34
Lesson 13: Evaluation .....	37
Student and Parent Safety Pledge .....	41

## Introduction

In 1969, half of all children either walked or biked to school. Today that number has declined to 15%. More than 50% of students arrive at school via private automobiles which are responsible for between 20-30% of morning traffic. As this trend developed, the number of overweight children increased by 65%.

According to Children's Mercy Kansas City, "The 2024 U.S. Report Card on Physical Activity for Children and Youth reveals a continued low level of physical activity, with an overall grade of D- for children and youth. The 2024 United States Report Card on Physical Activity is the latest assessment of physical activity levels among children and youth in the U.S. It highlights significant concerns regarding the physical activity habits of young people, showing that only 20% to 28% of children aged 6 to 17 meet the recommended 60 minutes of daily physical activity." The majority of children living within a 1/2 mile of schools are driven in private vehicles. Obesity rates are on the rise, and the cost of obesity and other health related challenges have significant impacts on the rising cost of health care in the United States, not to mention the lifestyles of our children

According to the Journal of Orthopaedic Research (2022), 4,666,491 bicycle-related injuries occurred between 2012 to 2021. The rate of bicycle incidents was often higher in the summer (36%) and on weekends (31.9%). Most injuries affected younger and male individuals. Head injuries were the most frequent type of injury.

According to Safe Kids Worldwide, there were 102 fatal bicycling injuries involving children in 2020. "Of those deaths, 75 percent were traffic-related, and 25 percent were non-traffic related. Between 2006 and 2020, there were a total of 1,753 fatal bicycling injuries among children. Although the rate of fatal bicycling injuries decreased by 35 percent between 2006 and 2010, it has remained relatively unchanged since then."

E-bikes come with unique safety concerns. Phyllis Agran, MD, FAAP, wrote that "There is a higher risk of severe injury and death for riders of e-bikes than for regular bike users. E-bikes were reported as the reason for about 53,000 emergency department visits and caused 104 deaths from 2017-2022. In 2022 alone, e-bikes were linked to 24,400 emergency department visits."

In response to these challenges and in an effort to encourage healthy living and improve safety, the Colorado Department of Transportation has developed a bicycle safety curriculum in support of the Colorado Safe Routes to School program. Safe Routes to School initiatives have long been a focus of health and physical education in schools. These lesson plans, which help educators teach children about safe walking and bicycling, introduce a variety of skills that can help children stay safe while they walk or ride their bicycles and have been developed to improve the safety of students on their way to school and in their communities.

## How to Use These Lesson Plans

These lessons are based on Matlin's theory of bottom-up or stimulus-driven processing. The lessons break the process of crossing the street down into the individual components of the task. The key to success with this program is to have the children actively engage in each task a number of times. This repetition will help students develop the habit and build on a conceptual understanding of what it means to cross safely.

This curriculum is a combination of indoor and outdoor lessons that can be used together or separately, depending on time and space available. Each lesson builds on the concepts and skills of the previous one, and the review of the concepts and key messages is encouraged. The outdoor lessons are the practical application of the skills learned in the indoor lessons. In addition to this Pedestrian Safety Unit, please also see Colorado Safe Routes to School companion educational materials: Bicycle Safety Lesson Plans intended for third through sixth grade and Core Subject Lesson Plans designed for Kindergarten through eighth grade.

## Relationship to Colorado Academic Standards

These lessons are age appropriate, and therefore span kindergarten through second grade. The Kindergarten lessons satisfy the following academic standard for the Kindergarten grade level the Health and Physical Education content area:

Kindergarten (Comprehensive Health)

4-2. Explain safe behavior as a pedestrian and with motor vehicles.

First Grade (Comprehensive Health)

4-2. Demonstrate strategies to avoid hazards in the home and community.

Second grade (Comprehensive Health)

4-4. Demonstrate interpersonal communication skills to prevent injury or to ask for help in an emergency or unsafe situation.

While all of these lessons will satisfy this standard, some of the concepts may be too advanced for the Kindergarten age group and therefore not appropriate for this group. Lessons may be adapted to satisfy other standards.

## Bicycle and Pedestrian-Friendly Driving Resource

In this unit, students develop essential skills for safe road and trail use as pedestrians. However, road safety is a shared responsibility, and it's also crucial for future drivers to understand how to interact safely with bicyclists and pedestrians. By the end of this unit, students will have a strong foundation in bicycle safety, and a better understanding of how drivers can contribute to a safer road environment for everyone. We encourage educators to share [Bicycle Colorado's Shift Driving online course](#) with families and communities as a resource to help fill knowledge gaps in traditional driver education. This free, web-based course is designed to teach drivers about sharing the road safely with vulnerable road users, emphasizing topics such as Colorado's specific laws regarding bicyclists and pedestrians, common crash scenarios to avoid, and navigating different types of bicycle infrastructure.

## Acknowledgements

These lesson plans represent an updated version of a project originally funded by the Colorado Department of Transportation and through a Safe Routes to School Grant. This project could only have been possible with the input and feedback received from over 24 individuals from school districts and organizations throughout Colorado as part of that initial development. Their dedicated efforts are greatly appreciated. Projects are underway all over the state to incorporate Safe Routes to School initiatives and the interest and efforts made by all those invested in Colorado Safe Routes to School make a huge difference in the quality of life of our schoolchildren.

Updated in 2025 by:

Alberto Real, retired Boulder Valley School District Secondary Science

Melissa Real, St. Vrain Valley School District early childhood educator

Wendy McMillan, Colorado Safe Routes to School Communications Coordinator, former early childhood educator, St. Vrain Valley School District

Note: This curriculum is intended to promote safety and awareness for all students and may be modified for individual communities. Acknowledgement to CDOT's Colorado Safe Routes to School program is appreciated.

**Contact:**



**COLORADO**

**Department of Transportation**

email: [active.insights@state.co.us](mailto:active.insights@state.co.us)

web: [www.codot.gov/programs/bikeped/saferoutes](http://www.codot.gov/programs/bikeped/saferoutes)

# Lesson 1: What is Traffic?

Grades: K, 1, 2

## Objective

1. To understand traffic and potential hazards that could be encountered as a pedestrian
2. To understand the importance of asking an adult for help when crossing the street. Many of the crashes and fatalities among this age group are caused by “dart outs.” By helping students begin to understand the basic concepts of sharing spaces with vehicles, “dart outs” and other dangerous behaviors can be minimized.

## Key Messages

Understand the different things that make up traffic and share the same road.

