

Parents and Guardians,

Riding the school bus can be an exciting experience for your child. She may have the opportunity to ride to and from school everyday, or she may only ride the bus once a year on a school field trip. Either way, it is important for your child to know bus safety rules. Take some time to go over these, and encourage your child to ask any questions she might have.

*Help your child get to the bus safely.*

1. **Pack all belongings securely in a back pack.** This will allow your child to hold onto the safety rail as he enters the bus. It will also prevent your child from tripping over or dropping any objects while he finds his seat.
2. **Make sure your child has plenty of time to get to the bus stop.** Your child may risk falling if she has to run for the bus. Also, your child may get frightened and not know what to do if she misses the bus.
3. **Have your child walk to the bus stop in a group.** If your child is walking to the bus stop, it is better to have him walk with a group of kids rather than by himself.

*Remind your child of safety rules to use when entering and exiting the bus.*

1. **Make sure your child knows to wait for the bus to come to a complete stop.** As long as the bus is moving, the bus driver is watching the road. It is safer for your child to wait for the bus to stop, the doors to open, and the bus driver to look over at your child.
2. **Have your child enter the school bus without pushing or stopping.** Your child is less likely to trip if they enter the school bus slowly and orderly. If your child drops something, have her tell the bus driver before trying to retrieve it. The bus driver may not see your child if she has bent down to pick something up.

*Encourage your child to be courteous and follow directions when riding the bus.*

1. **Go over the bus rules for your school bus.** These rules should be posted at the front of the bus, or the bus driver can tell you where to find a copy of the rules. This will help your child learn what they can and cannot bring on the bus, and will reinforce basic safety rules such as staying seated when the bus is in motion.
2. **Remind your child to use a soft voice while riding the bus.** It is important for the bus driver to be able to hear the sounds of the road while she is driving. Too much yelling on the bus can prevent the driver from hearing important things such as a train whistle or car horn.

*Remember that many of the same rules apply when exiting the bus.*

Rules such as waiting for the bus to stop, not pushing, and being courteous also apply when exiting the bus. They also apply for the bus trip home from school. Kids may need moral support when they first start riding the bus. For the first few days you may need to put your child on the bus at the bus stop, and then meet the bus at the school. This is a great time to ask your child if they followed the safety rules or have any questions.

