AAA Northeast offers materials for educators and school districts, including content on traffic safety issues such as pedestrian, bike and child passenger safety, and teen driver education. The goal of these resources is to engage parents and community members in matters of student transportation and traffic safety education. We hope you will find this toolkit and resources contained within helpful.
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RESOURCES FOR YOUR SCHOOL COMMUNITY

• Pedestrian Safety Videos
• Lesson Plans & Resources for Educators
• Customizable back-to-school press release

WALKING SCHOOL BUS

• Buster the Teaching Bus “Getting to School Safely” Lesson Plan
• Buster the Teaching Bus “Walking School Bus” Video
• Safe Routes To School/NHTSA Guide on Walking School Bus
• National Walk to School Day

AAA SCHOOL SAFETY PATROL

• Ordering Materials
• Parent Permission Slip
• “At Your Post” Training Video
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Pedestrian Safety Videos

**BACK TO SCHOOL HEALTH**
Whatever plan your community has for re-opening schools, we can all agree on these helpful back-to-school health tips! View Buster the Teaching Bus’s health safety reminders.

**SCHOOL SAFETY**
Does your school have a AAA School Safety Patrol program? The AAA School Safety Patrol program allows students to be active participants in maintaining a safe walk to and from school.

Visit [AAA.com/SafetyPatrol](http://AAA.com/SafetyPatrol) for more information.

**PEDESTRIAN SAFETY TIPS**
Walking is a great way to maintain a healthy lifestyle. It can also be great for the environment if fewer cars are on the road. But it is important to make sure that you are walking safely!

**Pedestrian Safety Tips**

- Be predictable. Follow the rules of the road, and obey signs and signals.
- Walk on sidewalks whenever possible. If there is no sidewalk, walk facing traffic and as far off the road as possible.
- Always be alert. Don’t be distracted by electronic devices or headphones that can take your eyes and ears off the road.
- Whenever possible, cross at crosswalks or intersections, where drivers expect pedestrians. Look for cars in all directions, including those turning left or right.
- If a crosswalk or intersection is not available, locate a well-lit area where you have the best view of traffic. Wait for a gap in traffic that allows enough time to cross safely; continue watching for traffic as you cross.
- Never cross between parked cars, as you will not be in the drivers’ view.
- Never assume a driver sees you. Make eye contact with drivers as they approach to make sure you are seen.
- Be visible at all times. Wear bright clothing during the day, and wear reflective materials and use a flashlight at night.
- Watch for cars entering or exiting driveways, or backing up in parking lots. Teach young students that white taillights indicate that the vehicle is backing up.
Lesson Plans & Resources for Educators

AAA NORTHEAST’S LESSON PLANS FOR DISTANCE LEARNING
AAA Northeast’s education team has created a compendium of K-12 lesson plans designed for distance learning. Elementary, middle and high school teachers will be able to send student worksheets, videos and slide presentations electronically for use in their curriculum. For more information and to view the lesson plans and accompanying materials, visit our Google Site! Educators can also request one of AAA’s educators to deliver these lessons virtually. Visit AAA.com/Community to request a virtual presentation!

WALKSAFE CURRICULUM AND RESOURCES
With more students walking to school, students should receive education on safe pedestrian practices. AAA recommends WalkSafe, an evidence-based curriculum for elementary-aged students that teaches pedestrian safety skills for the real world. Students in kindergarten through 5th grade will receive three, 30-minute lesson with interactive street simulations. The WalkSafe curriculum and resources are available here.

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL: THE WALKING SCHOOL BUS GUIDE
This is highly recommended for communities where walking school buses or “Safe Routes to School” programs will be employed.

“GETTING TO SCHOOL SAFELY WITH BUSTER THE TEACHING SCHOOL BUS” LESSON PLAN
This lesson plan (see sample on page 5) was developed to be used at the start of the school year to get students and parents thinking about safe transportation and incorporates instruction for starting a walking school bus where applicable. View full lesson plan, PowerPoint and resources here.

TIPS FOR STARTING A WALKING SCHOOL BUS PROGRAM
Interested in starting a walking school bus program in your community? View our tips for getting started! (See page 9)
“Getting to School Safely with Buster the Teaching School Bus” Lesson Plan

GRADES:
K-4

TOPIC:
Safety precautions and skills for students when walking solo or with a “walking school bus,” as well as riding the bus to school.

OBJECTIVES:
Students will demonstrate the ability to use decision-making skills in and around traffic to avoid injury.