## Vocabulary

traffic, ‘dart-out’, pedestrian, dangerous, hazard

## Preparation

### Lesson time

10 minutes

### Materials

None

## Procedures and Activities

### Optional Activator

To introduce the concepts of traffic and pedestrians, read an age-appropriate book about pedestrian safety such as *Clifford Takes a Walk* by Norman Bridwell, or *Safe Steps* by China Doi Long-Dodley.

### Discussion

Define and discuss traffic.

Ask students if they walk on or near roads and some reasons why.

Ask the class what might be dangerous about the street as a pedestrian. Have a discussion about what to do if toys, pets, other children or parents are in the street.

Ask students where to walk (sidewalk, side of street, facing traffic).

After reviewing traffic and the inherent dangers, ask students why they should ask an adult for help and never enter the street unsupervised (even to greet an adult in the street).

### Reflection

Ask students to tell stories about their experiences with walking near the street. You will be surprised what they know already and can share with the class!

Student responses should reflect an understanding of traffic and things that pose hazards to pedestrians.

Review key messages.



## Lesson 2: What does it mean to be Visible?

Grades: K, 1, 2

### Objective

To understand the need to be visible to drivers. Children don't typically understand that weather and low-light conditions make it harder for motorists to see pedestrians.

### Key Messages

Drivers don't always see pedestrians, particularly children; weather can make this even more challenging for drivers.

### Vocabulary

traffic, pedestrian, visible, low-light

### Preparation

#### Lesson time

15 minutes

#### Materials

Wax paper torn off in 4-inch strips (one per student)

### Procedures and Activities

#### Activity: Discussion

Begin by asking students to help explain what 'pedestrian' means.

Answer: Someone who is walking on foot.

Ask children to think of times when they have been a pedestrian in the last week.

Answer: Walking to school, crossing the street to go to a neighbor's house, walking to a nearby park, crossing a parking lot to get to the store, etc.

Tell students "Walking, playing and running can be fun, healthy and safe activities if you remember some important safety tips while near roadways and cars."

Ask children to think about and respond with true or false to this statement: if you can see a car, then the driver can see you.

Answer: False.

Call on a few children who correctly responded "false" to explain their reasoning.

Tell students “Many times drivers do not see pedestrians. In fact, pedestrians are especially difficult to see at night, dawn, dusk and in bad weather. It’s important to be **visible!**”

### Activity: Wax Paper Perspective

Distribute strips of wax paper and have the children hold them up over their eyes. Have the children pretend that the wax paper is fog or rain and explain that neither drivers nor pedestrians can see as well in weather such as rain or fog.

Ask children to note: Which things are most easily seen through the wax paper?  
Examples: light from the window, bright/light colors, etc.

### Extension Activity

Have several children wearing dark and light clothing stand on opposite sides of the classroom. Ask the children to look at the students through the wax paper and identify which they see more easily.

### Closure

Review key messages.



## Lesson 3: Being Visible

Grades: K, 1, 2

### Objective

To understand how pedestrians can be most visible to drivers in low-light conditions.

### Key Messages

Bright colors and retro-reflective materials make pedestrians more visible to drivers.

### Vocabulary

traffic, pedestrian, visible, retro-reflective, dawn, dusk

### Preparation

#### Lesson time

20 minutes

#### Materials

Sample of retro-reflective material such as a back-pack, police/fire fighter uniforms, athletic shoes, sample tape from 3M, flashlight

Paper or Coloring sheets and crayons or markers

#### Setup

Gather materials and students. Tell students that today they are going to investigate what things could help make them more visible to drivers.

### Procedures and Activities

#### Activity: Student Demonstration and Discussion

Ask for three volunteers: one in white or bright colored clothing, and two in dark-colored clothing. The rest of the children should be ready to write down the three safety rules for visibility as they are discovered. Perform these experiments to help children decide three guidelines for being most visible to drivers.

1. Have two children walk across the front of the group, one child in light-colored clothing and one with dark. Ask "Which one is most visible (easier to notice)?"

Summarize the exercise with the following rule:

Rule 1: Wear white or bright-colored clothing, footwear and accessories to be more visible when walking during the day.

2. Now turn off or dim the lights and have the two children in dark-colored clothing walk across the front of the room but give one a flashlight to carry and shine around the room as he/she walks. Which student is most visible?

Summarize the exercise with the following rule:

Rule 2: Carry a flashlight when walking at night, dawn, dusk or in fog or rain.

3. Now, with the lights still dimmed, have the same two children in dark-colored clothing walk across the front of the room. One student should wear or carry clothing with retro-reflective material as he/she walks. This time, various children in the audience should be given the chance to hold the flashlight at eye level as they shine it around the front of the room, simulating moving car headlights. Note, it is important that the flashlight is shone from eye level so that the light will be reflected back to the eye.

Which student is most visible?

Summarize the exercise with the following rule:

Rule 3: Wear clothing, footwear and accessories with retro-reflective material when walking at night, dawn, dusk or in bad weather.

### Activity: Personal Reflection

Have children look at their shoes, backpacks and clothing to determine if they are wearing any retro-reflective materials. Have students identify/model their gear.

### Activity: Drawing

Have students fold a piece of paper in half. On one side, draw a person using colors that might make you less visible while on the other side draw a person using colors that would increase visibility. Adaptation: consider providing a sheet with two drawings of a person for students to color with more and less visible clothing colors.

### Closure

Review key messages.

## Lesson 4: Stopping at the Edge; Stopping and Searching

Grades: K, 1, 2

### Objective:

To teach children skills necessary to be safe pedestrians by teaching the basics of crossing the street with the emphasis on stopping at the edge of the street before they cross (school bus safety rules will be addressed in Lesson 10). This lesson begins by using mock street simulations to teach basic pedestrian skills, and then progressively applies these skills in various traffic situations.

By the end of the lessons, it may be appropriate to have 2nd grade children perform these skills in real street situations. Younger students can continue to build skills in an indoor or mock-crossing environment.

It is important to note that children at this age may not be ready to cross streets on their own. Regardless of skills, they should be encouraged to cross the street only with the help of an adult.

### Key Messages

Stop at the edge before crossing the street.

### Vocabulary

traffic, edge, searching

### Preparation

### Lesson time

1 class period

### Materials

- Computer/projector and screen or white board for playing a video
- Open space for students to move around
- Masking tape to mark “edges” on the floor
- Desks or chairs to represent parked cars
- Audio player and fun music

## Setup

Lay down strips of masking tape to identify the 'edge' of the sidewalk. Desks or chairs can substitute for parked cars to help explain that the "edge" may not be at the edge of the sidewalk.

