

We are all responsible for keeping the Rick Hansen Public School community safe!

School zones can be dangerous places for kids! A [recent study](#) by Sick Kids and York University shows dangerous driving at school drop-offs puts children at risk of injury. How can you keep your kids and their classmates safe? Check out these [safety tips](#) for safe driving in school zones:

- Slow down and be ready to stop at all times.
- Stop for school buses and be aware of children running in front of or behind buses.
- Do not perform U-turns in school zones.
- Do not pass other vehicles in a school zone.
- Expect the unexpected. Children may cross the street at the wrong place, run into traffic or ride in front of your vehicle without warning.
- Obey all laws including the posted speed limits.
- Avoid distraction within your vehicle and ensure your children are secured in a correctly installed child-restraint seat.
- Obey crossing guard signals and yield to pedestrians (and please respect school parking lot signage, as well as the school staff helping to direct traffic and enforce rules to keep our kids safe!)

As a Healthy Living school, we believe the best way to get to school is through active transportation, like walking or biking! **The York Regional Police offer the following [school safety tips](#) for pedestrians and [cyclists](#)** – practice these rules with your children while they are young and they'll be better prepared to keep practicing safe habits when they are older.

- Many children bike or walk to school. Teach children safety while on the streets, especially younger ones.
- Kids should be taught to walk on the sidewalk, not on the road, and to cross at intersections.
- If they are riding a bike, they must wear a helmet at all times.
- Children should cross the road at intersections and always cross with caution.
- Kids should never wear headphones while riding a bike. They won't be able to hear car horns or warning shouts.

If your kids bike to school:

- By law, all riders under the age of 18 must wear a properly fitted, safety approved helmet.
- Ride in the same direction as the traffic.
- Dress brightly to be seen, especially in winter and fall when it is dark in the morning.
- Children under 10 should not ride on the road.
- Use a horn or a bell to let cars know you are there.
- Always use the appropriate hand signals to let drivers know what you plan to do. The hand signals are: signalling left (left arm straight out), stop (left arm bent down) and right (left arm bent up). An alternative to right turn signalling is right arm straight out.
- A bicycle is considered a vehicle under the Highway Traffic Act. You can be fined for improper bicycle riding, including careless driving (\$265 fine), fail to yield (\$90 fine), fail to signal (\$90 fine), and disobey sign (\$90 fine) to name a few.

[School bus safety](#) is also important, and many of our students now bus to school. If your kids take the bus to school:

- Be at the bus stop early so you aren't rushing.
- Stand back from the road.
- Get on and off the bus in single file. Don't push anyone to board more quickly.
- Don't put your head or arms out the window.
- Don't distract the bus driver and listen to their instructions.
- Always cross well in front of the bus and make eye contact with the driver so you know it is safe to cross.

<http://www.sickkids.ca/AboutSickKids/Newsroom/Past-News/2016/dangerous-driving-higher-risk-hit-school-drop-offs.html>