



Family Safety Guide

For Parents



Safe Walking and Riding - Pre-activity

Choosing Your Equipment

Walking

Be Prepared

- Wear comfortable shoes with non-slip soles, especially for rainy days.
- Protect yourself from the sun: Wear a hat and UV-protective clothing when possible.
- Use broad-spectrum sunscreen (SPF 30+).
- Stay hydrated! Be sure to carry water.



Bicycles

Size: Finding the Right Fit

- Don't buy a bike your child will "grow into." The bike must fit *now*. A properly sized bike is crucial for control and safety, reducing the risk of falls. Visit your local bike shop for expert assistance with bike fitting.
- Check these fit points:
 - Child can stand over the top tube with both feet flat on the ground.
 - Seat allows legs to extend 80–90% when pedaling.
 - Handlebars enable a comfortable, upright posture.



Lights: Be Seen, Be Safe

- Always use a white light on the front and a red light on the rear of your bike.
- Lights on your bike are required by law in most states after sunset.
- LED lights are best! They're bright and can be seen day or night.

Helmets: Protect Your Head

- Always wear a helmet when biking, scooting, rolling.
- Replace your helmet every five years, or sooner if it's been damaged.



Steps for Prevention

Clothing, Sunblock, and Hydration

- Protect yourself from the sun! Wear UV-protective clothing whenever you can and apply broad-spectrum sunscreen (SPF 30+).
- Stay hydrated! Attach a water bottle cage to your bike for easy access to water.



Bike Checks - for the kids

Help your kids get in the habit of checking their bikes before riding with the simple ABCS: Air, Brakes, Chain, and Seat.

- **A is for Air:** Make sure the tires are pumped up and in good condition. Check the numbers on the side of the tire for the correct pressure.
- **B is for Brakes:** Have your child squeeze the brakes. They should stop the bike, and the handles bounce back.
- **C is for Chain:** Check that the chain moves smoothly.

If your bike has gears, make sure the chain isn't stuck. If it doesn't have gears, make sure the chain isn't so loose it could fall off the gears.
- **S is for Saddle:** Check that the saddle is secure and doesn't wiggle.

Helmet Fit: Two-Finger Rule

Using the Two-Finger Rule:

Proper helmet fit is crucial for protection.



- 1.**
Put the helmet on your child's head.



- 2.**
Adjust the ratchet at the back of the helmet (if available) or use the foam pads for a snug fit.



- 3.**
Place two fingers flat on your forehead, above your eyebrows. The helmet should rest lightly on the top finger, not lower or higher.



- 4.**
Form a "V" with your index and center fingers. The helmet straps should follow this V, one strap in front of your ear next to your cheek, the other behind it.



- 5.**
Fasten the chin strap. Only two fingers should fit between the strap and your chin when buckled.

Be a role model for your children. Your safety habits are what they will remember. If you tell your child to wear a helmet, yet you are not wearing one yourself, what message does that send to your child?



