

## Head Up, Phone Down When Headed Back to School

Summertime offers a nice reprieve from the constant shuffling of papers, carpools and heavy backpacks of the school year. But once fall rolls around again, parents and kids have a lot to juggle.

As your children march out the door on that first day of school – and every day – there is really only one priority: Nothing is more important than making sure they get home safely.

### A Little History

- Back in 1995, children ages 5 to 9 were more at risk than any other age group under 19 for being struck by a vehicle while walking. The good news is, the death rate for kids of all ages in this category declined more than 50 percent in the last 20 years.
- But there is much more work to be done. According to a study by SafeKids.org, 61 children are hit by cars every day in the United States, most often during the hours before and after school, and peaking in September. And, there has been a noticeable demographic shift. It is now much more likely a teenager will be hit by a car than his younger counterpart.
- Of the 484 pedestrians ages 19 and younger who died after being hit by a motor vehicle in 2013, 47 percent were age 15 to 19, according to Injury Facts 2015. We also know that 16,000 pedestrians 19 and younger were injured in 2013. That's 44 per day.
- The injury and death rates for teens has leveled off over the years, but it has not improved significantly.

### Before your children head out, remind them of these year-round safety tips:

- Never walk while texting or talking on the phone
- If texting, move out of the way of others and stop on the sidewalk
- Never cross the street while using an electronic device
- Do not walk with headphones on
- Be aware of the surroundings
- Always walk on the sidewalk if one is available; if a child must walk on the street, he or she should face oncoming traffic
- Look left, right, then left again before crossing the street
- Cross only at crosswalks

### Not Only Kids Are Distracted

- Drivers have a lot to pay attention to in school zones, too, and there is never an occasion that justifies using a phone while driving. One call or text can change everything.
- A study conducted by the Centers for Disease Control revealed that the most common form of travel to school for students age 5 to 14 is the family car. That translates into a lot of cars in school zones at the same time. Eliminating all distractions is key to keeping children safe.

Source: National Safety Council

Check out our course list online for a variety of safety trainings provided across the state at

[www.ndsc.org](http://www.ndsc.org)

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