



COMMUTER ALERT

14-160

Date: Tuesday, August 26, 2014
District: 8 - Riverside/San Bernardino Counties
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<http://quickmap.dot.ca.gov>

WATCH OUT! CHILDREN AHEAD

San Bernardino—The school year has begun! Many children walk, ride their bicycle or take the bus to school. The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) is committed to providing safe access to school for all children through the Safe Routes to School Program. According to Caltrans, District 8 Interim Deputy District Director, Planning, Richard Dennis, “Providing a safe environment for our children is our number one priority. Safe travel ways to and from schools, whether you are a pedestrian or a cyclist, is an important part of that priority.”

Caltrans asks that all motorists be aware and courteous when driving and working around schools. We also offer the following tips:

Sharing the Road Safely with School Buses

- Never pass a school bus that is stopped to load or unload children.
- School buses use yellow flashing lights to alert motorists that they are preparing to stop or unload children. Red flashing lights and an extended stop sign arm signals to motorists that they are stopped and children are getting on or off the bus.
- Always stop when students are entering or exiting a school bus.
- The area 10 feet around a school bus is where children are in the most danger of being hit. Stop your car far enough from the bus to allow children the necessary space to safely enter and exit the bus.
- Be alert. Children are unpredictable. Children walking to or from their bus are usually very comfortable with their surroundings. This makes them more likely to take risks, ignore hazards or fail to look both ways when crossing the street.

Sharing the Road Safely with Child Pedestrians

- Drivers should not block the crosswalk when stopped at a red light or waiting to make a turn. Do not stop with a portion of your vehicle over the crosswalk. Blocking the crosswalk forces pedestrians to go around your vehicle and puts them in a dangerous situation.

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- In a school zone, when a warning flasher or flashers are blinking, you must stop to yield the right-of-way to a pedestrian crossing the roadway within a marked crosswalk or at an intersection with no marked crosswalk.
- Always stop when directed to do so by a school patrol sign, school patrol officer or designated guard.
- Children are the least predictable pedestrians and the most difficult to see. Take extra care to look out for children—not only in school zones, but also in residential areas and near playgrounds and parks.
- Never honk your horn, rev your engine or do anything to rush or scare a pedestrian in front of your car.

Sharing the Road Safely with Child Bicyclists

- When passing a bicyclist proceeding in the same direction, do so slowly and leave at least three feet between you and the bicycle.
- When your vehicle is turning left and there is a bicyclist entering the intersection from the opposite direction, you should wait for the bicyclist to pass before making the turn.
- If your vehicle is turning right and a bicyclist is approaching on the right, let the bicyclist go through the intersection first before making a right turn. Remember to always use your turn signals.
- Watch for bicycle riders turning in front of you without looking or signaling, especially if the rider is a child.
- Watch out for bikes coming out of driveways or from behind parked cars or other obstructions.
- Check side mirrors for bicyclists before opening the door.

Remember that children are our most precious resource. Let's work together to keep them safe. For more driving tips or information regarding our safety campaigns or projects, visit our web site at www.caltrans8.info and sign up for [COMMUTER/MEDIA E-MAIL ALERTS](#). Follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/caltrans8.



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