

Back-to-School Safety Tips

As summer vacation comes to an end, thoughts of a fresh new school year begin to weigh on the minds of both children and adults. The excitement of new teachers, seeing old friends, buying new notebooks and backpacks, and starting a new grade are tops on the thoughts of students. Parents, however, are also thinking about getting their children to school safely, and providing students with the tools and knowledge necessary to keep them safe. As Naperville school children begin the 2010-2011 school year, the Naperville Police Department asks that you make Back-to-School Safety a priority. Before the first day of school be sure to talk to your students concerning the following:

- Use the buddy system. Always walk to and from school with a friend or stay with a group at the bus stop. There is safety in numbers. If riding the bus, visit the bus stop with your child and be sure they know their bus number.
- Walk/ride in well lit areas and never take shortcuts. Instruct children to avoid places they cannot be seen or heard and to stay on the “Safe Routes to School”. These routes may be found on the City of Naperville’s website at: <http://www.naperville.il.us/walkroutes.aspx#About>
- Before the first day of school, walk to and from school with your child. Be sure to point out “Helping Hand” houses along the way. “Helping Hand” households are safe places for kids to go when they need emergency adult assistance.
- Stay within the crosswalks and obey all traffic signals/signs. Obey the crossing guard, if one is available. Parents, make sure that your child knows how to safely cross the street, or in the case of a younger student, always provide supervision to help ensure their safety. If children ride their bikes to school, provide them with a bicycle lock and be sure they use it!
- Teach children the safety rule, “Say NO, GO and TELL”. If anyone approaches your child, offers them a ride, asks for directions, or makes them feel uncomfortable, instruct them to say “NO”, get away from the situation (GO), and TELL a trusted adult. Be sure to discuss with your child who trusted adults may be: Teachers, parents, friend’s parents, neighbors, police officers, firefighters, relatives, etc.
- Make sure children understand NEVER to leave school with anyone they haven’t been instructed to leave with by you. If someone comes up to them and tells them that there is an emergency and they want your child to go with them, be sure they know to “Check First” with you or another trusted adult (school personnel) before doing so.
- If your students will be taking care of themselves after school, please provide them with the additional safety rules that may be found on the City of Naperville’s website at: http://www.naperville.il.us/dynamic_content.aspx?id=311