



## Want to improve children’s routes to school?

Involve everyone who has a responsibility for safety of the routes:

	Responsibilities and Suggestions
<b>The Driver</b>	Perhaps the greatest responsibility for traffic safety lies with motorists. Are drivers using caution when children are present, and respecting school-zone speed limits? Are drivers yielding to children in crosswalks—those crosswalks that are marked and unmarked? Even when pedestrians and bicyclists do not have the right-of-way, motorists have the responsibility to exercise due care to avoid a collision. Ask motorists to select a driving route that avoid school routes immediately before and after school hours, whenever possible.
<b>The Student</b>	Whether walking or bicycling, children must follow the rules of the road. Street signs, traffic signals and pavement markings are for everyone’s use, not just for drivers. Are children looking in all directions for moving vehicles before entering the street? Do they always STOP at the edge of the street before entering it? Are children making eye contact with drivers before they enter the roadway?
<b>The Parent</b>	Parents are responsible for teaching children to walk and bike safely. They should accompany children until certain that they have the skills and maturity to travel without supervision.* Children learn from watching what adults do, so always follow the rules of the road. Do parents cross at intersections, and never between parked cars? Do they hold children’s hands when crossing streets?  <i>*Children under age 8 or 9 need an adult’s help to cross streets.</i>
<b>The School</b>	Schools are responsible for establishing and enforcing policies that enable or prohibit walking and biking to and from school. Schools can play an active role to improve routes by educating parents and students, implementing safe routes plans, and providing crossing guards and school safety patrols. Do drop-off and pick-up areas help or hinder children’s access by foot and bike? School administrators—and teachers too—have an opportunity and responsibility to observe parents and students, and work to improve any problems they see.
<b>The School District</b>	School districts are responsible for where schools are located and for developing school facilities, which foster a good walking and bicycling environment. These responsibilities include choosing school locations which balance vehicle access with pedestrian safety needs, constructing adequate pedestrian and bicycle facilities along the perimeter of the school site and working with the local Public Works Dept. to fund and install adequate crossing protection at key points.
<b>Government Agencies</b>	Local Public Works Dept. and the state Dept. of Transportation (Caltrans) have responsibilities for design, installation and maintenance of traffic control devices and facilities, such as crosswalks, sidewalks, shoulders and bike paths. Local traffic officers enforce vehicle speeds and drop-off behaviors in school zones. Traffic officers may be available to lead walk and bike “rodeos” or other safety programs at schools or community events. Local government officials are responsible for zoning and building permits—which determine the design and density of communities. Some cities and counties collect school impact fees from private developers, which are used to design and build new schools.

Adapted by California’s Safe Routes to School Initiative ([www.dhs.ca.gov/routes2school](http://www.dhs.ca.gov/routes2school))  
From *School Traffic Safety*, Illinois Dept. of Transportation; undated, and the Santa Ana (CA) Pedestrian Safety Project