Students will demonstrate the ability to recognize walking safely as a health-enhancing behavior and practice safe skills to avoid health risks.

PROCEDURE:
• Ask students to consider how they plan to get to/from school each day. Will they walk alone, with friends/family, take the bus or get a ride?

• Once they have identified their main source of transportation, guide students to view a short video about each option:
  - How to Walk to School Safely
  - What is a “Walking School Bus”
  - Review school bus safety rules

• Test the students’ comprehension of the videos using the SAFETY TO REMEMBER worksheet.

• Instruct students to review the Getting to School Safety with Buster the Teaching Bus Power-Point presentation to guide them through the MAPPING MY TRIP activity.

• Instruct students to complete the MAPPING MY TRIP activity. This activity includes:
  - Viewing an electronic or paper map of their community (Google Maps is recommended) and identifying where they live, where their school is located, and a local playground or park are located if there is not one by their school.
  - Measure or find the distance from home to school (and the park or playground). Look for the safest route they can take (a roadway with sidewalks or crosswalks) if they are walking.
  - Identify why or why not would this be a safe or dangerous way to walk? Is it very far away? Are the roads too busy with no sidewalks? Are there safe places to cross the streets?
  - If students get a ride to school, what should they remember to do to stay safe in their vehicle?
• Encourage students to practice their trip to school sometime over the summer, especially if they will attend a new school in the fall. Estimate how long the trip takes (add more time for school traffic). Students can also use the MAPPING MY TRIP activity worksheet to learn about getting to a local playground or park.

**SUMMARY:**
This lesson should serve as an introduction or review for students on pedestrian and child passenger safety skills. It also serves as an introduction to map reading and mathematical measurement of time and distance.

**NATIONAL HEALTH EDUCATION STANDARDS:**

5.2.1 Identify situations when a health-related decision is needed.

5.2.2 Differentiate between situations when a health-related decision can be made individually or when assistance is needed.

5.5.1 Identify health-related situations that might require a thoughtful decision.

5.5.2 Analyze when assistance is needed in making a health-related decision.

5.5.3 List healthy options to health-related issues or problems.

5.5.4 Predict the potential outcomes of each option when making a health-related decision.

5.5.5 Choose a healthy option when making a decision.

5.5.6 Describe the outcomes of a health-related decision.

7.2.1 Demonstrate healthy practices and behaviors to maintain or improve personal health.

7.2.2 Demonstrate behaviors that avoid or reduce health risks.

7.5.1 Identify responsible personal health behaviors.

7.5.2 Demonstrate a variety of healthy practices and behaviors to maintain or improve personal health.

7.5.3 Demonstrate a variety of behaviors to avoid or reduce health risks.
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:

SCHOOL’S OPEN – DRIVE, RIDE, BIKE & WALK CAREFULLY!

AAA Northeast and are reminding students and drivers to use caution as schools reopen for the 2020-2021 school year. An increase in traffic, as well as an increase in child pedestrians and cyclists, requires patience, defensive driving skills, and mindfulness for all roadway users. School transportation guidelines have changed as recommendations from the CDC include social distancing on school buses, which reduces the number of riders.

Parents and caregivers can consider organizing or participating in a walking school bus program in neighborhoods that have infrastructure to support pedestrian traffic. Adults or older students trained in pedestrian safety, such as a AAA School Safety Patroller, lead a group of younger students to and from school each day. Students walk and cross streets together and “bus stops” are planned in advance to include all students who wish to participate.

“Parents and schools looking to start a walking school bus program in their neighborhood should start by conducting a walkability audit in their neighborhood by walking the route to the school from the starting point. This exercise rates the infrastructure for sidewalks, bike lanes, traffic calming devices and safety concerns regarding motor vehicle traffic,” said Diana Gugliotta, Senior Manager of Public Affairs at AAA Northeast.

AAA recommends using the Safe Routes Audit Toolkit to get started. Additionally schools interested in beginning a Safety Patrol program at their school should visit AAA.com/SafetyPatrol; materials are furnished at no cost to the school.

Local motorists must be vigilant, especially in the hours before and after school and follow the tips below:

• Slow down. Speed limits in school zones are reduced for a reason. A pedestrian struck by a vehicle traveling at 25 mph is nearly two-thirds less likely to be killed compared to a pedestrian struck by a vehicle traveling just 10 mph faster.
• **Come to a complete stop.** Research shows that more than one-third of drivers roll through stop signs in school zones or neighborhoods. Always come to a complete stop, checking carefully for children on sidewalks and in crosswalks before proceeding.

