

School Bus Safety Tips

(NAPSA)—The next time you see a school bus, you may want to give the drivers, operators, manufacturers, administrators, legislators and everyone in the school transportation industry a wave of thanks.

The American School Bus Council, celebrating its 40th anniversary of School Bus Safety Week, is encouraging school transportation officials and administrators across the country to promote the outstanding safety record of school bus transportation nationwide and reinforce important safety tips for parents and schoolchildren.

To highlight the importance of using safety rules while on and off the school bus, school districts around the country will be hosting activities and events for parents and children to highlight safety. The school bus safety message this year emphasizes the importance and benefits of school bus driver training and encourages students across the country to obey school bus safety rules while waiting at the bus stop and getting on and off the school bus each day.

“Travel on a school bus is the safest form of ground transportation available, eight times safer than travel in the family car,” said Pete Japikse, president of the National Association of State Directors of Pupil Transportation. “As good as that might be, when it comes to the safety of our children, zero tolerance is the expectation. The importance of school bus safety, education and training cannot be emphasized enough.”

Students, parents, motorists and bus drivers all share in the responsibility of safe school bus transportation. The first School Bus Safety Week took place in 1966 in Orange County, Calif. Since then, it has grown into a national event, and this year the United States House of Representatives unanimously passed a res-



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olution to honor the goals and ideals of the initiative.

Today's school buses include warning lights, crossing arms, reflective devices, rollover protection, additional mirrors that allow drivers to see immediately in front of the bus, multiple emergency exits and many other safety features to prevent accidents and to protect children on board in case of a crash.

To make school buses even safer, the American School Bus Council offers these tips for school bus riders:

- Be alert to traffic. Check both ways for cars before stepping off the bus.
- Make eye contact with the bus driver, and wait for the bus driver's signal before crossing the street.
- Walk in front of the bus; never walk behind the bus to cross the street.
- While waiting for the bus, stay in a safe place away from the street.
- Before leaving the sidewalk, look for the flashing red lights.
- Never go under the bus to retrieve something you've dropped.

The American School Bus Council presents a unified voice of the school transportation industry that collectively represents more than 450,000 yellow school buses that transport 25 million children to and from school each day.

To learn more about school bus safety, visit www.napt.org.