



Title: **Make safety a priority**
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Make safety a priority

Editor:

A new school year is beginning. The Illinois Insurance Association, a state property casualty trade association, and its member companies encourage motorists to drive carefully in the coming weeks.

Crashes involving children are most common between go-to-school and get-back-home hours.

Be alert to school buses. Children may need to cross the road when getting on or off the bus. Never pass a stopped school bus from either direction unless you are on the opposite side of a divided highway. Slow down in rural areas. Watch for walkers and bicycle riders. Children are unpredictable and may dart into the roadway from between parked vehicles. Keep an eye out for beginning motorists. Inexperienced drivers are vulnerable to making mistakes behind the wheel.

Commit to avoiding distractions each time you slide into the driver's seat. Illinois law prohibits the use of cell phones in school zones, but motorists lose focus for many other reasons.

Other tips to avoid injuring children on their way to and from school: obey the speed limit – especially in designated school zones; follow crossing guard instructions; never block crosswalks; respect school drop off and pick up rules for students.

Protect Illinois children by making school traffic safety a priority.

Kevin J. Martin

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