

Making safe choices when travelling to and from school by bus

For school years 1-8



NZ TRANSPORT AGENCY
WAKA KOTAHĪ

New Zealand Government



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Message to motorists

Each day, thousands of New Zealand children catch a bus to school - a total of 53,500 urban students and 49,900 rural students.



These children are at greatest risk after the bus has dropped them off and moved away. What you do as a passing motorist makes all the difference to keeping our children safe.

Motorists need to be extra careful when passing a stationary school bus where children are getting on or off. Always reduce your driving speed to 20km/h when passing the bus and keep an eye out for children who are walking to catch the bus, or leaving it.

Avoid all distractions that will take your eyes off the road ahead and never use your mobile phone while driving.

Message to parents and caregivers

If your child travels to school by bus, it's important to make this journey as safe as possible for everyone. Take special care to ensure that their first bus trip is a positive experience for them.

Talk to them about the importance of being quiet on the bus, and listening to the driver and bus monitor.

Sometimes, the weather will be bad, resulting in poor visibility. Therefore, it's always wise to ensure your child is dressed in bright clothing so they can be easily seen.

Make sure that your child knows the safest route to the bus stop. You can walk with them or drive them there so they don't have to cross roads on their own.

Tell children that while they wait for the bus, it is important they stay away from the road.



Have an alternative plan in case you are running late.

Always reduce driving speed to 20km/h when passing a stationary school bus.

When waiting for the bus to arrive, stand well back from the edge of the road. When it's time to get off the bus, children should not cross the road until the bus is no longer in sight. They need to stand back far enough so that they can see the driver.

Explain to your children the importance of taking their backpacks off during the bus journey. This is because backpacks, if worn, cannot only cause a nuisance and hit other passengers, but also result in children sitting precariously forward on their seat. Bags should be placed under the seat or on the child's knees.

It's always good to reinforce these messages by regularly discussing them with your children. Check the Safe Choices Together Contract at the back of this pamphlet. Discuss it with your children, sign it together, then agree to review it at a later date.

If you are picking children up from the bus stop, meet them at the bus stop on the same side of the road that the bus uses.



Message for children

Travelling to school on the bus can be fun and safe.

When you are waiting for the bus, stand well back from the road. Listen to what your parent or caregiver tells you.

When the bus arrives, wait until it has stopped and the door is open. Walk quietly on in a single line. Let smaller children on first. Don't push and shove each other.



Take your backpack off when you are on the bus. Put it under your seat or on your knees. Don't put it in the middle of the bus, because someone could trip over it and hurt themselves.

Listen to what the driver or bus monitor says. They want to keep you safe.

Always stay behind the driver.

When the bus stops, get off carefully in a single line, using the front door.

After getting off the bus, wait as far away from the edge of the road as you can until the bus goes.

If you need to cross the road, wait until the bus has gone, and you can see clearly up and down the road before you cross. Always use the kerb drill to cross.

If you are waiting for a parent or caregiver to pick you up, stand well clear of the bus if it is turning or reversing.

Kerb drill

- 1** Find a safe place to cross.
- 2** Stop one step back from the kerb.
- 3** Look all ways and listen for traffic wherever it may come from.
- 4** If there is traffic coming, wait until it has passed, then look all ways and listen for traffic again.
- 5** When there is no traffic coming, walk quickly straight across the road, looking all ways for traffic.



The contract

This contract is between children and parents and caregivers. It reinforces the importance of everyone committing to being safe on the school bus. Reviewing it regularly between you will help everyone remember the safety tips.



We will make safe choices together

Child

I (name)

will always:

- listen to what my parent or caregiver tells me
- stand well back from the road when waiting for the school bus
- take my backpack off when I am on the bus
- put my backpack under my seat or on my knees
- not push and shove other people
- listen to what the driver or bus monitor says
- stay behind the driver
- use the kerb drill and cross the road safely after I get off the bus
- wait for you if you are meeting me.

