

MSU-ES Dawg Tracks

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MISSISSIPPI STATE
UNIVERSITY™
EXTENSION SERVICE

Back to School
Safety Tips

According to the National Safety Council, at varying times during the month of August, 25 million kids will be returning to school. Obviously, it is extremely important for teachers, parents and others with the responsibility for our children to endeavor to teach and guide them through sound safety practices to keep them safe and out of “harm’s way.”

Following are some areas with suggestions and rules to pass on to the pertinent clientele that might just help to reduce the potential for injury and bodily harm:

WALKING TO SCHOOL-

- Walk on a sidewalk (if one is available). If not, walk on the side of the road always facing the traffic.
- Before crossing streets or intersections, look in both directions, twice, before crossing for oncoming vehicles.
- Do not “dart” out in front of a parked car.
- When possible or practical walk to school with your child.

RIDING A BICYCLE-

- Make sure your child is wearing a helmet each day as he leaves for school.
- Teach your kids the “rules of the road” for riding bicycles.
- Always come to a complete stop when approaching a crossing.

RIDING A BUS TO SCHOOL-

- Go to the bus stop with your children to teach the proper way to get on and off the bus.
- Make sure that they know to stand at least 6 feet away from the curb.
- Hypothetically- assume that it is necessary for you and your child to cross the street in front of the bus – walk on the side of the road until you are 10 feet ahead of the bus. Be sure to always position yourself so that you can see the bus driver and he can see y’all.

SCHOOL BUS SAFETY GUIDELINES-

Getting on the bus-

- ✓ Waiting on the bus- Stay away from traffic, avoid horseplay or random behavior – either could lead into an injury.
- ✓ Line up away from the bus as it approaches.
- ✓ Wait until the bus has stopped and the door is open; and then you can approach the roadway to load onto the bus.
- ✓ Utilize the handrail when entering the bus.

Getting off the bus-

- ✓ Crossing the street in front of the bus – you should walk at least 10 feet on the roadside until you can turn around and see the driver. Make sure that the driver can see you until all is clear.
- ✓ When the driver signals to walk across the street – look twice at the roadway to make sure that there are no changes. Do not walk pass the center line until the driver signals that it is okay.
- ✓ Stay away from the bus’s rear wheels at all times.

Crossing the Street-

- Before crossing – stop at the curb or roadway edge – look in both directions 2 times, being extra cautious – then walk across the street.
- Parked cars – move out from the cars enough that you are visible to the driver and occupants – then, again, look in both directions and then proceed cautiously.

SCHOOL SAFETY TIPS-

Many school-related injuries can be prevented. Following are some tips that can help them to be safe at school:

Prevent backpack related injuries-

- Choose a backpack carefully – be sure that it is designed ergonomically for safety and comfort.
- Don’t overfill a backpack. A loaded backpack should only weigh 10 to 20 % of a child’s body weight. Example – a 60 lb. child should only have no more than 12 lbs. in his backpack.
- Teach your child to always use both shoulder straps on his backpack to help distribute the load.

Prevent Play-ground related injuries-

- ✓ Encourage children to use playgrounds with soft surfaces. Avoid grass, asphalt, concrete and dirt surfaces, as they all normally have compacted hard surfaces.
- ✓ Watch for older children when they are playing on climbing equipment and refrain from allowing children four years and under to play on climbing equipment.
- ✓ Don’t allow your children of any age to play on monkey bars. They are unsafe for children of any age to play on.

Prevent Bullying-

Bullying in schools is as old as time, but just recently has gone viral to our society in general. We hear of tragedies all over the country, and it has been brought to the forefront. Psychologists are doing extensive research trying to determine the damages possibly done by this bullying.

Bullying comes in several different forms, such as hitting, punching, teasing, name calling, social exclusion (emotional bullying), unwanted sexual bullying (sexual bullying), e-mail or text messaging.

Warning signs of bullying can be recognized with the following problems:

- ~ Lost interest or dislikes in school work
- ~ Has only a few friends
- ~ Appears sad or moody when talking about school.
- ~ Complains of stomach aches and pains
- ~ Unexplained cuts, scratches or bruises
- ~ Fear of return to school
- ~ Coming with torn clothing or missing articles of clothing or school supplies
- ~ Has trouble sleeping and having nightmares

Bullying can have long-term psychological effects, such as depression and loss of self-esteem.