

# Road Safety

There are many ways children can travel to and from school including walking, wheeling (e.g., bicycle, scooter or mobility device), taking public transit or a school bus; and/or, driving/taking a ride to school.

Whatever option you and your family choose, please remember to be careful and share the road with other road users. Together, we can keep school zones safe!



## Walking to School

The TDSB encourages active transportation to and from school whenever possible. Walking to school can be safer than driving and have a positive impact on student's mental wellness and academic success.

Here are some safety tips from Toronto Public Health:

- Practice good role modeling by walking with your child and showing them road safety rules so that they can develop good habits.
- Wear bright, reflective clothing or accessories in cloudy or dark conditions so drivers can see you better.
- Teach your child to use their eyes and ears. Always stop, look and listen, even if there is a crossing guard, or traffic signals.
- Stop and check that cars in every lane can see you and make eye contact with the drivers. Wait until drivers have stopped before crossing the road.
- Look left, right and left again. Teach your child to cross the road only when the way is clear, or all the cars at the crosswalk or intersection have come to a full stop. Children shouldn't cross the road between parked cars or mid-block.
- Listen for oncoming traffic and be alert. Pedestrians shouldn't use headphones or cellphones when walking, especially when they are crossing the road. Distractions, even talking while walking, can put children in danger.
- Walk, don't run, while crossing the street. By running, you risk tripping and falling in the middle of the road.



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## Cycling to School

Similar to walking, cycling is good for children's health, the environment and our communities.

According to the Ontario Ministry of Transportation (MTO), bikes are considered vehicles. Therefore, cyclists must follow the same rules and laws as drivers do.

To ensure a safe trip when riding a bike, consider some of the following tips from MTO:

- Wear a helmet every time you ride – it is the law for anyone under the age of 18.
- Wear bright clothing so drivers can see you better.
- Ride in the same direction as traffic.
- Ride beside parked cars as if all the car doors were open. As long as you are riding in a straight line, motorists coming from behind will see you and give you enough space.
- Use hand signals early when turning or stopping – this lets drivers know what you are going to do next.

Always stop:

- At stop signs and red lights.
- At the edge of the road. Look all ways to see if the road is clear before entering a road.
- For stopped school buses when their red lights are flashing.
- For pedestrians at crosswalks.
- Two metres behind bus and streetcar doors and wait until the passengers have got on/off or reached the curb.

In Toronto, children 13 and under are allowed to ride on sidewalks; however, it is illegal for older cyclists to do the same. When riding on sidewalks, children must still exercise caution and follow traffic rules.



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## Driving to School

A child struck by a car travelling at 50 km/hr is eight times more likely to be killed than a child struck at 30 km/hr. Children 10 and under are most at risk for pedestrian related injuries. Therefore, if you are driving your child to or from school, it is important to be alert and slow down as children are smaller and harder to see. In addition, it might be difficult for children to determine the direction of sound and judging distance or speed.

Here are some safety tips from Toronto Public Health:

- Follow the school zones safety traffic rules.
- When possible, park legally on a side street or in school designated areas and walk your child to school to avoid adding to the traffic in front of or near the school.
- Stop at crosswalks and intersections. Allow children and other pedestrians to fully cross the road before continuing on.
- Enter and exit school zones and driveways slowly and carefully. Watch for children on and near the road, particularly in the morning and after school hours.
- Have your child exit the car on the right side nearest to the sidewalk.
- Do not speed.



Visit [tdsb.on.ca/roadsafety](https://tdsb.on.ca/roadsafety) for more information