



Matthew P. Doughney,
Chief of Police

CITY OF AVON PARK POLICE DEPARTMENT

*304 W. Pleasant Street
Avon Park Florida, 33825
Telephone 863-453-6622
FAX 863-452-4424
Email admin@avonparkpolice.com*

SCHOOL SAFETY

August is back-to-school time for students all over the country. Amid the excitement of new teachers, classes and friends, it's easy to forget the day-to-day hazards that go along with school attendance - particularly for younger students. Transportation to and from school, whether on the school bus, by foot or by car, is a high-risk part of the day commonly overlooked in a new school year. The City of Avon Park Police Department urges parents to set aside some time with their children to discuss important precautions about school transportation.

Some 24 million children travel on buses to and from schools and school-related activities each year, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). Approximately 440,000 public school buses travel more than 4 billion miles, and account for 10 billion student trips each year.

It is an unfortunate, but unsurprising reality: With so many students and buses on the road in the mornings and afternoons throughout the school year, many accidents occur each year in school bus-related accidents. However, many bus accidents are preventable, safety specialist's say. The majority of these injuries and deaths were not the result of a bus crash, but occurred when students were entering and exiting a bus.

The City of Avon Park Police Department encourages families to develop a safety plan, review basic safety rules for walking, biking or riding to school, and decide what will be done in case of an emergency.

For Bus Riders:

Line up facing the school bus door, not along the side of the school bus.

Don't play in the street while waiting for the school bus.

Carry your belongings in a backpack or book bag.

Never reach under a school bus to get anything that has rolled or fallen underneath.

After getting off the school bus, move immediately onto the sidewalk or road shoulder, out of traffic.

Wait for a signal from the bus driver before you cross the street.

Walk at least 10 steps away from the front of the bus so that the bus driver can see you.
Never cross the street behind the school bus.

Young students who walk or ride bicycles to school also face a range of dangers. Remind children to follow the following tips:

For Walkers or Bikers:

Never walk alone - always walk with a buddy.

Pay attention to all traffic signals and instructions from crossing guards.

Never cross the street against the light, even if there are no cars coming.

Wear a helmet when riding a bicycle.

Walk your bicycle across intersections.

Wear reflective material to be more visible to street traffic.

Anyone who rides in a car to school - or drives, in the case of older teenagers - needs to be particularly careful. Most traffic crashes occur close to home.

For Car Passengers and Drivers:

Everyone in the car should wear a seat belt. They lower the risk of injury in the event of a crash by 45 percent.

Motor vehicles are the leading cause of death for people age 15 to 18 years old.

Remind your teenager to take extra precautions if he or she drives to school, or rides with another teenage driver.

Make sure babies and young children are in safety seats at all times during a car ride.

The City of Avon Park Police Department has safety tips for many other situations listed on their website which can be found at www.avonparkpolice.com.