Signature

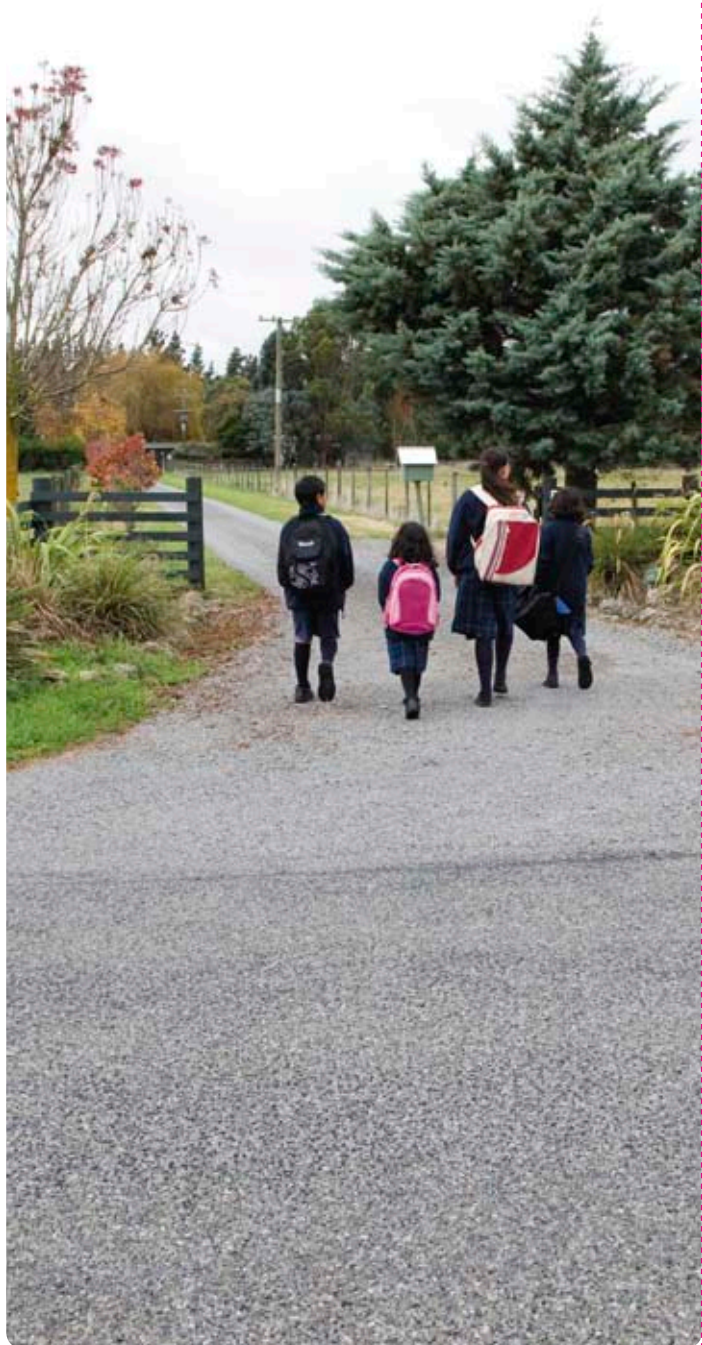
Parent /caregiver

I (name)

will always:

- show you how to cross the road safely
- show you the safest place to wait for the bus
- park on the side of the road the bus stops on
- reduce my driving speed to 20km/h when passing a stationary bus
- talk to you about safe bus behaviour
- make safe choices with you
- be a role model for safe behaviour
- discuss and practise the points in the pamphlet with you.

Signature



Stay safe, have fun...

...when you go to school on the bus.
Take your backpack off when you are on the bus and always listen to your parents and caregivers, and bus monitor or driver.



Our contact details

For general enquiries and contact information for the NZ Transport Agency please check our website www.nzta.govt.nz or email us at info@nzta.govt.nz

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