

A blue-tinted photograph of several students sitting at desks in a classroom, looking towards the right. The image is partially obscured by a white text box on the left.

WISCONSIN SCHOOL TALK

A Safety and Health Bulletin for K-12 Schools From
Gallagher National Risk Control

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School Bus Safety and Security for Parents and Drivers

School Bus Safety

For Parents

We often think about bus safety based on physical conditions on the bus and bus drivers; what about the risk of approaching or leaving the bus?

Safety Starts at the Bus Stop

Your child should arrive at the bus stop at least five minutes before the bus is scheduled to arrive. Visit the bus stop and show your child where to wait for the bus: at least three giant steps (six feet) away from the curb. Remind your child that the bus stop is not a place to run or play.

Get On and Off Safely

When the school bus arrives, your child should wait until the bus comes to a complete stop, the door opens, and the driver says it is OK before approaching the bus door. The child should use the handrail and watch their step while entering/exiting the bus.

Use Caution Around the Bus

Your child should never cross the street behind a school bus. Your child should also make eye contact with the bus driver before crossing to make sure the driver can see them. If your child drops something near the school bus, like a ball or book, the safest thing is for your child to tell the bus driver right away. Your child should not try to pick up the item, because the driver might not be able to see them.



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For Drivers

- When backing out of a driveway or leaving a garage, watch out for children walking or bicycling to school.
- When driving in neighborhoods with school zones, watch out for young people who may be thinking about getting to school, but may not be thinking of getting there safely.
- Slow down. Watch for children walking in the street, especially if there are no sidewalks in the neighborhood.
- Be alert. Children arriving late for the bus may dart into the street without looking for traffic.
- Learn and obey the school bus laws in your state, as well as the flashing signal light system that school bus drivers use to alert motorists of pending actions.
 - » Yellow flashing lights indicate the bus is preparing to stop to load or unload children. Motorists should slow down and prepare to stop their vehicles.
 - » Red flashing lights and extended stop arms indicate the bus has stopped and children are getting on or off. Motorists must stop their cars and wait until the red lights stop flashing, the extended stop arm is withdrawn, and the bus begins to move.

School Bus Security

It begins with **you**. Knowledge and judgment is critical to being able to distinguish a prank from a real security threat and determine the proper course of action. First, you must understand the difference between a security threat and a security incident.

Security threat: an event that may endanger life or property and may result in a loss of service equipment

Security incident: an unforeseen occurrence that may not result in death, injury or significant property damage, but may result in interruption of service

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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

CORE360™ Loss Control Portal: Your online safety training and resource system for K-12 public schools available at ajg.com/us/loss-control-portal.

Best Practices for Employees

In addition to knowing and applying the established procedures, use the following guidelines as preventive measures to help ensure the safety and security of your passengers and driver.

- Wear your required uniform and/or company identification badge.
- Familiarize yourself with your company's security procedures.
- Keep all vehicle doors, hatches and compartments locked when unattended.
- Conduct pre- and post-trip vehicle inspections.
- Keep the vehicle clean and in good condition.
- Maintain constant awareness around the vehicle.
- Immediately report any operational weaknesses such as broken doors, locks or poor/insufficient lighting.

Monitoring Suspicious Activities and Items

Monitor and observe people, events and activities around you, and take note of and report irregular or suspicious behavior. Look for:

- People or items not where they are supposed to be (restricted areas)
- Individuals that appear to be conducting surveillance
- Those showing an unusual interest in employees or students
- Someone abandoning an item and quickly leaving the area
- Items that appear to be emitting a gas, mist or odor
- Anything connected to wires, timers, tanks or bottles
- Anything appearing to be a source of a foreign substance causing others discomfort

There are a lot of things that go into keeping school buses and their passengers safe. By following these practices, drivers can learn how to identify and respond to security issues both on and off the bus.

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