



Media release

Friday 22 January 2016

Drive safe around school children

Over 8,000 children will be returning to school in Selwyn in early February.

“Children will be travelling on the bus, by car, biking, walking and using a scooter to get to and from school,” says Selwyn District Council’s Road Safety Coordinator Ngaire Tinning.

“With so many children on the move, and additional traffic from children being dropped off and picked up from school, motorists will need to take extra care before and after school.”

To help ensure children get to and from school safely, the Council has the following safety tips for motorists and parents:

Safety tips for drivers:

- watch out for children when they are crossing the road. If children are on scooters they can move quickly. Whether they are on bike, walking or on scooter children may not have the skills to judge if it is safe to cross, so slow down if they are near a crossing
- back into your driveway so when you leave the house in the morning you will have a clear view of any children crossing your driveway. This is also a good idea to increase safety and visibility if you have children in your own household
- if you are passing young cyclists on the road, give them plenty of space as they may be inexperienced
- always reduce your speed to 20 kilometres when you pass a stationary school bus, regardless of which side of the road the bus is on. Look out for children who are on the roadside waiting to catch a bus, or are getting on or off the bus
- slow down around schools and other areas children travel along to get to school

Safety tips for parents:

- talk to your children about the how to use their bike or scooter safely and how to check its condition to see it is safe to use. Whether you child is travelling by foot, by bike or scooter make sure they are familiar with the route to take to school and know how to cross any roads safely
- helmets must be worn by cyclists and are recommended for children on scooters. Hi-viz vests are a good idea as they will make children more visible to motorists
- if your children catch the bus talk to them about making sure they are safe from vehicles. They should stand well back from the road and wait until the bus has gone and there is a clear view both ways before they cross the road
- if you drive your children to school, check all children are correctly restrained before you leave, even if it’s only a short journey

- when picking or dropping off children at school, ask your children to get in and out of the car on the footpath side of the car and don't park near yellow lines, intersections and driveways

Mrs Tinning says that both parents and motorists can help to make the journey to and from school safer for children.

"Motorists can help by slowing down, and showing patience and consideration when children are around. Parents can help by talking to their children about road safety, modelling good behaviour and checking their children have the right gear to help them be seen and be safe."

Ends

Photo attached: Prebbleton children Ethan Punivai, Caitlin Butson, Sophie Withell and Courtney Sim travelling to school. High vis vests improve children's safety by making them more visible to motorists

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