## Procedures and Activities

### Activity: Introduction to Safe Street Crossing Procedures

Have students watch one of the videos below as an introduction to the lesson. Students can be encouraged to sing along.

[Road Safety Song for Kids from Educastle](#)

[Crosswalk/Traffic Lights/Road Safety Song from Pinkfong Songs for Children](#)

After watching the video ask students to share what they learned in a verbal discussion.

### Activity: Mock Practice Using Taped Area

Demonstrate proper stop and search (left-right-left-behind) technique. With your back to the class, point and look left, say "left", then point and look right and say "right", then point and look left again and say "left", then say "clear and keep looking" as you cross the tape. To assure that students are actually looking and not just shaking their heads left-right-left, ask them to identify things they see when they look in that direction. You may hang mock signs or other easily identifiable items. Always verbalize your actions, and look and identify the signs on the wall, calling out what you see each time.

Have the children practice this stop and search pattern in the same manner at one of the "edges."

Start the music and ask the children to move around the room in a designated manner until the music stops. For example, have them spin, elephant walk, crab walk, hop, walk backwards, etc.

When the music stops, children stop movement and stand at the edge of a strip of tape. Talk the class through the stop and search pattern. They should point to where they are looking and verbalize their actions (left-right-left). Repeat the activity several times.

Once the students have learned the technique of stopping and searching, add desks or chairs outside the tape edge to represent parked cars. Teach them the importance of finding the proper edge. Explain that parked cars along curbs (desks or chairs) create new edges at which they must stop.

Repeat until the class masters the skills of stopping at their edge and looking for traffic. As a class or in small groups, have students cross the street and call out the steps.

## Evaluation and Review

Gather the students together again and review with the students the following questions:

What is an edge?

Answer: a curb, road side, parked car, row of hedges, etc.

Why do you first look left, then right, then left again, before crossing the street?

Answer: The closest lane of traffic is the left; you need to look for traffic coming in both directions. Then, look left once again before you start crossing because a car that you didn't see before might be coming now.

Why do you keep on looking as you cross the street?

Answer: Traffic is always moving and cars and trucks may come up quickly.

Why is it important to stop?

Answer: It is important to remember to stop first and look for traffic when you are chasing your toy/ball into the street because cars may be coming from either direction.

What do you do when you see a car?

Answer: Stop, wait for the car(s) to pass, and search left-right-left again!

What do you do when there are parked cars or a row of hedges blocking your view?

Answer: The cars or hedges are the edge. Look left-right-left at this edge and cross when it is safe!

Review key messages.

## Lesson 5: Crossing the Street

Grades: K, 1, 2

### Objective

To understand the need for care and caution when crossing any street. To become familiar with the important steps in crossing a street, such as stopping at the curb and finding the edge, looking left, right, and left again before crossing, and continuing to scan for traffic while crossing.

### Background

Using a mock crosswalk is a good way to introduce children to the complexities of crossing the street.

### Key Messages

Crossing the street involves a number of important steps such as stopping at the curb and finding the edge, looking left, right, and left again before crossing, and continuing to scan for traffic while crossing.

### Vocabulary

pedestrian; edge; crosswalk; scan; diagonal; straight; safe; dangerous; left; right; traffic

### Preparation

#### Lesson time

1 class period

#### Materials

- Masking Tape or floor tape
- Small cones (optional)
- Sidewalk chalk (if working out- doors)

#### Suggested Location

This lesson should be taught in a gym or other indoor space. Kindergarten age students tend to have trouble with distractions outdoors. Once students learn the basics of crossing, the lesson can be performed outside on a playground or field. Depending on school location, familiarizing students with a midblock crosswalk location may be appropriate.

## Setup

Practice crosswalk should be set up ahead of class. “Draw” a crosswalk using masking tape, floor tape, or sidewalk chalk. Mark the ends of the “curb” with traffic cones to make it easier for students to know where to line up.

## Procedures and Activities

### Activity: Crossing Safely Discussion

Assemble students to have a discussion about traffic. Use the following discussion topics to engage students:

Do any of you walk places?

What kind of things do we need to be careful of when walking?

Answer: Cars, trucks, bicycles, trains

Should kindergarteners walk places by themselves?

Answer: No, you should always walk with an adult.

Can any of you tell me what a crosswalk is?

Is it safe to think that cars will always stop for us in crosswalks?

Answer: No, we need to look and wait for them to stop.

What are some things that could distract a grownup when they are driving?

If a crosswalk signal says I should walk, do I still need to look left-right- left again?

Answer: Yes!

### Activity: Mock Crossing the Street

Assemble students at the sample midblock crosswalk. Define the edge and where students should be standing to prepare for crossing. Students should stand near the edge but not in the street.

Have students “check their feet” for untied shoelaces. Discuss dangers of tripping and falling in the street.

Instruct students to look left-right-left, discuss what they are looking for. Ask students what they see (if outside, if inside ask what they might expect to see) when they look left-right-left. Correct students who are simply turning their heads or looking at the ceiling or floor.

Discuss what to do if a car is coming. Students should learn to wait for cars to pass and look left-right-left again to ensure the street is clear.

Students should practice crossing as a group. Instruct students to continue to scan the street for cars as they cross. Ask students why they shouldn't walk too slowly or run across an intersection. (i.e.: may trip and fall, might not make it across)

Ask students if their neighborhoods have crosswalks. If not, ask them what would be done differently when crossing the street.

Practice this until students can perform the crossing on their own. If time allows or in another class period take students outside to practice crossing either on the playground or if possible in a parking lot which has a crosswalk painted on it. The street crossing will be more difficult with the distractions of traffic, other students playing etc. Encouraging students to concentrate on crossing despite distractions is important.

### Take Home

Print out or copy and paste the letter on the following page, modified from [safekids.org](https://www.safekids.org), for parent distribution.



Dear Parent:

Today your child learned how to stay safe while walking. This is important, because, according to the CDC, pedestrian injury remains the second leading cause of unintentional injury-related death in your child's age group (5 to 14). According to Safe Kids Worldwide, a total of 385 children ages 0 to 19 years were fatally injured and another 9,257 were nonfatally injured as pedestrians in motor vehicle crashes in 2021. The skills your child learned today - such as being visible to drivers, and where and how to cross a street safely - may keep him or her from becoming a statistic.

