



# BACK TO SCHOOL SAFETY TIPS

The Dori Slosberg Foundation and our safety partners, are reminding motorists, parents and students to take extra traffic safety precautions as children head back to school.

The beginning of the school year is a time when children are at increased risk of transportation-related injuries from pedestrian, bicycle, school bus, and motor vehicle crashes. This is a prime time for drivers of all ages to catch up on their back-to-school driving essentials.

## **Tips for Motorists:**

- Do not text or talk on your cell phone while driving & eliminate distractions.
- Slow down and obey all traffic laws and speed limits.
- Be alert for school zones that have a reduced speed limit at designated times of the day. Besides the safety issue, penalties are high for offenders so slow down!
- Watch for school buses. Red flashing lights and an extended stop arm indicate the school bus is stopping to load or unload children. State law requires you to stop. Keep an eye out for children walking in the street, especially where there are no sidewalks.
- Be alert for children playing and gathering near bus stops and for those who may dart into the street without looking for traffic.
- When backing out of a driveway or leaving a garage, watch for children walking or biking to school. When driving in neighborhoods or school zones, watch for young people who may be in a hurry to get to or away from school and may not be thinking about getting there safely.

## Tips for Parents:

- Be a good role model.
- Always buckle up in the car, always wear a helmet when biking, and always follow pedestrian safety rules. Don't text or talk on your cell phone while driving.
- Supervise young children as they are walking or biking to school or as they wait at the school bus stop. Provide your children with bright clothing so motorists can easily see them.
- If your child is under 4 years old and weighs less than 40 pounds, make sure the child is properly buckled up in a weight-appropriate child safety seat in the back seat.
- Children, ages 4 to 8, weighing over 40 pounds and measuring four feet nine inches or less should ride in a booster seat.
- In addition, safety experts advise that all children under the age of 12 should ride in the back seat.
- Make sure that your teen driver understands & obeys all traffic laws & is well rested before getting behind the wheel. Discourage them from texting or talking on a cell phone while driving.

## Tips for Students:

- Always buckle up when riding in a car.
- Be sure to remove your backpack before getting in the vehicle.
- Never buckle your safety belt with your backpack on.
- Always ride in the back seat. It's the safest place for young people.
- Always wear a helmet and follow traffic safety rules when riding your bike.
- If you ride a school bus, learn and practice the safety rules for waiting at the bus stop, getting on and off the bus, and riding the bus.
- Never wait for the school bus in the roadway. If you walk to school, learn and practice the safety rules for pedestrians.
- It's extremely important for you to use sidewalk when available, look left-right-left when crossing the road, and always walk facing traffic.
- Always cross at crosswalks, obey all traffic signs, traffic lights and crossing guard instructions.
- Get plenty of sleep and leave the house with plenty of time to spare. This will reduce the possibility of speeding, running red lights and not giving the proper attention to bicycle riders and pedestrians.
- Teen drivers should avoid all distractions while driving, such as texting, talking on cell phones, eating and adjusting the radio.
- Teens are also reminded never to overload their vehicle; everyone riding in a vehicle must use a safety belt. Be a good role model for your younger brothers, sisters and friends, and help them learn and follow vehicle safety rules.

**The Dori Slosberg Foundation will be holding safe driving video conferences, road safety assemblies, and safety belt compliance contests at schools across Florida. Please check our website [www.dorislosberg.org](http://www.dorislosberg.org) for updates on these events and all of our upcoming safe driving campaigns.**