Parent’s Role in Keeping Children Safe

As a parent/guardian, you know that your children are always watching and learning from you. Parents/guardians are the most important role models in a child’s life. This is just as true when it comes to safe walking as it is with anything else. By modeling safe walking habits when you are out walking with your child/children, it could lead to increased safe behaviors and decreases in walking-related deaths and injuries. Remember every step you take is a teachable moment. With your safe walking habits as a guideline, your child/children will be on their way to forming safe walking habits for themselves.

Here are a few basic safety behaviors you can role model for your child/children:

**BE AWARE**
Engage your child by pointing out different hazards and obstacles and discuss safe actions to take.

**STEP TO THE SIDE**
If you have to call or text, move out of the way of others and stop on the sidewalk in a safe place.

**FOLLOW THE LAW**
Obey the traffic signs and signals at all times.

**CHOOSE YOUR ROUTE**
Plan and discuss the safest route to school or any other destinations.

**EYES ON THE DRIVER**
Make eye contact with drivers (or people bicycling, riding scooters, etc.) at the intersections before stepping off the curb. Explain to your child/children to do the same.

**CROSS CAREFULLY**
Stop, look all four ways and listen before crossing streets, driveways, alleyways and parking lot entrances and have your child/children do this with you.

**PHONE AWAY**
Never text or talk on the phone when you are walking.

**MUSIC OFF**
Do not walk with headphones or earbuds in your ears.

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While driving, practice safe behaviors when your children are in the car by making sure to:

**FOLLOW THE LAW**
Drive the speed limit and obey all traffic signs.

**STOP FOR PEOPLE**
Yield to all people using the crosswalks.

**GO WITH THE FLOW**
Obey school drop-off and pick-up procedures.

**PARK LEGALLY**
Don’t double park, stop in crosswalks or park in residents’ driveways or teacher parking lots.

**LOOK BEHIND YOU**
Watch for children walking to school when backing out of a driveway or a parking spot.

**STAY FOCUSED**
Limit distractions while driving, including your phone, food, make-up and interactions with passengers.

**GIVE RESPECT, GET RESPECT**
Be respectful to other people driving, bicycling and walking.

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