I hope you will ask your child to share what he or she learned with you and with any other children in your family. Here are some additional things you need to know:

- Children under age 10 should not cross the street alone. They do not yet have the judgment necessary to deal safely with traffic.
- The best way to teach your kids to walk safely is to set a good example. Be sure to cross streets at corners, using traffic signals and crosswalks whenever possible. Stop first at the curb, and look left, right and left again before and while crossing the street. Walk, don't run. Make eye contact with drivers before crossing in front of them. Make sure that technology such as tablets or phones are put away when approaching a crossing.
- Drivers may need help seeing your child in low light and bad weather. Today your child learned about retroreflective material - a type of fabric that causes a large amount of reflected light to be "bounced back" to its original source, making it 1,500 times brighter than white clothing. Look for retroreflective material when purchasing shoes, clothing, backpacks and other accessories. Make sure your child carries a flashlight and wears something with retroreflective material when walking at night, dawn, dusk or in bad weather.
- Don't let your children play in driveways, unfenced yards, streets or parking lots.
- Make sure your children take the same route to common destinations (such as school) every time. Walk with your child to find the safest path. Look for the most direct route with the fewest street crossings.

In some cases, teaching your child to be safe may not be enough. If you feel a particular intersection or other area in your community is dangerous for pedestrians, you may want to alert your local department of transportation or public works. Experts can assess the environment and decide on the best way to make it safer.

If you would like to learn more about pedestrian safety - and other ways to protect your child - you may want to contact the National SAFE KIDS Campaign or your local SAFE KIDS coalition. Find out more at [www.safekids.org](http://www.safekids.org).

Together, we can make our community a safer place for children to walk, live and play.

Sincerely,

## Lesson 6: Visual Barriers and Model Street Crossing

Grades: K, 1, 2

### Objective

To teach children to recognize visual barriers and how these barriers can block the motorists' view of pedestrians and bicyclists. Can be combined with Lesson 7.

### Background

Children seldom realize that although they can see a car coming toward them, the driver may not see them. Visual barriers can be serious threats to a pedestrian, cyclist or motorist because barriers obstruct the view. Identifying visual barriers in their own neighborhoods will help students remember to stay clear of them or be especially careful to make themselves visible to a car driver. They can also increase visibility by wearing bright visible colors, retro-reflective tape on heels, backpacks and jackets if they are walking at dawn, dusk or especially in the dark.

### Preparation

#### Lesson time

30 minutes

#### Materials

- An image of a street with parked cars or whiteboard to draw on
- Visual barriers, real or cardboard, such as large boxes, garbage bin, filled bags, bushes, a fence, a car
- Chalk, ropes, or field markers
- 6 traffic cones
- A group leader for every 8 students

#### Setup

For the introduction: draw a street with parked cars on a whiteboard or other visible surface as a visual aid for discussion; alternatively, find an image of a street with parked cars to project.

For the model crossing, create a simulated setting as described in the crossing activity that follows.

### Procedures and Activities

Optional Activator: Video to review safety procedures from previous lessons before going out to the playground or street: [Pete's Street Smarts - Pedestrian Safety](#)

Note: this video may not be accessible to all. For accommodations, please contact [CobbTV](#)

### Activity: Visual Barriers Discussion

Introduce the concepts below using imaginary scenarios and the drawing/image:

What is a visual barrier?

Answer: Something that blocks your view of the street.

Why isn't the first edge a good place to cross the street?

Answer: Because parked cars block the view of the street and blocked cars from being able to see you.

What should you look for when crossing the street?

Answer: Oncoming traffic.

Where do you stand to look for traffic?

Answer: First edge is at the edge of the sidewalk; next, check at the edge of parked cars.

How do parked cars affect your view when crossing?

Answer: They block it.

What should you look for when stopped at the edge of parked cars?

Answer: Moving vehicles.

How do you deal with parked cars?

Answer: Move to the edge of the parked cars and look for traffic.

What do you do before crossing?

Answer: Look left-right-left.

What are some other possible visual barriers you can think of?

Answers may include bushes, trash cans, etc.

What should you do if you may be hidden by a visual barrier?

Answer: Move out from behind the barrier to the edge of where cars can see you and you can see vehicles.

### Activity: Mock Crossing Practice

Construct several model streets on the playground or use a barricaded street near the school.

Place a cone on each station to mark a starting point. Make each street unique with bushes or surface differences. Divide the class into several small groups with partners and a group leader. Have them practice crossing the "model" street and identifying when it's safe to cross. Have

each group demonstrate. Note: When they do the left-right-left check, ask students to identify what they see when they look.

Group leaders should guide children in making decisions on crossing the street. (1 leader for 5-8 children).

Put a model crossing near the edge of a building or light pole; put one beside a parked car so children must look around the car before crossing; put one beside a tall bush or garbage can near a driveway.

Discuss the barriers and what made it safe or unsafe to cross.



## Lesson 7: Crossing Intersections Part 1

Grades: 1, 2

### Objective

Children will understand why it is important to look behind them or over their shoulder for on-coming traffic before crossing at an intersection and to understand the complexity of the intersection. This lesson is made up of 4 activities.

### Background Information

Children often have difficulty understanding complicated traffic situations; therefore, it is especially important for children to be taught the similarities and differences between crossing a street and crossing at an intersection. All possible intersection scenarios should be explored with children. The messages conveyed by traffic signs and signals must also be taught to children. Traffic signs, signals and rules were made up by adults for adults; children often interpret these differently. For children to learn how to cross an intersection safely, they must also understand the traffic signs, signals, and rules of the road that regulate intersections.

### Vocabulary

Intersection

### Preparation

### Lesson time

30 - 40 minutes

### Materials

- Field markers or rope
- Fun music and means of playing it

### Setup

Arrange field markers or rope to simulate street corners.

### Procedures and Activities

#### Activity 1: Introductory Discussion and Demonstration

Define and discuss intersections. How are they different from crosswalks? Explain to the class that cars may drive up from behind at an intersection, so we need to search there too.

Explain to the class that the field markers or rope are edges (like curbs) that make up an intersection. It is also where they need to stop.

Demonstrate the stop and search pattern for intersections with your back toward the class:

1. Stop at the edge.
2. Look left, right, left, and search behind and forward.
3. Cross when clear.
4. Keep looking while crossing.

Have the students say everything aloud.

### Activity 2: Mock Intersection Practice

Assign or have the children choose partners.

