

School Safety

Putting The Brakes On Danger At Rail Crossings

(NAPSA)—A national traffic safety group is encouraging school bus drivers to not give danger the right of way.

A record number of students are expected to enter classrooms this year, requiring more school buses to carry them to school.

According to the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics, elementary and secondary enrollment will rise to 53.9 million in 2005.

This is also expected to create a demand for more school bus drivers. An increase in the number of drivers, it says, underscores a need to remind drivers to use safe driving techniques when behind the wheel of a bus, especially at rail crossings.

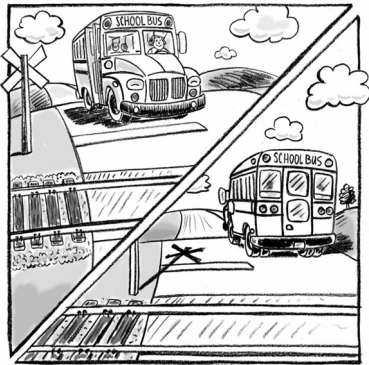
Operation Lifesaver, a national, nonprofit educational group started in 1972, is described as North America's highway-rail safety awareness organization.

According to the group's president, Gerri Hall, "Since school bus drivers' safety training requires them to stop at all railroad crossings and open their doors to check for trains, the need for driver patience is critical at these intersections as a reminder, we're sending newspapers a school bus safety cartoon for use in local papers."

For more than 30 years, the program has been working to reduce collisions, fatalities and injuries at highway-rail grade crossings and along railroad rights-of-way. According to the group, over that time, the number of vehicle-train collisions has dropped 70 percent.

As part of its mission, the group recently completed a school bus driver training video, "Decide

Look + Listen = Live



...One more safe crossing.

Watch out! School buses stop at railroad crossings. Be prepared to STOP.

Brought to you by Operation Lifesaver.



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Experts say patience at a rail crossing can be a school bus driver's friend.

Smart, Arrive Safe," which has been distributed to school districts through the National Association of State Directors of Pupil Transportation Services.

Operation Lifesaver has 3,000 certified presenters throughout the U.S. who are trained to speak to community groups, schools, bus drivers, and other organizations to reinforce driver safety around railroad tracks.

To learn more or to schedule a free safety presentation, visit the Web site at www.oli.org.