



## **BACK TO SCHOOL – AUGUST 2021**

**The National Safety Council is reminding motorists that schools will be reopening in August and children will be returning to the school buildings. As part of the Back to School process, please remember to Slow Down, especially in School Zones, and watch out for children.**

School days bring congestion: School buses are picking up their passengers, children are walking and some on bikes are hurrying to get to school before the bell rings, harried parents are trying to drop their kids off before work. It's never more important for drivers to slow down and pay attention than when kids are present – especially before and after school.

The National Safety Council has prepared the following information to help motorists, parents and children going to and from school.

**If You're Picking Up or Dropping Off, please follow the school specific instructions and routes for this activity.**

Make sure you know the instructions and routes for your school; this helps with the safety of all kids. The following apply to all school zones:

- Don't double park; it blocks visibility for other children and vehicles.
- Don't load or unload children across the street from the school.
- Carpool to reduce the number of vehicles at the school.

## **Sharing the Road and Crosswalks with Young Pedestrians**

By exercising a little extra care and caution, drivers and pedestrians can co-exist safely going to or from school. Please be careful and help keep children safe. School zones have a reduced speed limit on school days. In Bloomington, the school zone speed limit is 20 miles per hour. A few precautions go a long way toward keeping children safe:

- Be extra vigilant in school zones and residential neighborhoods. Keep vehicles speeds low and do not exceed the speed limit.
- When driving, keep off cell phones and other distractions.
- In Illinois, motorists must yield the right-of-way to pedestrians at or in marked or unmarked crosswalks.
- Don't block the crosswalk when stopped at a red light or waiting to make a turn, forcing pedestrians to go around you; this could put them in the path of moving traffic.
- Always stop for a school patrol officer or crossing guard holding up a stop sign.
- Take extra care to look out for children in school zones, near playgrounds and parks, and in all residential areas.
- Never pass a vehicle stopped for pedestrians.
- Watch for bikes coming from driveways or behind parked cars; give bicyclists at least 3 feet of space when overtaking or passing.

## **Sharing the Road with School Buses**

If you're driving behind a bus, allow a greater following distance than if you were driving behind a car. It will give you more time to stop once the yellow lights start flashing. School buses make frequent stops, so be prepared to slow down and stop around school buses. It is illegal to pass a school bus that is stopped to load or unload children.

- Never pass a bus from behind or from either direction if you're on an undivided residential neighborhood street if it is stopped to load or unload children.
- If the yellow or red lights are flashing and the stop arm is extended, traffic must stop.
- The area 10 feet around a school bus is the most dangerous for children; stop far enough back to allow them space to safely enter and exit the bus.
- Be alert; children often are unpredictable, and they tend to ignore hazards and take risks