Have the children practice intersection crossing to music in ways you ask them as in previous lessons (elephant walk, bunny hop, etc.). Each time you stop the music, have students recall the pattern, repeating the steps.



## Lesson 8: Crossing Intersections Part 2

Grades: 1, 2

### Objective

Children will practice looking behind them or over their shoulder for oncoming traffic before crossing at an intersection.

### Background Information

Children live and play in their neighborhoods where traffic is a reality. Another reality is that children are not born with the knowledge and ability to negotiate traffic; they must be taught the rules of the road and the proper procedures to be safe pedestrians. Using real and secured intersections or creating realistic intersection situations for children to practice will help them when they are faced with real traffic situations.

A child's field of vision is narrower than that of an adult. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, "Children's perception and decision-making skills in traffic are significantly influenced by their cognitive development. Younger children often exhibit less hazard recognition and more risk-prone behaviors compared to older peers. This is why it is crucial to provide children with the necessary supervision and education to ensure their safety on the roads. Parents and caregivers should be vigilant and model safe pedestrian behavior to help children understand the risks involved in crossing the street." Children often believe that because they can see a car, the car driver can see them. Practicing crossing techniques using a "real" street with visual barriers can help children understand the importance of obeying pedestrian safety rules. Parents, volunteers, and teacher aides can help secure the area and serve as group leaders. A small intersection on school grounds would work well for this option.

### Preparation

#### Lesson time

15 - 20 minutes

#### Materials

- 8 giant numbered cards (1-8)
- 8 traffic cones
- 2 stop signs
- Life-size mock intersection made using ropes or a line marker on a large field space or blacktop
- 2 assistant group leaders
- Barriers (cardboard or real) such as cars, train cars

## Setup

Use a real but secured intersection or layout a mock intersection on a field or black top area. Try to create one that is realistic, identifying sidewalks, curbs, center lanes, and crosswalks. Set out giant numbered cards in a clockwise direction and cones around the perimeter of the intersection to identify 8 destination points. See intersection diagram below.

## Procedures and Activities

### Activity: Mock Crossing Practice

Assemble children and group leaders near the model intersection and ask these questions:

Where do you stand to look before crossing at an intersection?

Answer: At the edge

What are you looking for?

Answer: Traffic from both directions

What do you do before you become a part of traffic?

Answer: Look left-right-left and behind if at an intersection

Why do you look back?

Answer: Because cars might be coming from behind you

Why do you need to pay close attention to parked cars even though they are not moving? What visual barriers do you see here?

Answer: Cars may not be able to see you behind parked cars

Name some "barriers" that would prevent you from having a clear view of the street.

Answer: Cars, bushes, trash cans, walls etc.

Where is the new edge you need to search from?

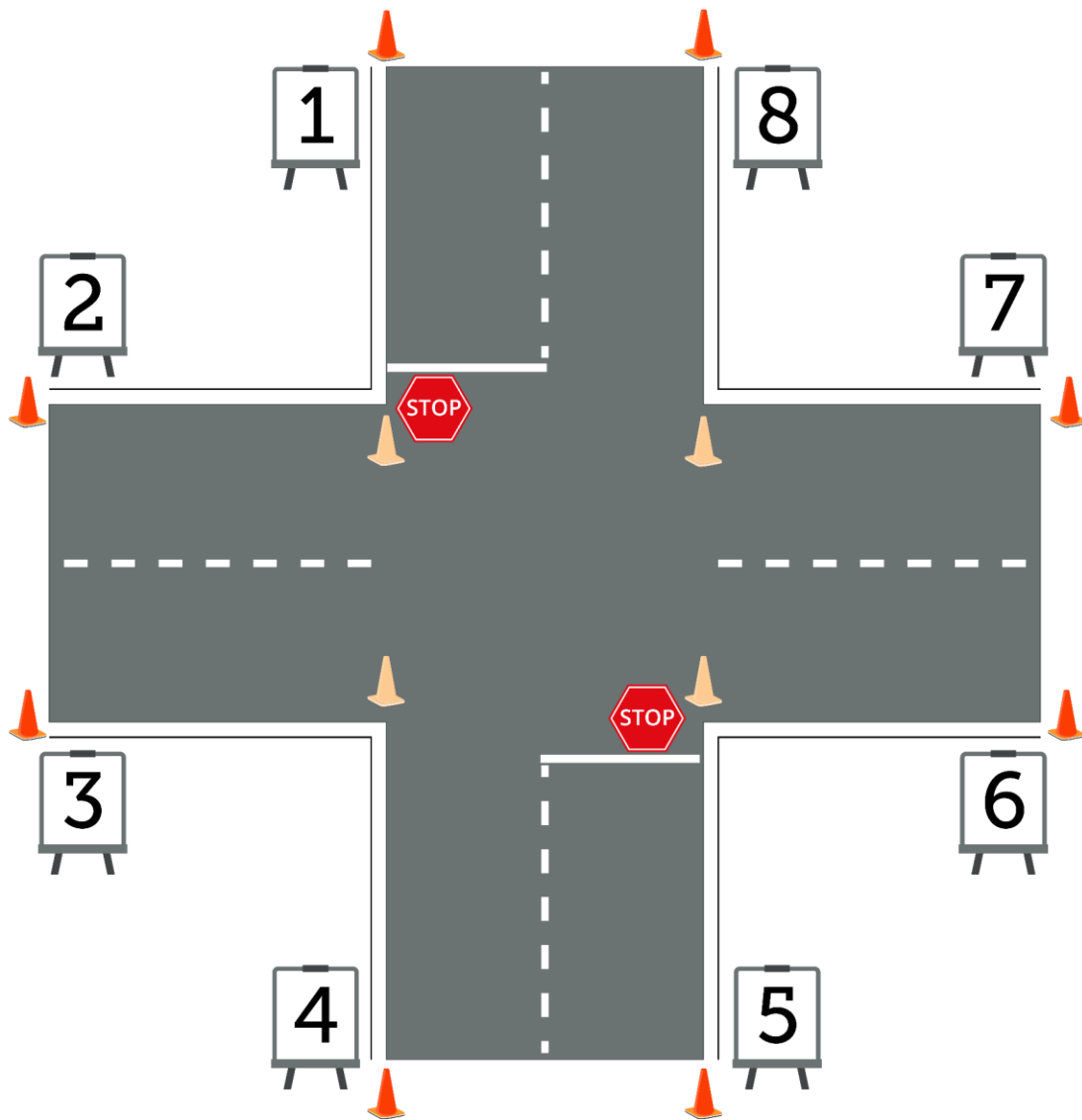
Answer: At the edge of the obstruction

Next, demonstrate the proper crossing technique at the mock intersection.

