

The Community Page



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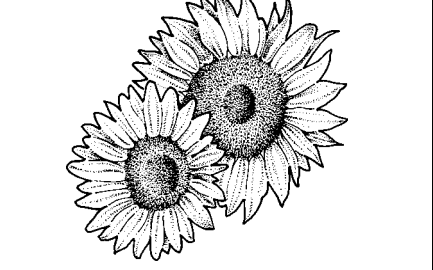
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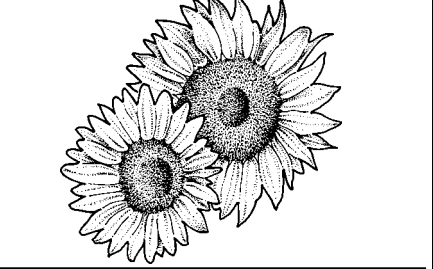
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BACK TO SCHOOL




Watch out as kids head to class

The new school year begins tomorrow and parents need to take time out to teach and review important safety guidelines with children to get them back to school safely.

"Whether you drive the kids to school or they walk, bike, or ride the bus, it's important for parents and children to go over safety tips together," says Jan Stegelman, Coordinator of Safe Kids Kansas. "This will help ensure a safe, enjoyable start to the school year for everyone."

School Bus Safety

"More children are killed and injured crossing the street at bus stops than riding on a school bus," says Stegelman. "Teach your children about the 10-foot danger zone around the school bus, where the driver can't see children on the ground."



Young children should take eight giant steps away from the bus to be sure the bus driver can see them. Older kids should look to the bus driver for an "O.K." sign before crossing.


Safe Kids Kansas reminds drivers to obey state laws that prohibit passing a stopped school bus.

- Children should be reminded to:
- Arrive at the stop at least five minutes before the bus arrives.
 - Stay out of the street and avoid horseplay.
 - Ask the bus driver for help if anything is dropped while entering or exiting the bus.

Walking to School

Pedestrian injuries are the second leading cause of unintentional injury-related death among children ages 5 to 14. Safe Kids Kansas recommends children under 10 never cross the street alone. Make sure you follow these additional safety guidelines:

- Choose the safest route and walk it with children. Look for the most direct route with the fewest street crossings. Children should take the same route every day and avoid shortcuts.
- Teach children to recognize and obey all traffic signals and markings.
- Make sure children look in all directions before crossing the street. Teach them to stop at the curb or edge of the road, and to look left, right and left again for traffic before and while crossing the street.
- Teach children to cross the street at a corner or crosswalk, never from between parked cars or from behind bushes or shrubs.
- Warn children to be extra alert in bad weather. Visibility might be poor and motorists might not be able to see them or stop quickly.
- Demonstrate proper pedestrian safety by being a good role model. Children need you to not only tell them, but also show them how to be safe pedestrians. If there are older children in your home or neighborhood, express to them how important it is to be good role models.





Riding Bikes to School

Bicycle riding is a favorite pastime of children. More than 27 million children ages 5 to 14 ride bicycles. Whether out of necessity or for fun, many of these children choose to ride their bikes to school.

Unfortunately, bicycles are associated with more childhood injuries than any other consumer product except the automobile. On average, 168 Kansas children ages 14 and under die or are injured as a result of a bicycle crash in traffic each year.

To keep children safe, Kansas Safe Kids offers these safety tips for children riding bicycles to school:

- Wear bike helmets at all times when bicycling. In Kansas, traumatic brain injury occurs in 45 percent of the children hospitalized for bicycle crash injuries. Bike helmets have been shown to reduce the risk of head





Bus safety tips

- Have a safe place to wait for your bus, away from traffic and the street.
- Stay away from the bus until it comes to a complete stop and the driver signals you to enter.
- When being dropped off, exit the bus and walk ten giant steps away from the bus. Keep a safe distance between you and the bus. Also, remember that the bus driver can see you best when you are back away from the bus.

injury by as much as 85 percent and the risk of brain injury by as much as 88 percent. Purchase a bike helmet that meets U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission safety standards for each child and make sure that it is worn correctly every time the child rides his or her bike.

- Follow the rules of the road. Ride on the right side of the road, with traffic, not against traffic; use appropriate hand signals; respect traffic signals; stop at all intersections, marked and unmarked; and stop and look left, right and left again before entering or crossing the street.
- Never let children ride on the road without direct adult supervision until age 10.
- Plan a safe cycling route with children and ride it with them. A safe cycling route to school may not be the same as a safe walking route.
- Do not ride at night. Children should not be allowed to ride after dark, and should wear retro-reflective clothing when biking at dawn, dusk, or during inclement weather.
- Make sure schools provide cyclists with "safe areas." Bike racks should be placed in areas where there are few motor vehicles and pedestrians. Avoid drop-off and pick-up zones in school parking lots.



Driving Children to School

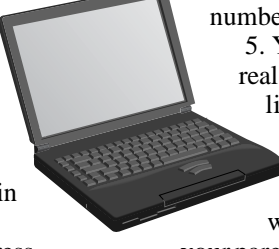
- Always use child safety seats, booster seats, and safety belts correctly every time your children ride. Kids need to be in a car seat or booster seat until they are approximately 8 years old and 5 feet tall.
- Children under age 12 should always ride in the back seat.
- Drop off children in a safe location so that they do not have to cross the street. Make sure they enter and leave the car on the curb side.
- Arrange to pick up children at a safe spot away from the congestion of traffic around the school.

Safe Kids Kansas, Inc. is a nonprofit Coalition of 67 statewide organizations and businesses dedicated to preventing accidental injuries to Kansas children ages 0-14. Safe Kids Kansas a member of Safe Kids Worldwide, a global network of organizations whose mission is to prevent accidental childhood injury.

Students follow Internet safety rules

As kids head back to class, they'll probably be spending more time on their computers doing assignments. Here are some rules to stay safe Online.

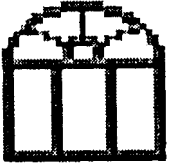
1. Ask your parents for permission before you log on!
2. Tell your parents to spend time with you while online. Show them your favorite places in the internet.
3. Post your family's e-mail address even if you have your own!
4. Do NOT give out your home address, parents work address, or school information.
5. You should NOT use your real last name while you are online, especially if it is unusual.
6. Never agree to meet anyone, anywhere without talking to your parent or guardian about it and getting their approval.
7. Never give out your password to anyone for any reason!
8. Don't reply to any e-mail messages if you feel that they are offensive, strange, mean or upsetting to you.
9. Don't send scanned pictures of yourself or your family to anyone unless you have your parent's approval.
10. Stop right away if you see or read something on a Web site that is upsetting or offensive to you. Some sites are not meant for children and you might have accidentally reached that site through a hyperlink. Talk to your parents or teacher about it.



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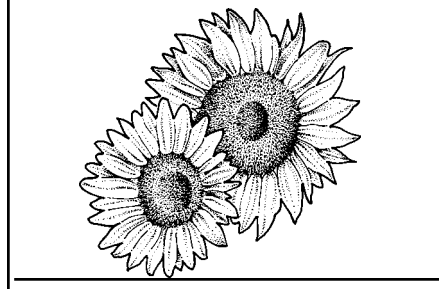



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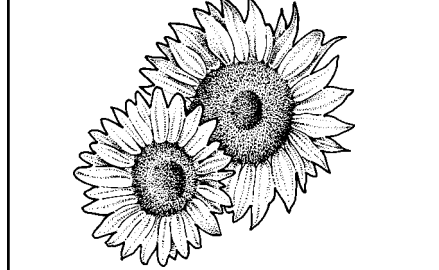
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