

RSA

GOING TO SCHOOL

A parents guide to getting children to school safely.



Walking to School



- Research shows that children under 12 should not cross roads on their own. They cannot decide how far away a car is or how fast it is going. They should be taken to school by a responsible adult.
- Children should wear high visibility clothing when out walking.
- If there is no footpath, you must walk as near as possible to the right-hand side of the road (facing oncoming traffic).
- Choose a safe route to school and keep hold of your child's hand at all times.
- Don't allow your child to cross the road between parked cars. This is very dangerous as a driver will not be able to see your child. Show your child how to cross the road **by example**. Choose safe places to cross and explain the reasons why to your child i.e. footbridges, zebra or pelican crossings, with a Garda, an adult warden or junior school wardens.
- Ensure that your child always stops at the edge of the footpath, and always put the Safe Cross Code (see overleaf) into practice.

■ After some weeks assess your child's understanding by asking him/her to bring you across the road.

■ The best person to teach your child to cross the road safely is you. But remember, **a child will do as you do**, not as you say. So set the good example yourself!



Travelling by bus

- Teach your child to take special care when getting on or off public transport.
- While waiting for a bus get them to stand well in on the footpath or grass verge.
- Before crossing the road, they should wait until the bus has moved off and they can see clearly in both directions.
- On the bus your child should remain seated until the journey is complete.
- If safety belts are provided, they must be worn.
- Place school bags under the seat.



Driving your child to school

- Children should be secured in the back seat in a restraint appropriate to their weight and height. Children who are under 150cms in height and weighing less than 36 kilograms must use the correct child restraint when travelling in cars or goods vehicles. Ensure they cannot open doors or windows.
- Children should never be left alone in a vehicle, **even for a brief period.**
- Set down and collect your children on the school side of the road whenever possible. Never park opposite and call your child.
- You must not park where parking is prohibited by a traffic sign or roadway markings. Children are most vulnerable when crossing the road between parked cars. Not only will the child be unable to see approaching cars, drivers will not see the child.
- Co-operate with school wardens.
- Drivers, **please** give cyclists plenty of room.
- Set a good example to children by always wearing your safety belt.

Cycling

- Research shows that children under 12 do not have the skills and experience required to be safe in traffic on their own and should only cycle accompanied by an adult or responsible person.
- Parents should decide whether their child is fit to cycle on public roads. When doing so they should be confident that their child possesses the appropriate skills and training. It is important that your child understands and is protected against potential hazards.
- Children should be taught that a bicycle is a vehicle and must follow the same rules as other road users. Impress on your children that traffic lights apply to cyclists too and that Red means Stop.
- Cyclists are advised to use cycle tracks where provided. By law, cycle tracks must be used as part of a pedestrian street/area or as part of a contra flow cycle track. Where there is no cycle track, cycle on the left-hand side of the road.
- Ensure the bicycle is a suitable size for your child and that he/she can comfortably apply the brakes.
- Check that the bicycle's brakes, lights, reflectors, tyres and bell are in good working order.
- Make sure your child is highly visible and wears a reflective belt and bright clothes. The higher the visibility, the lower the risk.
- Because of their vulnerability cyclists should, in their own interest, wear protective headgear at all times. While it is not a legal requirement it is strongly recommended that cyclists wear a helmet suitable for their head size and ensure it is fitted correctly.
- For more information on safe cycling see **www.rsa.ie**



Travelling by Luas

- Keep your child close to you.
- Use designated crossings to cross
- While waiting for the Luas, teach your child to stand on the platform behind the white line
- Ensure you hold their hand, especially when getting on and off the tram
- Make sure they stand back from the doors when the warning tone sounds and the lights begin flashing – the doors are closing.
- On the Luas, your child should sit down for the duration of the journey.
- If a seat is not available ensure your child holds onto to the handrails provided.
- Place school bag under the seat.



Information

Ask your child's teacher to use the teaching resource **"Be Safe"** which forms part of the SPHE curriculum to teach your child road safety. For further information on educational resources in schools see www.rsa.ie

The Safe Cross Code

Know the Code

One, two, three, safe cross

Four, five, six safe cross

One, two, three, four, five, six, **Safe Cross Code**



Chorus

Remember

One – look for a safe place

Two – don't hurry stop and wait

Three – look all around and listen before you cross the road remember

Four – let all the traffic pass you

Five – then walking straight across you

Six – Keep watching, that's the **Safe Cross Code**



Safe place **Stop** and **Wait**

Safe place **Stop** and **Wait**

Safe ground **Look Around**

Listen for a traffic sound

If traffic's coming **Let It Pass**

Until the road is **Clear** at **Last**

Then **Walking** straight across the road

Keep Watching, That's The Code



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See www.rsa.ie/childsafetyincars for further information.

