



IMPROVING SCHOOL DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP ZONES



In most communities, perhaps including yours:

- More children are hit by cars near school than at any other location.
- Too many cars are being driven near schools.

To help change this pattern, consider some of these low-cost and easy-to-implement measures. Schools, parents and local governments can undertake these actions.

- **Develop drop-off and pick-up rules:** Create and update written drop-off and pick-up procedures. Give them to parents at the start of each school term and periodically through the year.
- **Conduct regular traffic safety training:** Have school personnel, police and volunteers periodically monitor drop-off and pick-up conditions and provide instruction to drivers. (Feel free to use or adapt Walk to School Headquarters' "Letter to parents and drivers," located on our website.)
- **Encourage carpooling:** Promote carpooling and consider providing incentives to carpool vehicles. For example, provide carpoolers their own drop-off and pick-up lanes.
- **Stagger bell times:** The school starting and ending times are staggered for different grades (e.g., K-2 and 3-5), creating two smaller peak traffic flows instead of one large peak flow.
- **Create a park-and-walk plan:** Adults can simply find parking further away from the school to drop-off and pick-up children. They can join students for the short walk, if desired or needed. For a school-wide plan, ask nearby facilities, such as a church or shopping center, if their parking lot can be used for dropping-off and picking-up children. Children can walk, sometimes escorted by school staff or volunteers, between that location and the school.
- **Use a "valet" at drop-off:** Cars pull up and a "valet" (school staff, parent volunteers or older students) opens the student's door to expedite drop-off. Drivers are not permitted to leave the vehicle and must proceed after the door is shut.
- **Revise curb striping and signing:** Working with the local public works department, drop-off and pick-up zones can be extended, parking and stopping restrictions modified, etc.

Sometimes, physical improvements are needed to improve drop-off and pick-up conditions. These cost more than operational measures and can take years to put into place. With funding, consider providing on-site drop-off and pick-up lanes, separating the car and bus (and sometimes carpool) lanes, and creating more on-site parking.

The most effective - and the healthiest - way to improve drop-off and pick-up conditions is to walk or bicycle with your child. Schools were designed with children's safety on foot and bike in mind. With fewer cars, well-trained families and more civilized drivers, drop-off zones can again be safe places.

Learn more about Walk to School solutions at www.caactivecommunities.org or call 1-888-393-0353.