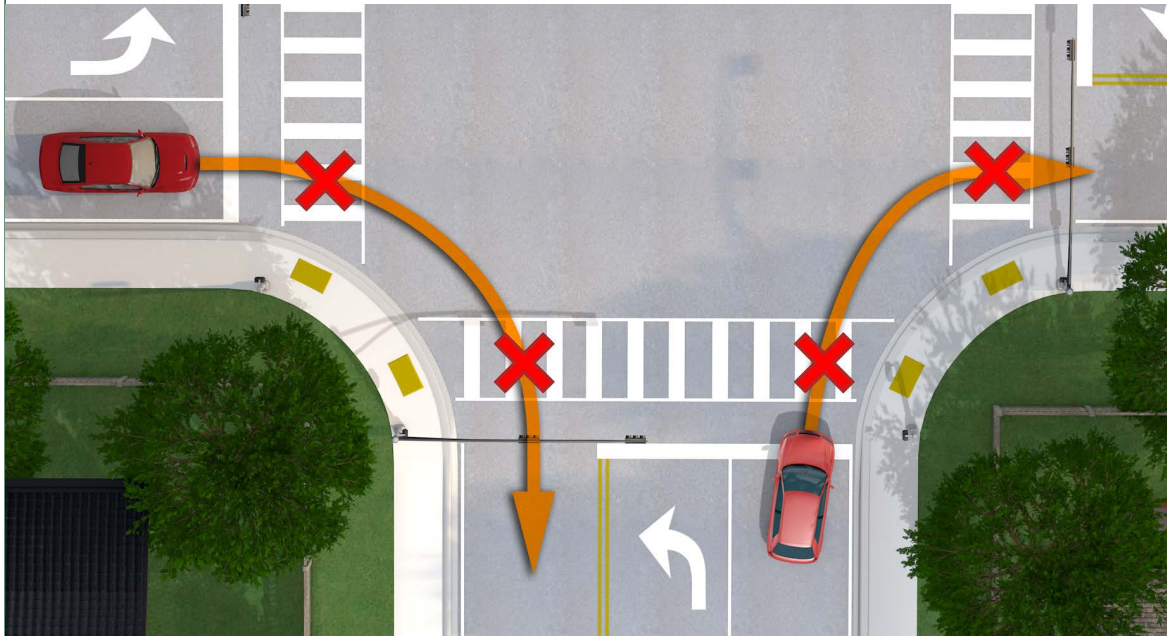
While Walking and Riding - During Activity

Knowing your streets

Intersections

Beyond “Left-Right-Left”

While “Stop and look left-right-left” is a good start, modern intersections require more awareness. Even with “WALK” signals, look around for the following potential dangers.



Right Turns on Red (RTOR)

Right turns on red are confusing:

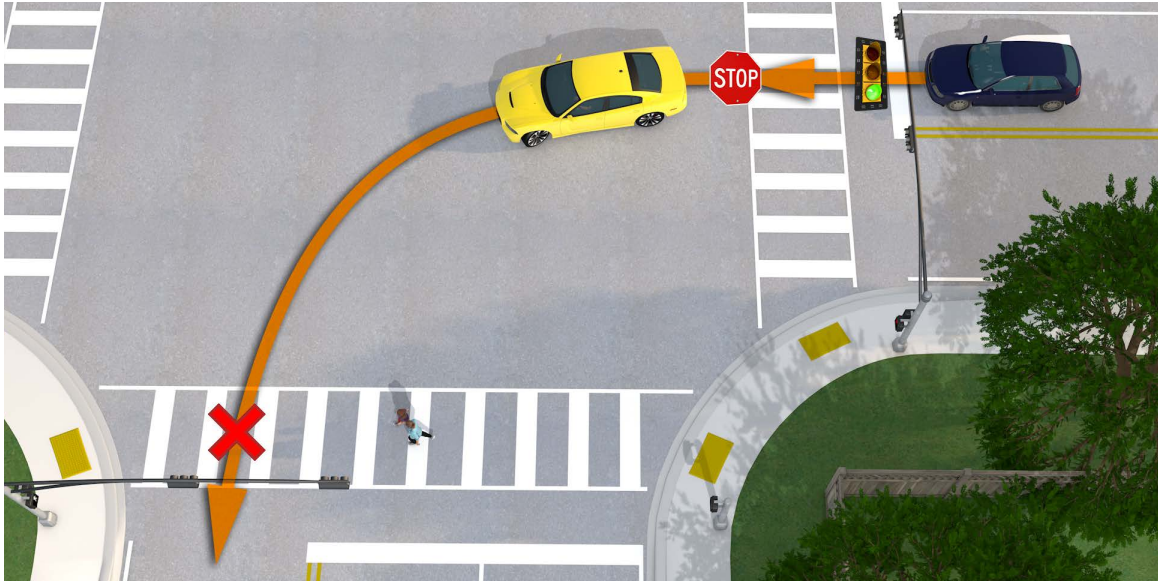
- Red lights mean a driver must stop.
- “WALK” signals are *supposed to* mean a crosswalk is clear.