• **Eliminate distractions.** Research shows that taking your eyes off the road for just two seconds doubles your chances of crashing. Children can be quick, crossing the road unexpectedly or emerging suddenly between two parked cars. Reduce risk by not using your cell phone.

• **Reverse responsibly.** Every vehicle has blind spots. Check for children on the sidewalk, in the driveway and around your vehicle before slowly backing up. Teach your children to never play in, under or around vehicles.

• **Watch for bicycles.** Children on bikes are often inexperienced, unsteady and unpredictable. Slow down and allow at least three feet of passing distance between your vehicle and a bicyclist. If your child rides a bicycle to school, require that he or she wear a properly fitted bicycle helmet on every ride.

• **Talk to your teen.** Car crashes are the leading cause of death for teens in the United States, and nearly one in four fatal crashes involving teen drivers occur during the after-school hours of 3 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Insert any local intersections or traffic hazards that law enforcement would like to warn citizens about due to construction, speeding, or crash rates.

# # #
AAA Northeast’s School Transportation Toolkit

Tips for Starting a WALKING SCHOOL BUS Program

School transportation looks different this year. For parents & students with concerns about traffic safety, a walking school bus program can be a great benefit to the community.

A walking school bus is a planned route that a group of students – accompanied by an adult and/or trained AAA School Safety Patrollers – travel to school. There are assigned “stops” along the way where other students join on the way to school.

Visit [AAA.com/Community](http://AAA.com/Community) to learn more!

**Decide who will organize & manage the program**

This can be a group of parents who share responsibility of leading the bus different days of the week. The school may be able to help with grouping students by neighborhood.

**Find your students!**

Organize walking groups with interested families. Use social media to get the word out! Share info with the school so they can promote it too. Create a map to mark “walking school bus” stops.

**Conduct a walkability audit**

Take note of the safest route(s) possible and identify possible hazards. Provide feedback on sidewalks, crosswalks and traffic control devices before you decide on the route.

Use the [Safe Routes Audit Toolkit](http://SafeRoutesAuditToolkit) for help.

**Announce the program in your community**

Share the news with the school & police department.

Send a press release to local media, and share on social media networks.

**Use your AAA School Safety Patrol!**

Visit [AAA.com/SafetyPatrol](http://AAA.com/SafetyPatrol) to order supplies or register a new School Safety Patrol. Use the resources on that page to conduct a training with your students.

**Make it FUN & SAFE!**

Have a group meeting with students and parents to review the rules before the program begins. Set regular check-ins to make sure students are following safety guidelines. Incorporate “theme weeks” to engage students.
National Walk or Bike to School Day 2020

You may have heard an older relative describe their experiences walking or biking to school as “up-hill both ways!” However, walking and biking are still excellent ways of getting to school! National Walk and Bike to School Day on October 7, 2020 is a fun challenge for students of all ages!

All over the country, school is going to look different this fall due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Safe walking and biking to school can be alternatives to traditional school transportation. With schools facing the challenge of school re-opening, walking and biking can be a part of a greater solution to the challenges presented by COVID-19 related to transportation. Ultimately, National Walk and Bike to School Day can be a wonderful time to enjoy fresh air and encourage students to creatively and confidently take ownership of their own transport!

Click here for information on planning a Walk or Bike to School event and to access additional resources on safe walking and biking.
AAA School Safety Patrol

Now in its 100th year, the AAA School Safety Patrol program has a rich history. Over the course of the program, more than a million boys and girls have taken an active role in helping their peers get to and from school safely. The AAA School Safety Patrol program also has some famous alumni - U.S. presidents & vice presidents, state governors, members of Congress & Supreme Court justices, astronauts, athletes and celebrities. Many former patrollers also now serve as educators, business executives, physicians and other community leaders.

AAA School Safety Patrol advisor resources

AAA School Safety Patrol School Registration Form
New to the AAA School Safety Patrol program? Register on the link above to start your school’s program and order materials.

PowerPoint Training for Advisors
Find information on organizing, maintaining and supporting your Patrol.

AAA School Safety Patrol Supplies Order Form
Order Safety Patrol belts, badges or other materials for your new Patrollers.

“At Your Post” Patroller Training Video
This training video serves as a comprehensive training for Patrollers.

AAA School Safety Patrol Application & Parent Permission Form
Download this printable PDF of a template Patroller application and parent permission form.

AAA School Safety Patrol Program COVID-19 Guidance