

What is good practice for school bus safety?

This fact sheet contains information about safe practices for school buses. The information contained in this sheet is current as at June 2010.

Overview

The main people involved in the day-to-day running of school buses are bus drivers, schools, caregivers, and students, and it is important for everyone to know what they can do to keep students travelling on buses safe. This fact sheet outlines safe practices for each of these parties to help keep school buses safe.

What can caregivers do to keep bus students safe?

To help make a school bus trip safe, caregivers who are dropping off / picking up students at the bus stop should:

- ◆ When dropping students off at the bus, **get out of the car and go with them** to the bus stop.
- ◆ When collecting students, **get out of the car and meet them** as they get off the bus, **on the same side of the road** that the bus has stopped, and go with them to the car.

This will help to stop students running across the road to or from the bus into the path of passing traffic.

Caregivers should also spend time with students to help them understand how they can keep themselves safe and how they are expected to behave on the bus.

What can the school do to keep bus students safe?

Schools have a responsibility to support a safe environment for students getting on and off buses. They can help keep school buses safe by:

- ◆ deciding on and documenting a process for safe loading and unloading of students (in conjunction with NZ Police if expert advice needed)
- ◆ supervising loading and unloading every afternoon, and every morning if there are hazards (eg several buses unloading in the same area)
- ◆ posting a senior student or adult to signal to the driver when it is safe to turn and when it is not, if a bus is turning near a loading area
- ◆ giving students instruction on safe loading and unloading from buses and safe storage of school bags on buses
- ◆ working with the bus operators and caregivers around managing student behaviour on buses.

School Transport: What you need to know

The following fact sheets about school transport are available:

1. Who is eligible for school transport assistance?
2. What if a student doesn't attend the nearest school?
3. What if the nearest school doesn't offer education in the desired language?
4. What types of assistance can a student get?
5. How is transport assistance provided for students with special needs?
6. What should I know about school bus services?
7. Student behaviour on buses: What is expected?
- 8. What is good practice for school bus safety?**
9. Who has a responsibility for school bus safety?
10. What is a Conveyance Allowance and who can receive it?
11. Who can I contact about school transport?
12. How are bus routes designed?

For more information visit our website at:

www.minedu.govt.nz/schooltransport

How do bus drivers contribute to the operation of a safe school bus?

There are a number of things that bus drivers do to help keep school buses safe:

Picking up and dropping off students

- ◆ Pick up/drop-off students on the left-hand side of the road.
- ◆ Load/unload students on the same side of the road as the school if possible.
- ◆ Wait for the all-clear from the duty teacher before departing on the home run.

On the road

- ◆ Report any inappropriate student behaviour to the school, bus controller or bus operator.

General

- ◆ Check the vehicle before each trip to make sure it is safe.
- ◆ Give students instruction on using the emergency door at least once a term.
- ◆ Check overloading.

What can bus students do to keep themselves safe?

Students who are given a place on a school bus can do a number of things to keep themselves and other students on the bus safe:

Getting on the bus

- ◆ Wait in the designated place – well back from the road.
- ◆ Wait until the bus has stopped before getting on.
- ◆ If there is more than one set of doors, get on through the door by the driver.
- ◆ Put your bag (and anything else you are carrying) under the seat or on your lap.
- ◆ If there are no free seats, fill the bus from the back, put your bag on the floor, and hold onto a handrail or seat-back.

Getting off the bus

- ◆ Wait until the bus has stopped.
- ◆ Get off the bus (through the front door if possible) carefully without pushing.
- ◆ Wait well back from the road until the bus has moved away. Then, if you need to cross, find a safe place where you can see clearly up and down the road.

General

- ◆ Carry your school bag in front of you when getting on and off the bus so it doesn't get caught in the door.
- ◆ Stand well clear of the bus if it is turning or reversing.
- ◆ Don't leave the bus between home and school (and vice versa) unless you have permission from the Principal.
- ◆ Behave in an appropriate and safe way while on the bus (see **Fact Sheet 7 - Student behaviour on buses: what is expected?**).

Looking for more information on school transport assistance?

Then visit our website at: www.minedu.govt.nz/schooltransport