Yet, RTORs mean drivers can turn on red, even with a “WALK” signal. Drivers frequently ignore pedestrians. Stay vigilant, as drivers might fail to provide the right of way.

There is another place a driver can come from unexpectedly.

Unprotected Left Turns

At many intersections, traffic parallel with pedestrians can turn left at the same time, like this:

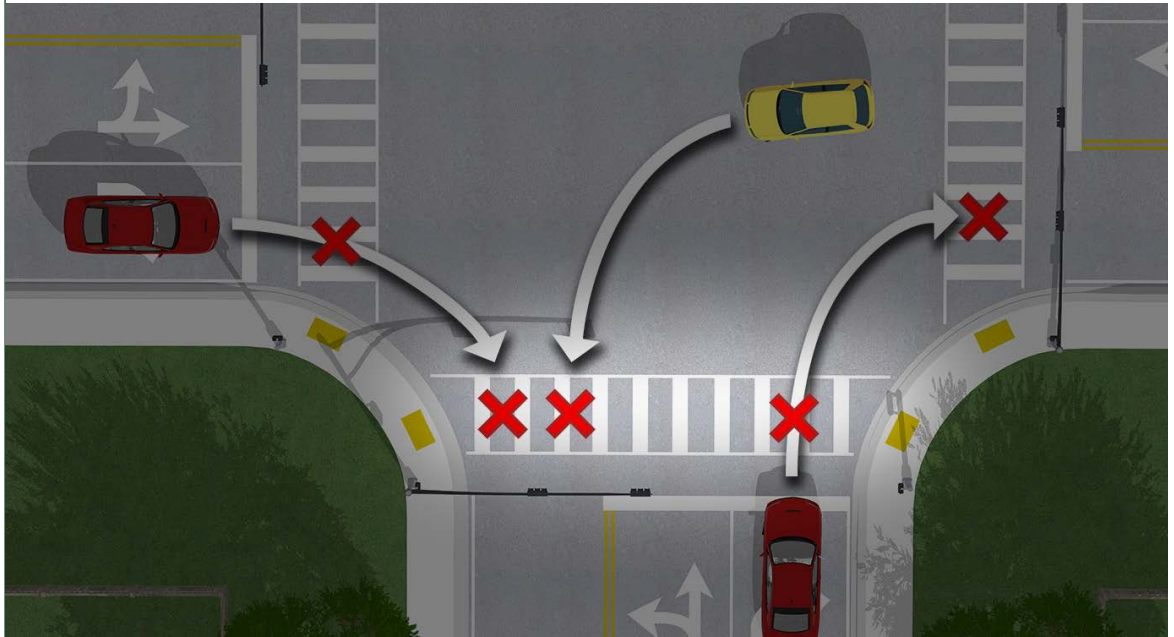


The driver in the yellow car, on a green light, can wait in the middle of the intersection to make a left turn. They must wait for a gap in oncoming traffic before turning.

But this driver has to concentrate on oncoming traffic too, which can distract them from pedestrians or bicyclists crossing the street.



Drivers can come from three different places unexpectedly, even with a WALK signal.



This shows why constant awareness before and during crossing streets goes beyond “left-right-left.”

School Drop-Off Zones

- Stick to designated safe walking routes.
- Never allow children to walk between parked cars where they can't be seen.
- Increase safety with walking groups or “walking buses.”



Weather and Environment

Climate

Rain

- Wet conditions reduce traction – slow down and avoid puddles.
- Wear waterproof gear if available.
- Use lights/reflectors in low visibility conditions.

Intense Heat

- **Hydrate constantly:** Drink water before, during, and after any activity.
- **Avoid peak sun:** Limit outdoor activity from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- **Sun protection:** Wear a hat, sunglasses, light clothing, and SPF 30+ sunscreen.
- **Know heat illness signs:** Learn the symptoms of heat exhaustion (dizziness, nausea, headache, heavy sweating) and heatstroke (high body temperature, confusion, seizures).
- **Pavement is hot:** Wear shoes that protect your feet from hot surfaces.