Assign each group and leader to a work station. The children will coach each other through the process of crossing the street with a visual barrier.

Once all the children can complete this skill well, introduce a ball to be retrieved. The adult group leader rolls the ball into the mock street. A child enters the street after stopping at the edge and searching properly for on-coming traffic.

Let children move to new stations representing various points of the intersection to practice with different scenarios.



Crossing Intersections Diagram

## Lesson 9: Crossing Intersections Part 3

Grades: 1, 2

### Objective

To teach children how to apply all the skills they have learned throughout the pedestrian safety unit in a real traffic situation. Practicing pedestrian safety skills in the environment to which the skills apply is an important part of the learning process. Note, this lesson requires a real intersection.

### Preparation

#### Lesson time

30 minutes

#### Materials/Support

- 4 adult group leaders
- 8 giant numbered cards (1-8)
- Low-traffic intersection
- 8 traffic cones

#### Setup

This is the culminating lesson for pedestrian safety lessons. Children will have the opportunity to practice crossing at a real intersection. Secure a low traffic intersection on or around campus. Set up the giant numbered cards around the intersection as they are set up for the Model Intersection in the previous lesson. Adult volunteers should stand beside the giant numbers to give guidance and provide security.

### Procedures and Activities

#### Activity: Real world practice

This activity is conducted the same way as the Model Intersection activity, only now the children are working in a real intersection and possibly negotiating with real cars and traffic signals. You may wish to secure additional adult supervision but avoid blocking the road to traffic because the goal of this lesson is to provide students with the same real-life experiences that they will face when crossing real intersections.

## Lesson 10: Parking Lot Safety

Grades: 1, 2

### Objective

Small children should understand that they cannot be seen easily in parking lots and should not walk through a parking lot without taking an adult's hand.

### Key Messages

Children may not be easily seen in parking lots.

### Vocabulary

parking lot, visible

### Preparation

### Lesson time

30 minutes

### Materials/Support

Masking tape, floor tape, or sidewalk chalk depending on if working indoors or outdoors  
Volunteers if available (optimally at least 2 adults are on hand for this lesson)

### Suggested Location

School parking lot or teachers' parking lot

### Setup

Obtain permission from school administration to take children into the parking lot of the school. Have a teacher aide or parent volunteer to assist if possible in order to maintain control of the group. Put cones in the parking lot or mock lot area to cordon off the section you will be in with the students.

## Procedures and Activities

### Optional Activator

Watch this Parking Lot Safety video to introduce the safety considerations in parking lots before going out to the parking lot

[Let's Go Walking! Lesson 5: Parking Lot Safety](#)

Note: this video may not be accessible to all. For accommodations please contact [ncdot.gov](http://ncdot.gov)

### Activity: Trip to the Parking Lot

Take students (and volunteers if available) out to the designated part of the lot. Discuss what cars do when they are getting ready to move and how cars back up (look at lights, talk about sounds that cars make, etc.).

Have one adult and one student stand on one side of a car while the class is on the other side. Discuss who you can see the easiest and why a grown-up might not see a kindergartener out when driving in a parking lot.

### Evaluation

Ask students how they can stay safe in parking lots.

### Closure

Review key messages.

# Lesson 11: School Bus Safety Part 1

Grades: K, 1, 2<sup>nd</sup> grade review

## Objective

Children will learn the importance of safe and responsible behavior while riding the school bus.

## Background

Bus drivers have the tremendous responsibility of safely transporting children to and from school, on field trips, and to various events on a daily basis. Drivers must remain alert and attentive to the rules of the road, the traffic conditions around them and to the students on the bus. Quiet, responsible behavior on the bus is an important component of any school bus program.

## Preparation

### Lesson time

45 minutes

### Materials/Setup

- Computer, whiteboard for projecting video (optional)
- Chairs, arranged to resemble rows of seats on a bus
- Flash cards

## Procedures and Activities

### Activity: Introduction to rules

Watch the following video, [School Bus Safety from Learn Too](#). It is suggested that the instructor pause the video throughout. Each time you pause, take the opportunity to ask questions and review what was presented.

### Activity: School Bus Scenarios Role Play

When a school bus is not available, arrange pairs of chairs in a straight line that resembles the inside of a school bus, allowing space for the aisle.

Divide the class into two groups, one group to role play and the other to describe what the students should do. These groups will switch roles throughout the activity.

Ask the first group to role play. Assign a bus driver and several students to be on the bus. Assign several students to be waiting for the bus and one to be walking to the bus stop.

Tell the students that the bus is picking them up for school.

Ask the students who are watching the group to tell the students what to do to get on the bus safely.

Question: The student walking to the bus sees the bus coming. What should he/she do?

Answer: Continue to walk to the bus

Question: Is it ok to run? Answer: No

Question: What is the right way to go to the bus stop?

Answer: To walk

Have the student who is walking join the other students to get on the bus.

Question: Where should the students stand to wait for the bus? (Ask the students waiting for the bus to stand in the right place.)

Answer: 3 large steps away from the curb

Question: Ask the students on the bus how they should act. Should they be rowdy? Ask them to act like they do when they ride the bus.

Have the waiting students 'board' the bus. Question: How do you board the bus?

Answer: One at a time, single file, holding on to the handrail.

Question: Why is it important to be quiet and careful getting on the bus? Answer: Because pushing or shoving can cause someone to fall or be pushed into the pathway of a bus or a car.

Question (to all students): How do you get off the bus?

Answers: Quietly, no climbing over other students to get out, let others ahead of you exit first, do not switch seats while others are loading or unloading, exit the bus promptly, have your belongings ready, respect personal space, do not tap other students on the back of the head when exiting. Discuss other possible scenarios with students.

Question: Ask the students where they should put their bags. Answer: Under the seat in front of them

Question: Ask students why they need to keep the aisle clear.

Answer: To avoid tripping someone and to ensure a quick evacuation in an emergency situation.

Ask students who are on the bus, to disembark. How many steps away from the bus should they go?

Answer: 3

Tell the students who got off the bus that they need to cross the street.

Question: What should they do?

Answer: Walk 5 steps in front of the bus on the sidewalk and make eye contact with the bus driver. Wait for the signal from the bus driver to cross.

