

School zone road safety advice – for families

Supporting your children to travel safely

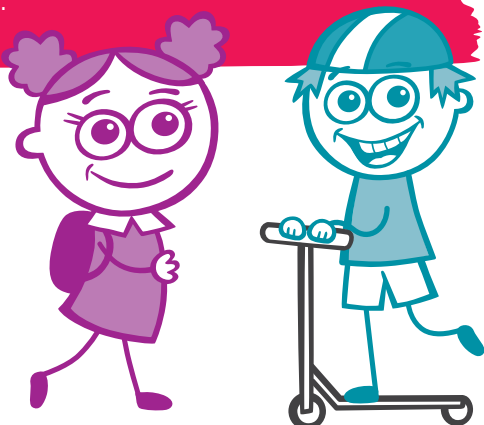
Families and caregivers should prioritise supporting children to learn and practice road safety rules while they travel to and from school.

As a general rule, children up to the age of 10 should not be in traffic situations without an accompanying adult, as they have not yet developed the knowledge, skills and behaviour necessary to keep themselves safe.

Young children benefit by learning about being safe while using all modes of transport – from walking as a pedestrian, to riding a bike, and as a passenger both in a car and on public transport. They should also learn the importance of where to play safely, away from traffic and roads.

Children learn best in the real traffic environment under the supervision of a caring adult.

Remember: Model safe and considerate behaviour for your child – they will learn from you.



Set an example

Children learn safe road user habits from their parents and carers and continue them later on when they are old enough to travel alone. You can set a good example for your children on how to be safe as a passenger, pedestrian, and rider by:

- driving to the speed limit
- not using your mobile phone while driving
- taking the time to talk about what your child can see when walking or driving with you in the car
- pointing out traffic signs and signals and explain what they mean, and talk about safer places to cross the road
- always wearing your seatbelt
- being calm when travelling, not swearing or yelling at other road users, or showing aggressive driving behaviours such as tailgating or dangerous overtaking manoeuvres.

Key strategies for supporting your children

- **Hold hands**

Until your child is at least eight years old, hold their hand while walking on the footpath, in the carpark and when crossing the road. Up until at least 10 years old, supervise your child closely, holding their hand when crossing the road.

- **Stay alert**

As pedestrians, children can be easily distracted and are often too small to be seen by drivers. They may be unable to predict or identify dangers and tend to act impulsively. Parents and carers must stay alert while supporting children walking.

- **Talk with them**

Talk with your children about being alert in the road environment. Explain to them the safe choices you make on your journey – such as why you have chosen the safest place to cross.

- **Accompany them**

Accompany your child on their journey where possible, and meet them at their school gate after school. If you can't be there, arrange for another trusted adult to take your place. Remember that at the end of the school day children may be excited, distracted, or tired and often not concentrating on their own safety, making adult supervision important. Never call a child across the road to meet you.

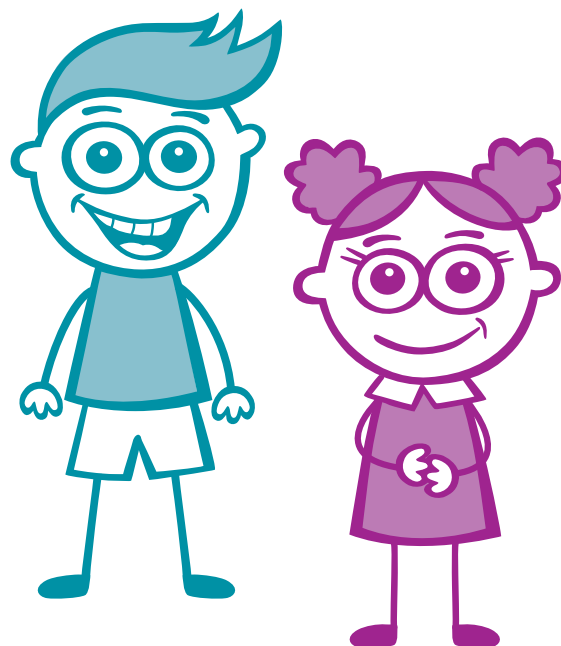
- **Plan and practice the route**

Plan and practice your trip to school and incorporate safe crossing locations where possible.

- **Remind them to STOP! LOOK! LISTEN! THINK!**

Remind your child to STOP! LOOK! LISTEN! THINK! every time they cross the road and keep checking until safely across.

Remember: when young children learn and practice safe pedestrian behaviours with you, it will help them to be safer pedestrians when they are old enough to travel alone.



Consider active travel

Another way to support road safety around school zones is to contribute to reducing the number of cars on the road. You can do this by helping your child to take an active mode of travel to get to and from school.

Some ideas for active school travel include:

- walking, riding a bike or scooter
- catching public transport
- car-pooling with another family
- if you must drive, consider parking further away from the school zone and walking your child to the gate.

Remember: switching to an active mode of travel just one day a week makes a difference.

The City of Gold Coast offers an Active School Travel program at schools on the Coast. Find out more at www.goldcoast.qld.gov.au under > The Gold Coast > Traffic & Transport > Active Travel > Active School Travel

More information

More information about road safety on the Gold Coast is available at www.goldcoast.qld.gov.au under The Gold Coast > Traffic & Transport > Road Safety