Visibility

Daytime

- Wear bright or fluorescent clothing to stand out.
- Use reflective gear on clothing, backpacks, and bikes.
- Ride in well-lit areas and avoid heavy shadows or blind spots.

Nighttime

- Use bike lights!
- White light on the front (at least 200 lumens for visibility)
- Red flashing light on the back to alert drivers.
- Add reflective strips on clothing, helmets, and shoes.
- Avoid dark-colored clothing—opt for neon or high-visibility colors.
- Stick to well-lit streets and paths whenever possible.

Urban City Safety

- **Increased caution:** High traffic and pedestrian volume demand extra awareness.
- **Complex intersections:** Use designated bike lanes and crossings; there is a higher risk of crashes.
- **“Dooring” & sudden moves:** Watch for parked car doors and unexpected maneuvers.
- **Public transit zones:** Avoid walking or riding too close to buses and trains.
- **Defensive riding:** Teach children to assume drivers may not see them.

Unsafe Sidewalks

- **Trip hazards:** Watch for cracks, potholes, and uneven surfaces. They increase the risk of tripping and falling.
- **Obstructions:** Be aware of trash cans, construction, and overgrown vegetation. They reduce space.
- **Crowded sidewalks** can lead to collisions between bicycles, scooters, and pedestrians.
- **Low visibility and poor lighting:** Use lights at night and stick to familiar routes, especially after hot days when heat haze can linger.
- **Alternative routes:** Use bike lanes or designated paths if sidewalks are too hazardous.

Bike Lane Safety: What Parents Need to Know

- **Painted lines aren’t protection:** Unprotected bike lanes are unsafe for children and most adults.
- **Seek protected bike lanes:** Look for bike lanes with physical barriers from traffic. These are significantly safer.

- **Demand safe routes:** Advocate for protected bike lanes in your community to create family-friendly cycling.
- **Protected lanes = real safety:** Protected bike lanes are much safer than painted lanes.



Driveway Safety: Protect Your Children

- **Blind spots:** Drivers may not see children; always stop and look.
- **Eye contact:** Teach kids to wait for eye contact with drivers before crossing.
- **Slow movement:** Walk bikes/scooters past driveways, avoid sudden moves.
- **Rolling stops:** Encourage kids to slow down and check for traffic before entering the street.
- **Increase visibility:** Use reflectors or signs near driveways to alert drivers.

Safer Out There

Street design dictates whether we can safely bike or walk.

Protected bike lanes:

Safe, separated bike paths away from cars.



Modal filters:

Reduced neighborhood car traffic, making it safer for bikes and pedestrians.



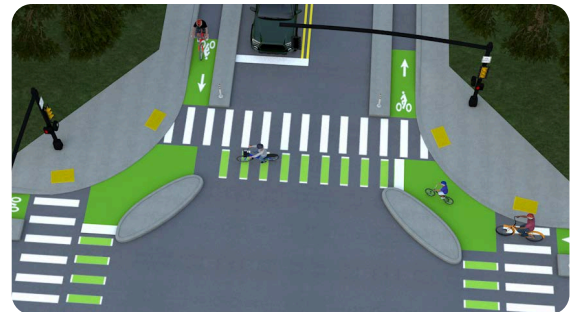
Bikeways in parks:

Safe bike routes through parks for recreation and commuting.



Protected intersections:

Safe crossings for bikes at busy intersections.



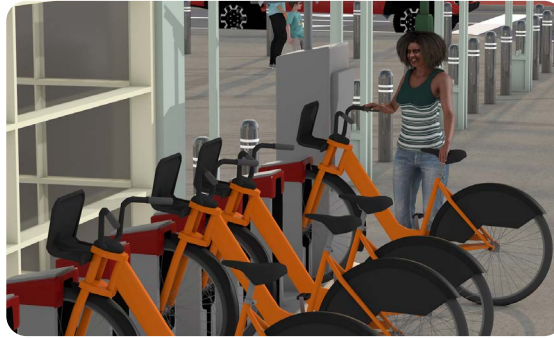
Pedestrian islands:

Safe mid-street waiting areas for crossing wide roads.



