

SCHOOL SAFETY: Children, drivers should follow bus-safety guidelines

BOISE - Few things are as exciting — and intimidating — as a young child's first ride on a school bus.

Buses and trained drivers represent one of the safest forms of transportation for school children.

Keeping those rides safe depends on following some basic rules and practices.

- When the bus arrives, stand at least three giant steps (six feet) away from the curb.
- If you have to cross the street in front of the bus, walk on the sidewalk or along the side of the road until you are five giant steps (10 feet) ahead of the bus. Then cross the street.
- Be sure the bus driver can see you and you can see the bus driver.
- Never walk behind a bus.
- If you drop something near the bus, tell the bus driver. Never try to pick it up first because the driver may not be able to see you.
- When on the bus, find a seat and sit down. Loud talking or other noise can distract the bus driver.
- Never put head, arms or hands out of the window.
- Keep aisles clear—books or bags are tripping hazards and can block the way in an emergency.
- Before you reach your stop, get ready to leave by getting your books and belongings together.
- At your stop, wait for the bus to stop completely before getting up from your seat, then walk to the front door and exit using the handrail.
- Wait for a signal from the driver before beginning to cross.
- When crossing multiple lanes of traffic, make sure all vehicles have stopped, not just the ones closest.
- When the driver signals, walk across the road, keeping an eye out for sudden traffic changes.
- Do not cross the beyond the centerline until the driver has signaled that it is safe to do so.
- Stay away from the wheels of the bus at all times.
- If you are the last one on the bus, make sure the driver knows you haven't been dropped off yet. Don't let him or her leave you alone on the bus.