

ELK ISLAND STUDENT TRANSPORTATION SAFETY NEWSLETTER | OCTOBER SCHOOL BUS SAFETY WEEK 2017

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WELCOME TO SCHOOL BUS SAFETY WEEK!

Transportation is Cool, When you



Take the bus to School!

Schools throughout Elk Island Public Schools (EIPS) are celebrating School Bus Safety Week October 15–21.

The theme: **Rider Rules = Safe to School**, which is all about teaching children about proper school bus safety. Throughout the week, various activities are planned including information sessions, bus safety lesson plans, and bus-evacuations drills.

In addition, the Alberta Student Transportation Advisory Council (ASTAC) is holding a provincial poster contest

for students in Kindergarten to Grade 6. Each winner—one from each grade level—whose posters best illustrates the theme, Rider Rules = Safe to School, will receive a \$25 gift card, a framed original of their poster, an engraved plaque and \$100 for their classroom. Elk Island Public Schools is excited to have our students participating in the contest again this year.

Have a safe and happy School Bus Safety Week, everyone!

KEY POINTS

- The relationship between a bus operator and a student is very important
- Appropriate boundaries between the bus operator and the student serve to protect both parties
- Do not add students on Facebook, Instagram, or any other social media
- Report any troubling information directly to the school. Do not try to intervene.

If unsure, clarify appropriate boundaries with Student Transportation

What are professional boundaries?

As a very important person in the daily lives of children, it is important that Bus Operators are aware of their professional boundaries with students.

Professional boundaries are the effective and appropriate interaction between professionals and the public they serve. In this case, the interaction between a professional bus operator and the students.

Professional boundaries exist not only to protect the student, but also the bus operator.

What are some risk behaviours?

- Becoming too personally involved with students
- Seeing students in private or non-school settings
- Exchanging emails, Facebook friends, texting, snapchat, Instagram etc.
- Inviting students to one's home

What strategies can I use to protect myself and my students?

- Compliment or direct students without hugging or initiating physical contact
- If a child shares any personal or troubling information with you, report it right away to the school
- Avoid exchanging emails, becoming Facebook friends, texting, snapchatting, etc. with the students
- Let students know when they are overstepping your personal boundaries



NEAR MISSES



Please do not forget the importance of reporting near misses to the **Safety & Compliance Coordinator**. We can all learn from these incidents and prevent more serious events like vehicle or pedestrian collisions from occurring.

If in doubt, call Student Transportation!

STUDENT SCANS

It is very important that every Bus Operator is doing their best to ensure students are scanning on and off the bus, as well as ensuring your scanning equipment is working properly.

We have seen a drastic increase in the amount of parents that are using the **MyStop app**, so it is more important than ever to ensure we are giving them the most accurate and useful scanning information.

These scans are the first thing Student Transportation checks when a student is missing, and are often the key to locating them.

We appreciate everyone's help in ensuring the safest ride for all students!



CHECK IT OUT!

Take a look at the below link for this month's Safety Tip Article!

6 Steps for Securing Students in Wheelchairs:

<http://www.schoolbusfleet.com/article/724567/6-steps-for-securing-students-in-wheelchairs>

UMBRELLAS ON THE BUS

With the rainy weather we have been seeing lately, you are probably noticing more and more umbrellas on your bus. Here are some tips to ensure the safety of those on the bus during 'Umbrella Season':

- Ensure students are folding the umbrella down completely before boarding the bus
- If they fit, the backpack is the safest spot for umbrellas
- For larger umbrellas, they may be stowed under the seat out of the way of the aisle
- Longer umbrellas can be tucked beside the passenger seats (which is also the optimal place for storing crutches on the bus)

SAFETY WEEK TIPS

- Courtesy is contagious! If you show kindness and respect to the students on your bus they will show kindness and respect to you.
- Never show your bad moods – keep your personal problems outside of the bus
- Safety begins with students who respect and follow the rules
- Remember – one of the most dangerous times for students is when they are boarding or disembarking the bus. Remind students of the Safety Zone
- Always know where the students are
- Ensure students are scanning on and off the bus – student tracking is a vital part of ensuring students are safe and accounted for
- Ensure all cargo is stored safely – loose items can become projectiles if the bus stops suddenly
- With winter on the way, ensure students are holding on to the handrail when boarding and disembarking the bus to avoid falls on slippery stairs
- If you are late, communicate that to Student Transportation instead of rushing to make up time. Safety before schedule!

FOCUS ON ONE THING

Minimizing distractions, though difficult on a bus full of children, is extremely important.

Check out this article on focussing:

<http://www.schoolbusfleet.com/article/724462/focus-on-one-thing-student-safety>



Thank you to all of our professional bus operators for your commitment each day to keeping our students safe in and around your bus.

The work your do each day is greatly appreciated!



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