

School Bus Safety

With so many parents today depending on school buses to transport their children to school, the issue of safety is an often overlooked, but extremely important topic. In Texas alone, over one million children attending more than 9,000 schools in the state ride school buses on a daily basis. These children depend on the driver, and other motorists, to be aware of the law and to drive safely.

The Law is a Key Factor

Every state has laws governing the behavior of motorists when in the presence of a school bus in a loading or unloading zone with children aboard. The laws in Texas are pretty similar to those other states follow. The law states that:

- Motorists must stop when the red lights on a school bus are flashing regardless of the direction in which the vehicle is traveling.
- The motorists may continue his trip after the flashing lights stop flashing, the bus moves, or the bus driver signals approval for the driver to pass the bus.
- Violations of the state school bus law can lead to a fine of \$1,000.

It's important for all drivers to be aware of the laws in their individual states. While the above points relate to Texas, some states have variations. For instance, in some states a motorist may pass a school bus with lights flashing if they are traveling on a road that has a divider and/or has more than two lanes of traffic in one direction. [See more on Wikipedia.](#)

Safety Tips for Drivers

In order to maintain the safety of students riding school buses, the following are essential safety tips for all motorists:

- Make sure to drive the speed limit.
- Be aware that fines may double for violations that occur in school zones.
- Be aware of children that are gathered at bus stops.
- Pay close attention to children who may decide to run out in the road to catch the bus.

Safety Tips for Children

Students need to exercise respect for their bus drivers while the bus is in motion, and obey the following rules:

- Stand far away from the road while waiting for the bus.
- Remain seated on the bus so the driver can maintain attention to the road and his or her driving.
- When crossing the road after getting off the bus, look both ways or wait for a signal from the driver.

Be Aware of the Facts

School buses are not dangerous in reality; they are statistically the safest mode of transportation for students. However, if students are careless on the bus or while entering or leaving a bus, injuries can (and often do) occur. Some of the most important tips to ensure school bus safety include the following:

- Walk to the bus stop with your children and remain with them until the bus arrives.
- Teach your children to never attempt to get off the bus before it stops completely or to walk behind it.
- Before crossing the street the child needs to take at least five giant steps forward (so that the bus driver can clearly see the student in front of the bus) and make eye contact with the driver. He or she should only cross after instructions from the bus driver. Children also need to learn to look left, right, left before attempting to cross any street.
- Younger children need to use the handrails when they get on or off the bus. They also need to be aware of any straps or drawstrings that might cause problems if they become caught in the door. They should be sure they are in the sight of the bus driver if they need to pick something up that they drop.

Rasansky Law Firm can help you with any questions you may have regarding school bus safety, especially if your child has been injured while riding on a school bus. To speak with one of our Dallas experienced personal injury lawyers, visit our website at <http://www.jrlawfirm.com/> or call our office at 1-800-ATTORNEY.