

# — Caution for Kids

## *Safe Driving for Back to School*

Summer vacation is over for many schools. It's common for everyone to think about the increased challenges of the new school year: children walking and riding their bikes, driving in school zones, and being cautious around school buses. But it's also important to remember high school and colleges are in session too.

This adds a whole other level to defensive driving. You've got increased foot and bike traffic as well as inexperienced drivers. And most importantly, teens and young adults have a high potential for distracted walking, biking, and driving. Cell phone use, tweeting, texting, talking, searching, listening to music, and watching videos are major distractions. Is this frustrating? Absolutely, but now it's more important than ever to be a defensive driver. Here are some safe driving tips to help you navigate the back-to-school season.

### **MANAGE YOUR DRIVING TIME**

Allow yourself plenty of time to get where you need to go. But sometimes things just happen; maybe you're late for an appointment or there's road work ahead. It's natural to become frustrated and try to rush to your destination...but don't. Take a deep breath and remember your life and the lives of others are in your hands. Implement regularly scheduled inspections and cleanings of rooftops and storm drains throughout the rainy season

### **DON'T GET DISTRACTED**

Research shows that taking your eyes off the road for just two seconds doubles your chances of crashing. When you're driving, just drive. Put away your phone, tablet, laptop, etc. If it's not an emergency, it can wait. If it can't wait then pull over safely before reaching for your phone.



### **SLOW DOWN**

The simplest thing any driver can do when there are new hazards is to slow down.

- Stop for school buses.  
**FLASHING RED LIGHTS = STOP**
- Yield to pedestrians at crosswalks and be on the lookout for children crossing in-between cars.
- Watch for bicycles. Allow three feet of distance between your vehicle and the bicyclist when passing.
- Always come to a complete stop at stop signs and double check for children.
- Be patient.

The Centers for Disease Control reports that texting while driving is especially dangerous because it contains all three types of distractions.

1. Visual - taking your eyes off the road
2. Manual - taking your hands off the wheel
3. Cognitive - taking your mind off of driving

It also takes the driver's attention away from driving more frequently and for longer periods than other distractions. Additional information