



BROOME COUNTY TRAFFIC SAFETY BOARD NEWSLETTER

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It's That Time of Year Again! "Back to School Safety"

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With the beginning of the school year just around the corner, motorists need to be extra cautious on the roads. By early September, the streets will be filled with school buses and sidewalks with students. Parents and motorists have a responsibility to help ensure the safety of child pedestrians. Accidents, injuries and even deaths can occur from drivers disobeying traffic laws such as passing school buses, disregarding crossing guards and speeding in school zones. Approximately 5,900 pedestrians are killed by automobiles every year and 84,000 suffer nonfatal injuries. Almost 1/3 of these victims are children under the age of 15. Drivers need to be aware of and comply with state traffic laws in order to keep our kids safe. Remember, the memory of hitting or killing a child may be one you carry for the rest of your life.

School Bus Safety

It is **illegal** and **very dangerous** to pass a stopped school bus when the large **red** lights located on top of the bus are flashing or when the bus extends the **stop** signal arm!

Quick Tips to Remember!

- ✓ Flashing lights mean the bus is picking up or discharging students
- ✓ You must stop whether you are approaching the school bus from the front or overtaking it from the rear
- ✓ Watch carefully for children near school buildings, in areas where school buses are traveling or where there are signs for school zones or bus stops

**National School Bus
Safety Week
October 15-21 2006**

If the buses red lights are flashing **YOU MUST STOP!**

It's the law!

This includes school buses that are:

- on the opposite sides of divided highways
- on multiple lane roadways
- in parking lots
- on school grounds in front of school entrance

*The only exception to this law is if the bus driver or a police officer signals that you may pass.



According to the NYS Governor's Traffic Safety Committee, an estimated 50,000 motor vehicles illegally pass New York State school buses *EVERY DAY!* In the last 5 years, 35 students were hit by motorists in New York State passing stopped school buses. Of these students, 2 were killed.

Penalties For Passing A Stopped School Bus

By Conviction	Minimum Fine	Maximum Fine	Possible Imprisonment
First Conviction	\$250.00	\$400.00	Up to 30 days
Second Conviction (within 3 years)	\$600.00	\$750.00	Up to 180 days
Third or Subsequent Convictions (within 3 years)	\$750.00	\$ 850.00	Up to 180 days



Obey Your Crossing Guards!

A Word to Drivers.....



According to Officer Dan Correll of the Binghamton Police Department, one of the biggest complaints that come to their department during the school year is drivers disobeying school guards. The city of Binghamton has approximately 47 school guards and many of them complain that drivers ignore their stop signs and signals. Motorists need to understand the importance of obeying crossing guards. Although crossing guards have no arrest powers, cannot write tickets, and can only forward the license plate numbers and other descriptors of alleged violators to local law enforcement, drivers must still comply with their traffic signals just as they would with a police officer. Remember, children are not small adults and need the aid of others to help them deal with traffic. Crossing guards serve an important function of helping our children cross the street safely. The Broome County Traffic Safety Board and local law enforcement encourages all motorists driving in school zones to comply with defined speed limits AND all crossing guard direction in order to keep our kids safe.



The National Highway Traffic Safety Association states that children under 10 *do not* have the same traffic skills as adults.

- Because children are short it is difficult for children to see motorists and for motorists to see children.
- A child's peripheral vision is approximately 1/3 narrower than an adults, making it impossible for a child to see approaching motorists from the left or right as quickly as an adult can.
- Children have difficulty judging a car's speed and distance.
- Children often think that if they can see the driver, the driver can see them.



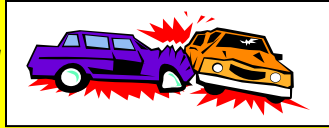
A Little Slower Speed Can Make a World of Difference.....

A **school zone** refers to a reduced speed limit on a street near a school or near a crosswalk leading to a school. The purpose of these lower limits is to protect student pedestrians or to increase safety of roads that become traffic-congested around school opening and closing hours. Fines for speeding in school zones are usually enhanced, and traffic enforcement often uses lower speed enforcement tolerance. School zone speed limits are often, but not always only applicable during posted weekday hours near the beginning and ending of school when children are likely to cross roads. In some places, the school zone speed limit is effective at all times when school is in session, plus additional time before and after the school day. Flashing amber lights often indicate when the school zone is effective. When a school zone also has a large playground facility, it may double as a playground zone and the speed limit could be in effect longer - or at all times of day, every day. School zones typically have speed limits between 15 and 25 mph (25 and 40 km/h). When driving in school zones, near playgrounds, or in neighborhoods where children might be playing, motorists should always expect a child to dart out into the roadway. So please be aware! A little slower speed can mean a world of difference especially for child pedestrians and bicyclists. A child's risk of being killed when hit by a vehicle traveling at 30mph is about 40%. A child's risk of being killed when hit by a vehicle traveling 40mph is about 80%. Children under the age of 10 do not have the skills to handle traffic so we must rely on responsible and safe drivers to keep our kids safe. ***So please slow down!***



Free Periods May Cost You More Than You Think.....

A note to Teen Drivers...



Now that the summer months are ending, we can breathe a little easier knowing that our young drivers will be driving less on the road. WRONG! Teens will still be driving to and from school as well as leaving school grounds on their free periods. Many of the schools in Broome County including, Binghamton, Vestal and Union Endicott allow their students to go off-campus during lunch and free periods. Free driving periods can be dangerous. Teens are at a much greater risk of being involved in car crashes. According to the National Safety Council, traffic crashes are the leading cause of teen fatalities, accounting for 44% of teen deaths in the U.S. Part of the reason why teens are at such a high risk is because they are inexperienced at driving. Teens can become easily distracted by cell phones, loud music and other passengers. Speeding is another major factor in teen crashes. Students may find themselves rushing back from their free periods to get to class on time. In order to avoid these problems, teen drivers should give themselves plenty of time to get to their destination, avoid talking and text messaging on cell phones and focus only on the road. *Remember...free periods can cost a lot more than we think!*

Announcements!

- ✓ **Car Seat Check Event**
 - Aug. 22nd, Sept. 12th, Sept. 19th
Broome County Sheriff's Office
9am-12pm
 -
- ✓ **Traffic Safety Board Meeting Aug. 23, 4pm, BCHD**
- ✓ **23rd Annual Chris Thater Memorial, Aug. 26 & 27, Recreation Park, Binghamton**
- ✓ **Endicott Bike Rodeo**
 - Aug. 27th, 5-8pm
 - Next to Village of Endicott Police Department
- ✓ **Child Passenger Safety Certification Trainings:**
 - Aug. 21-25 Ogdensburg, NY
 - Aug. 28-31 Norwich, NY
 - Sept. 12-15 Albany, NY
 - Sept. 25-29 Queensbury, NY

For more information on CPS Training go to www.safekids.org



Barbara J. Fiala, Broome County Executive

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