

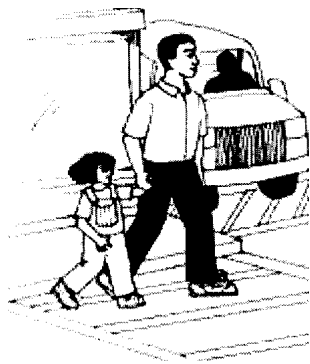


# Protect Your Children from Traffic

Each year, many children are hit by cars as they walk or ride their bikes. They can be hurt or killed, even when cars are moving slowly.

- Children younger than 10 years old cannot judge how far away a car is or how fast it is coming.
- They do not know the safety rules and expect adults to watch out for them.

## Supervise young children at all times



Watch young children from close by, not from a distance. Hold your child's hand when you walk beside or across a street.

Do not let young children cross the street alone. Teach them who can help them cross the street safely.

## Teach your child how to be a safe walker

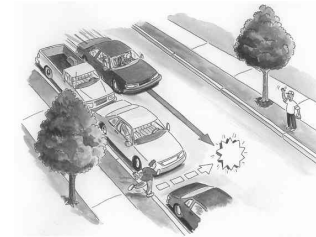
When you cross a street with your child, cross at the crosswalk or the corner. Explain what you are doing:

1. "When I cross a street, I always stop at the curb."
2. "I look Left-Right-Left for cars. I look left for any traffic coming close to me. Then I look to the right for traffic on the other side of the street. Then I look left again."
3. "When there are no cars coming, I cross the street, and keep looking left and right."

When walking, talk to your child about street safety. Point out signs that indicate a car is about to move:

- Rear lights
- Exhaust smoke
- Sound of motor
- Wheels turning

## Teach your child to avoid dangers



**Cross at the corner, not in mid-block.** Small children are hard for drivers to see. If they try to cross from behind a parked car, trash can or bush, the driver may not see them in time.



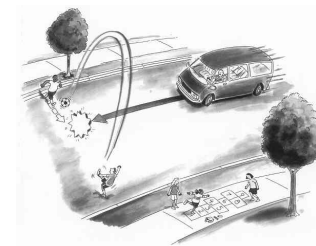
**Stay out of the street.** Young children move quickly and can run into the street without warning. If they are excited or distracted, like by an ice cream truck,

they may forget to watch for traffic.



**Take five giant steps up the sidewalk before crossing in front of the school bus.** Children should stay away from the bus so the driver can see

them. It is against the law for drivers to pass a school bus when the "stop arm" is out and the lights are flashing.



**Do not play in the street.** If a ball goes into the street, young children should ask an adult to get it for them. Older children should stop at the curb and look Left-

Right-Left before getting it.

**How well does your child understand?**

Here are some traffic questions to ask:

**Where is the best place to walk?**

A sidewalk. If there is no sidewalk, walk in the grass along the street. It is best to face the cars so we can get out of the way, if we need to. (Adult bicyclists riding in the street should ride with the flow of the traffic, as they are part of the traffic.)

**Where is the best place to cross the street?**

At the corner. Walk between the two white lines of the crosswalk. Never take short cuts across to save time.

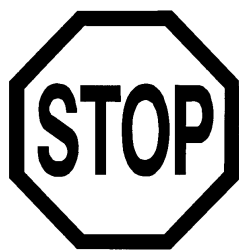
**What does a green light mean?**

It means it is our turn to cross, but we still need to keep looking and make sure there are no cars coming.

**If you can see the driver, does that mean the driver sees you?**

No. Sometimes drivers do not expect to see children. They may be thinking about something else. Try to make eye contact with the driver before you cross in front.

**What do these signs mean?**



Stop, School zone, Pedestrian crossing, Railroad crossing

Answers

**After dark, what colors do you think a driver sees best?**

White and light colors are best. Red, green and blue are not bright like they are in daylight. Carrying a flashlight or wearing reflective strips helps. Walk facing traffic when you can, so you can get out of the way if you have to.

**Help your child plan a safe way home**

Help your child plan the safest way to come home. Plan a way so that your child:

- Walks on the sidewalks.
- Crosses the street only at the corner. It's best to cross with a crossing guard if there is one. Do not rely on children younger than 10 years old to cross busy streets safely on their own.
- Never takes short cuts, such as across vacant lots or through alleyways.

If you pick your child up from school, or drop him or her off in the morning, make sure that your child does not cross the street mid-block. Park on the school side of the street or insist that your child cross at a crosswalk.



Texas Children's Health Plan  
The best decision a family can make.



Center for Childhood Injury Prevention

Developed by the Texas Children's Center for Childhood Injury Prevention.

Texas Children's Hospital Integrated Delivery System is committed to a community of healthy children by providing the finest possible pediatric care, education and research.

© 2004 Texas Children's Hospital®

All rights reserved. 6621 Fannin St. MC 4-4497 Houston, Texas 77030-2399. 1016:07/06