

# Kids are unpredictable. INJURIES DON'T HAVE TO BE.

## A step ahead... of traffic injuries

Tips to keep your 5 – 9 year old safe.

### Being hit by a motor vehicle is one of the main causes of death for children 1-14 years old

#### Traffic injuries are more likely to occur:

- Close to home
- Near main roads
- In the summer months between 3:00 - 6:00 p.m.

#### Who is most at risk?

- Children between 5–14 years of age
- Boys are injured more often than girls

### What you can do

## 1 Learn how injuries can occur

#### Children 5–9 years of age:

- Are smaller and may not see or be seen by traffic, especially around parked vehicles.
- Have not developed the ability to make safe decisions about traffic because they:
  - Have difficulty deciding how fast a vehicle is approaching and whether they have time to cross safely.
  - Are impulsive, have trouble waiting for lights and may run out onto the road suddenly.
  - Have limited vision out of the corners of their eyes and may not see the vehicle approaching until it is too close to cross safely.
  - Assume that if they see a vehicle that the driver sees them too.
  - Have trouble knowing the direction of sounds such as sirens or vehicle horns.

## 2 Create safer places for children

- Go to the park or a safe space away from traffic to play with your child.
- Report road safety problems such as sidewalks with cracks, broken street lights, or overhead crossing lights, to your local Municipal Office.
- Choose brighter clothes for children to wear and consider adding reflective patches to clothing.
- Place portable basketball nets on the driveway or yard – nets should not be used on the road. Children cannot concentrate on the game and be aware of traffic at the same time.



- Work with local government officials (such as your city councillor) to create safer walking and play spaces for children.
- Slower moving traffic prevents some injuries from occurring and gives children a better chance of surviving a collision. Report any unsafe or speeding motorists to York Regional Police at [www.yorkregionsavealife.ca/initiatives.RoadWatch](http://www.yorkregionsavealife.ca/initiatives.RoadWatch)

# 3

## Watch children closely

### Parents and caregivers:

- Know where your children are playing at all times and that they are being supervised.
- Always cross the road with children who are under 10 years of age. Young children do not have the ability to be aware of traffic. Even older children may need to practise crossing the road safely.
- Follow the safety rules when you are crossing the road. Children learn by watching adults.

# 4

## Create and follow family safety rules

### Teach children to:

- Always cross the street with an adult, especially if children are under 10 years of age.
- Play in safe spaces away from traffic.
- Walk in pairs or groups to and from school.
- Obey crossing guards and school bus drivers.
- Walk on the part of the sidewalk furthest away from the curb.
- Walk facing traffic when there are no sidewalks.
- Cross only at corners, where there are traffic lights, or stop signs. Never cross in the middle of a block.

- Remove headphones when walking or playing near the road. These decrease a child's ability to hear what is going on around them.
- Stay off snow banks which can collapse and send a child onto the street unexpectedly.
- Watch for vehicles coming out of driveways and lanes. Children should stop and make eye contact with the driver before moving past the vehicle.
- Know that white lights on the back of a vehicle and/or a beeping sound, mean the vehicle is backing up.

### Skills children should practise when crossing at a crosswalk or traffic signal:

- Stop.
- Activate the overhead lights. When at an intersection with a signal, push the button and wait for the pedestrian walk signal.
- Look both ways.
- Listen for traffic.
- Indicate intent to cross by sticking your arm out.
- Wait for all traffic to stop before crossing.
- Cross at the beginning of the green light. Do NOT start to cross once the light turns yellow or the hand is flashing. Never cross on a red light.
- Walk across and watch for turning vehicles.
- Make eye contact with the drivers.

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**AN ounce OF  
prevention  
GOES A LONG WAY**