Have the students who got off the bus walk to the right spot to cross. Ask the student playing the bus driver to signal to the students to cross. Ask the students to cross the street.

Ask the students watching if crossing students crossed correctly.

Repeat various roles with students from the class to review the concepts.

### Activity: Thumbs Up/Thumbs Down Reflection

Read the following statements to the students. Have them give a thumbs up when the children are behaving and a thumbs down when they are misbehaving.

The bus door is closed, and the bus is leaving for school. In the back, two students start throwing paper at each other. (Thumbs down)

A girl sitting behind the bus driver turns around and yells loudly to her friend in the back of the bus. (Thumbs down)

Two boys sitting next to each other are talking loudly. The bus comes to a stop, and the boys quit talking for a moment so the driver can listen for other cars. (Thumbs up)

A girl with a saxophone for her band lesson places the saxophone case under the seat before the bus begins to move. (Thumbs up)

The bus stops at a railway crossing. Three friends in the back of the bus keep yelling and laughing loudly. (Thumbs down)

A student sees his best friend poking his pencil into the seat, so he starts doing the same thing. (Thumbs down)

Another student sees the two students poking their pencils into the bus seat and asks them to stop. (Thumbs up)

A boy cleaning out his book bag throws paper onto the floor of the bus. (Thumbs down)

A girl sees her best friend sitting a few rows in front of her. While the bus is moving, the girl gets up from her seat to go sit next to her friend. (Thumbs down)

A student gets off the bus and immediately runs across the street to meet his friend. (Thumbs down)

A student gets off the bus, stands on the curb and waits for the driver's signal to cross the road. (Thumbs up)

### Evaluation and Review

Ask students to describe the steps to get on the school bus.

Review key messages.

## Lesson 12: School Bus Safety Part 2 (Outdoor)

Grades: K, 1, 2

### Objective

To teach children the four danger zones around a school bus, the importance of staying in the bus driver's line of vision, and how to cross in front of a school bus.

### Background

A school bus acts as a visual barrier for the bus driver and to students and vehicles stopped in front of, or behind, a school bus. When children enter or exit a school bus, it is important for them to stop at the edge, move 5 big steps (10 feet) in front of the bus for the bus driver to have constant view of them, stop at the new edge in front of the bus, look left-right-left, wait for all traffic to stop and continue to look while crossing. Observing all these rules is important when a school bus is involved. Children killed in school bus related crashes most often are the result of either an overtaking and passing vehicle or the bus driver's inability to see the child. Teaching children safe school bus loading, unloading, and street crossing practices can save a child's life.

### Preparation

#### Lesson time

30 minutes

#### Materials/Support

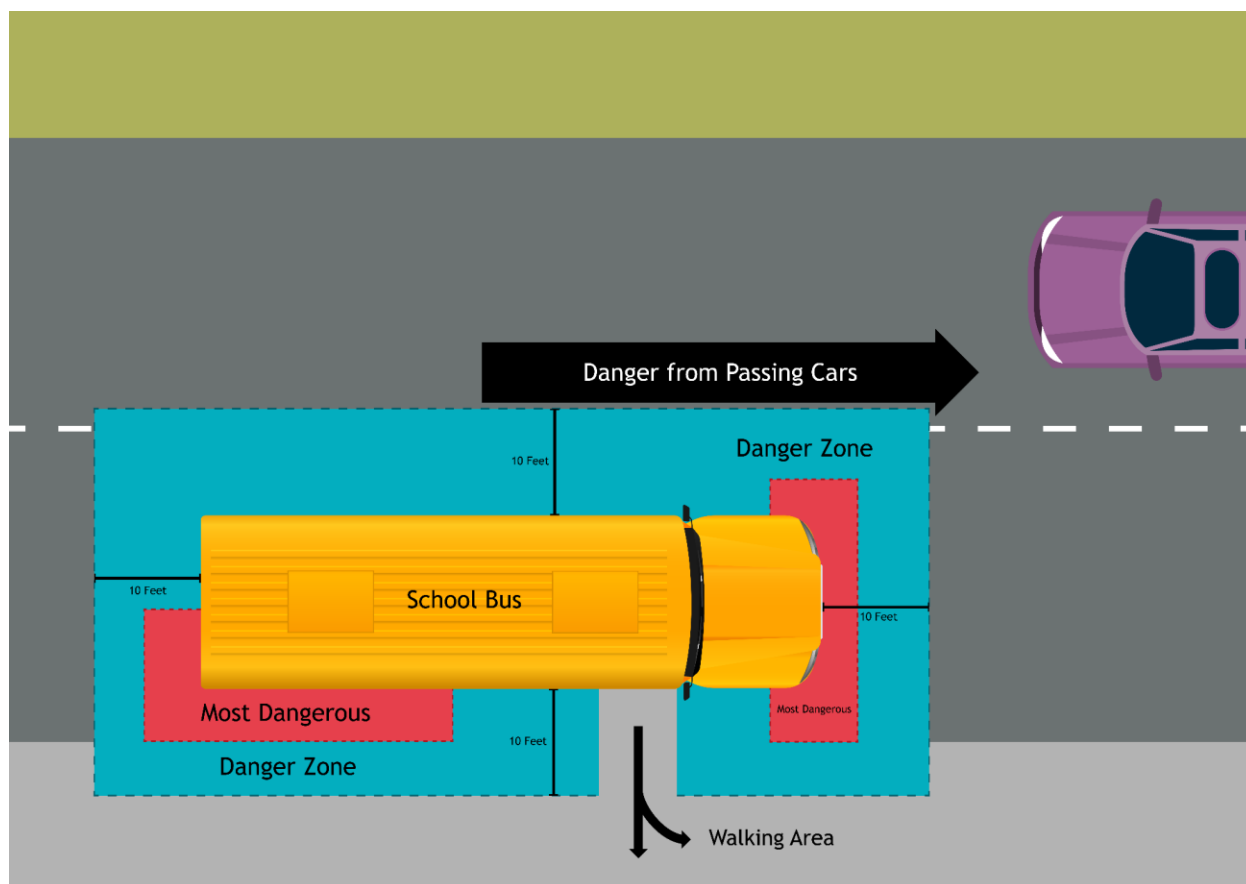
- School bus and driver when possible (If a school bus is not possible, swap in chairs assembled like bus rows)
- 8 cones or bean bags or chalk
- Poster board with bus drawing and danger zones highlighted
- Large cardboard box (if no bus is available)

#### Setup

If available, the bus should be parked on a street on the school grounds so the children can practice getting on the bus, dismounting the bus and crossing the street.