Bike share:

Accessible bikes for short trips requiring safe bike routes.

**Raised crosswalks:**

Slower car speeds at pedestrian crossings.

**Bicycle signals:**

Clear bike traffic signals at intersections.

**Crossing guards:**

Safe school crossings for children.

**Speed bumps:**

Slower car speeds on neighborhood streets.



Slower speed limits:

Safer streets with reduced speeding.



Bollards:

Protection for pedestrians from cars.



Trails

- Stick to designated bike and walking trails to minimize conflicts with vehicles.
- Yield to pedestrians and slower-moving riders—use a bell or verbal cue before passing.
- Stay on the right side of the trail and pass on the left when safe.
- Be aware of loose gravel, sudden turns, and elevation changes that can impact balance.
- Avoid wearing headphones—hearing approaching cyclists or runners is key for safety.
- Carry water and basic repair tools for longer trail rides.

Final Notes

Walking, biking, and scooting are fun and healthy ways to get around—but staying safe takes planning and awareness. Before you head out, make sure your gear fits properly, your helmet is snug, and your bike or scooter is in good working order. Wear bright colors, apply sunscreen, and stay hydrated.

While you're on the move, pay attention to cars, intersections, and your surroundings—especially in places like drop-off zones, driveways, and busy city streets. Choose safe routes with sidewalks, bike lanes, or trails whenever possible, and remember it's safer and more fun when you walk or ride with others.

Most importantly, be a role model—what you do helps shape safer habits for everyone around you. And remember: parents and caregivers set the tone—when they follow the rules and make safe choices, they help everyone to be safer too.

Success Stories: Bike Buses and Walking School Buses



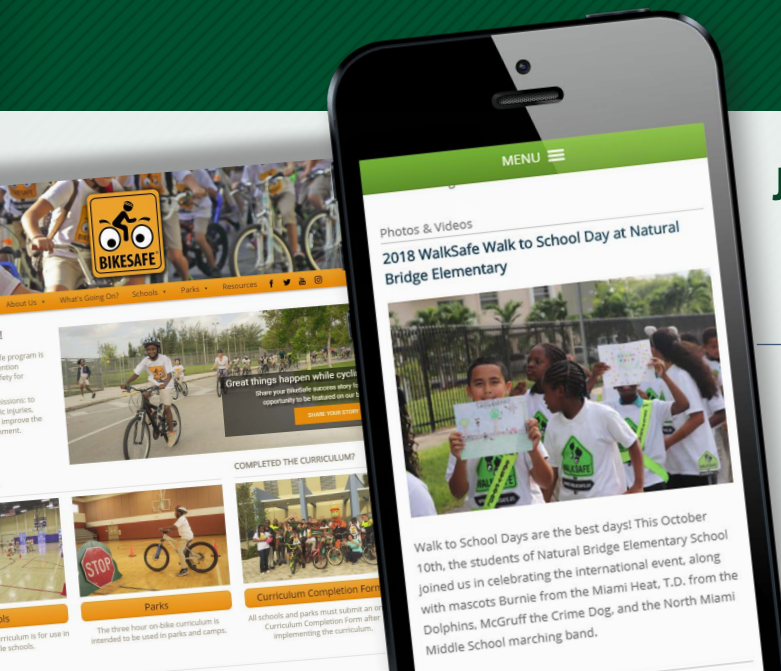
- [Sam Balto Bike Bus Video](#)
- [Springview Bike Bus](#)
<https://www.instagram.com/springviewbikebus/>
- [Hialeah Bike Bus](#)
- [Our 1-min video highlighting pop-ups](#)

Additional Free Resources

- <https://ibikesafe.org/resources/>
- <https://iwalksafe.org/resources/>

Email List





Join the conversation about safer streets for kids:



@iWalkSafe | @iBikeSafe

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