Back to School Safe Driving Reminders

While the school bus is one of the safest modes of transportation, illegal school bus passing is a significant threat to children and their caretakers.

Statistics and Facts About Illegal School Bus Passing:

- It is illegal for vehicle drivers to pass a school bus while the school bus stop-arm is extended, and the red lights are flashing. Failing to do so could result in injury or death to child pedestrians or their caretakers. Vehicle drivers must always come to a complete stop when a school bus stop-arm is extended, and the red lights are flashing.

- From 2011 to 2020, there were 1,009 fatal school-transportation-related crashes, and 1,125 people of all ages were killed in those crashes — an average of 113 fatalities per year.

- In the National Association of State Directors of Pupil Transportation Services 2022 Stop Arm survey, 79,859 school bus drivers reported that 51,593 vehicles passed their buses illegally on a single day during the 2020-21 school year. Throughout a 180-day school year, these sample results point to more than 41.8 million violations per year among America’s motoring public.
The most dangerous part of the school bus ride is getting on and off the school bus. The school bus loading and unloading area is called the “Danger Zone.” Specifically, this is any side of the bus where a child may not be seen by the bus driver and, therefore, is in the most danger. These areas include:
- 10 feet in front of the bus, where the driver may be sitting too high to see a child
- 10 feet on either side of the bus, where a child may be in the driver’s blind spots
- Behind the school bus

Young children are most likely to be struck because they:
- Hurry to get on and off the bus
- Act before they think and have little experience with traffic
- Assume motorists will see them and wait for them to cross the street

**Safety Reminders for Parents and Caregivers**
- Arrive at the bus stop five minutes early.
- Stand at least 5 giant steps (10 feet) away from the edge of the road.
- Wait until the bus stops, the door opens, and the driver says it’s okay before stepping onto the bus.
- Be careful that clothing with drawstrings and book bags with straps or dangling objects do not get caught in the handrail or door when exiting the bus.
- Walk in front of the bus; never walk behind the bus.
- Be sure the bus driver can always see you, and you can see the bus driver.
- Before crossing the street, stop and look left-right-left before crossing.
Safety Reminders for Drivers

- The overall best practice is to “always stop if there’s a school bus.”
- Yellow flashing lights indicate the bus is preparing to stop to load or unload children. Motorists should slow down and prepare to stop their vehicles.
- Motorists may begin moving only when the red flashing lights are turned off, the stop arm is withdrawn, and the bus begins to move.
- Never pass on the right side of the bus, where children enter or exit. This is illegal and can have tragic results.
- The greatest risk to a child isn’t riding a school bus but approaching or leaving one. That’s why, as a vehicle driver, it is especially important to pay attention. Students’ lives are on the line.
- **Slow Down.** Watch for children walking in the street, especially if there are no sidewalks in the neighborhood. Watch for children playing and gathering near bus stops.
- Don’t drive distracted. Be alert. Children arriving for the bus may dart into the street without looking for traffic.
- Watch out for young people who may be distracted and not paying attention to the traffic around them.
Want To Keep Kids Safe?
Become a Child Passenger Safety Technician!

Upcoming Child Passenger Safety Technician certification classes:

September 19-22, 2023
North Kansas City Fire Department
North Kansas City, MO

October 3-5, 2023
Kansas Department of Transportation
Bonner Springs, KS
Labor Day Warning
Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over
“If You Feel Different, You Drive Different. Drive High, Get a DUI”

Summer may be coming to an end, but there's no end in sight to law enforcement's crackdown on impaired driving. This Labor Day holiday, the Kansas Department of Transportation urges drivers to think twice before driving drunk or high.

Enforcement for the national impaired driving campaign, “If You Feel Different, You Drive Different. Drive High, Get a DUI,” increases across the state.
You Drive Different. Drive High, Get a DUI,” will run for 20 days - from Aug. 17, through Sept. 5. KDOT is working to reduce sobering statistics involving driving drunk or high. During August and September of 2021 in Kansas, there were 19 total fatal crashes of impaired driving, according to KDOT stats.

“It doesn’t matter what term you use,” said Gary Herman, KDOT Behavioral Safety Manager. “If you feel different, you drive different - an impaired person should never get behind the wheel.”

Nationally, about 37 people die in drunk-driving crashes each day – that’s one person every 39 minutes, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. In 2021, 13,384 people died in alcohol-impaired driving traffic deaths – a 14% increase from 2020.

“The bottom line is that no matter what the substance is, if you are impaired, you should not be driving,” Herman said. “The consequences are real and cannot be undone. Play it safe.”

Like drunk driving, drug-impaired driving is illegal nationwide. NHTSA states that drugs can impair a driver’s coordination, judgment and reaction times; make drivers more aggressive and reckless; and cause extreme drowsiness, dizziness and other side effects.

If convicted for impaired driving, drivers face stiff penalties, hefty financial consequences and time in jail. Bottom line - don’t drive impaired. Designate a sober driver, take public transportation or stay home.

For more information about impaired driving, visit www.KTSRO.org.
A B.R.A.K.E.S. (Be Responsible And Keep Everyone Safe) defensive driving class for 180 teens and their parents was held in Topeka.
Child Passenger Safety Technicians held a car seat check lane in Cherryvale.
2022 Community Traffic Safety Award
Parsons Police Department
Silver
Pictured are some of the Kansas law enforcement agencies that earned 2022 Community Traffic Safety Awards.

A media event to promote the Labor Day “If You Feel Different, You Drive Different. Drive High, Get a DUI” campaign was held at the Kansas Turnpike Authority.
Garden City Child Passenger Safety Technicians held a car seat check lane.
The SAFE (Seatbelts Are For Everyone) program was awarded a certificate of appreciation from the Kansas Juvenile Officers Association at its annual conference. The group pictured includes KTSRO staff and KDOT Law Enforcement Liaisons.
ALWAYS DESIGNATE A SOBER DRIVER

DESIGNATED DRIVERS, STOP BY TEAM STORE FOR A COMPLIMENTARY COCA COLA VOUCHER

RIDE SHARE DROP OFF AND PICKUP ZONE AT THE MAIN GATE

FANS with a PLAN

DRIVE SAFE SEDGWICK

Kansas Department of Transportation
New "Fans With A Plan" signs seen at Wichita's Riverfront Stadium.

A child's car seat is checked at the Lawrence Back to School Safety Fair.
KTSRO set up a booth at the McPherson First Responders Night event and distributed educational traffic safety items to the public.