If a bus is not available, arrange chairs like the inside of a school bus, including the driver's seat. Use a large cardboard box to place at the front of the bus, in front of the bus driver. Cut out a section of the box to resemble the front bus window. This will then work as your bus.

In either situation, it is important to mark the school bus danger zones using traffic cones, bean bags or chalk. See illustration below:



## Procedures and Activities

### Activity 1:

Use either the book, *Molly Rides the School Bus* by Julie Brillhart, or the read aloud book below.

[Molly Rides the School Bus Book Read Aloud For Children](#)

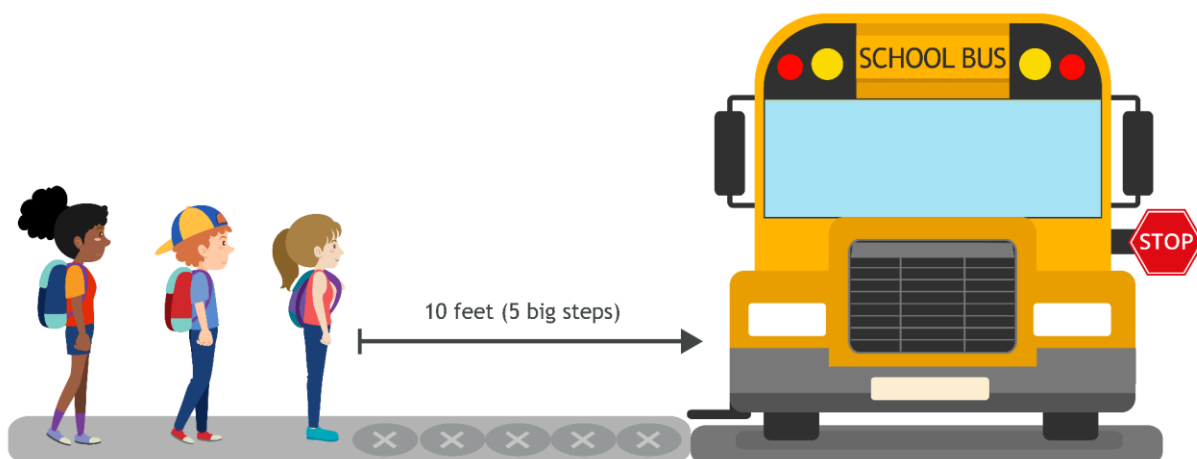
Have students share what they learned from the book. Set up students in small groups of 2-4. Assign each group a safe bus behavior to act out. Chairs can be set up to serve as a bus. Give students a little time to prepare and have each group present their safe behavior.

### Activity 2: Safe School Bus Behavior Practice

Gather the class and go over the proper procedures for getting on the bus. The video below could be used to review bus safety if you like.

[School Bus Safety for kids by a kid!](#)

First explain that they should never stop to pick up something that has dropped near a school bus. Next demonstrate the activity. Stand 10 feet (5 big steps) away from the edge of the road. When the school bus has stopped completely and the stop bar is out, walk to the edge of the road. When the bus driver motions, continue to carefully step on to the bus. See the illustration below:



Have the students practice the procedure in pairs until everyone is on the bus. Then everyone gets off the bus and stands 3 big steps (5 feet) away from the bus door while the teacher discusses the proper procedures for bus dismounting and crossing the street.

Demonstrate the proper dismounting and crossing procedure. Get straight off the bus, take 3 big steps (5 feet) away from the bus, then take 5 big steps (10 feet) to the front of the bus and stop. Search left- right-left to make sure traffic has stopped behind the bus. When it is clear and the bus driver signals it is OK to cross, move to the edge of the curb, continue searching, then walk to the edge of the bus and stop and search for traffic. When the road is clear or traffic is completely stopped, cross the street while continuing to search for traffic.

## Lesson 13: Evaluation

### Preparation and Notes

#### Time needed

30 minutes

#### Differentiation

For kindergarten and first grade this works well as a teacher review given orally. For second graders, questions can be printed out. This can also be done as a group question and answer session. An awards ceremony can be a great way to celebrate student achievement. It is important that the children know how important the information they learned will be for the rest of their life! Great job, everyone!

### Questions and Answers

What should you always do before crossing the street?

Answer: Stop and search “left-right-left” before crossing the street

Why is it important to keep looking and listening for cars as you cross the street?

Answer: Because they might approach while you are crossing

Is it safe to cross the street between two parked cars? If not, why?

Answer: Yes, but move out to the new “edge” and look left-right-left

Answer: Because on-coming cars might not see you

Is the edge of the sidewalk always the best place to stop and search for cars before crossing the street?

Answer: Yes, but... When might it not be?

Answer: where there are visual barriers blocking your view

Can car drivers see you better if you are wearing bright colored clothes?

Answer: Yes

If a crossing signal starts flashing “don’t walk” when you are in the middle of crossing the street, should you go back to where you started?

Answer: No but...

What should you do?

Answer: Continue crossing the street with care

Is it easy for car drivers to see children on small bikes?

Answer: No

Why not?

Answer: Because bicycles are smaller than cars and drivers might not see them

Should you stop at the edge of the school bus to search for cars before crossing the street?

Answer: Yes

## Pedestrian/School Bus Safety Evaluation

Name:

What should you always do before crossing the street?

Why is it important to keep looking and listening for cars as you cross the street?

Is it safe to cross the street between two parked cars? If not, why?

Is the edge of the sidewalk always the best place to stop and search for cars before crossing the street?

Can car drivers see you better if you are wearing bright colored clothes?

If a crossing signal starts flashing “don’t walk” when you are in the middle of crossing the street, should you go back to where you started?

Is it easy for car drivers to see children on small bikes?

Should you stop at the edge of the school bus to search for cars before crossing the street?

## Student and Parent Safety Pledge

I promise to always:

1. Stop, look left, right, and left again and wait for traffic to pass before I cross the street.
2. Listen to the bus driver and all his or her safety rules.
3. Stay 5 giant steps away from the street when I'm waiting for a bus.
4. Wear a bike helmet every time I ride my bike.
5. Wear light, bright colors and reflective markers so I can be seen walking and riding in the dark.
6. Be predictable when I am a part of traffic.
7. Always follow traffic safety rules and encourage my friends to do the same.
8. To not be distracted by devices such as phones or when walking or riding near streets.

Student Signature:

Parent Signature: