



Back-to-School Safety Tips for

Drivers

Drivers:

- Expect delays near schools. Know your route, plan ahead, start early, and allow extra time to reach your destination and obey the posted speed limit.
- Be alert and slow down. Reduce any distractions inside your car so you can concentrate on the road and your surroundings. Put down your phone and don't talk or text while driving.
- Review the rules regarding stopping for a school bus with stop arm activated and flashing lights at <http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/POL/bussafety.html>
- All passengers should wear a seat belt and/or ride in an age and size-appropriate car safety seat or booster seat. Children of all ages are safest when properly restrained in the backseat of a vehicle.
- Exercise extra caution as you head out to work and be on the lookout for school buses. Many bus routes or schedules change each year and you may encounter a school bus or stop where you may have never seen one before. Be alert. For many children this may be the first time they have ever traveled on a bus.
- Take extra time when making a right turn on a red light and be on the lookout for pedestrians.
- School Zones: Slow down and be especially alert in residential neighborhoods and around schools. Be alert to children as you back out of your driveway or exit your garage.
- Motorists not involved in dropping off or picking up students should consider adjusting their route or schedule in order to avoid arrival and dismissal traffic in front of schools.
- Park only in lawful areas. Parking within 20 feet of a crosswalk is against the law and can obstruct visibility for both pedestrians and motorists.

- Unload school children onto the sidewalk or the right side of the vehicle. Unloading school children into a traffic lane could put a child in harm's way.
- Instruct children to remain alert and look left, right, then left again before crossing the street.
- Pedestrians should not use cell phones to talk or text or wear headphones when crossing the street.
- Safety on the road is especially important for “new” drivers that may be driving to school for the first time.
- New high school-age drivers may be pressured to give rides to and from school to many of their not-yet-driving friends. It is especially important not to fill a vehicle with passengers until the new teen driver has had plenty of driving experience by him/herself or with just one passenger.

As we make school safety a top priority, County police remind motorists that the violations of these Maryland Transportation Articles may result in the following penalties: a citation issued by a police officer for passing a school bus with stop arm activated and flashing red lights incurs a fine of \$570 and 3 points on your license. The fine incurred from the automated school bus camera enforcement is \$125 with no points on the license. Parents who bring their children to school or pick them up after school are reminded to obey the “No Parking, No Stopping, and No Standing” signs in a school zone. A violation of these signs incurs a fine of \$60.