

TIP #11: HANDRAILS & DRAWSTRINGS: SCHOOL BUS HAZARD



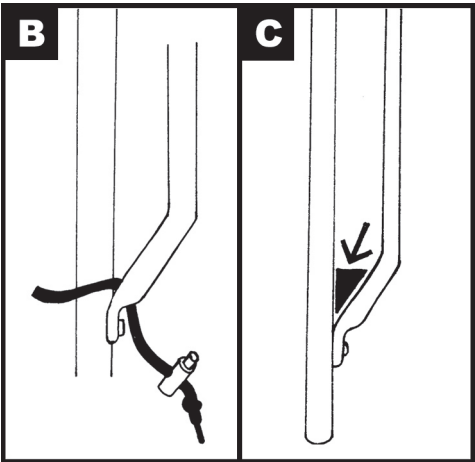
As a child gets off the bus, a drawstring or backpack strap can catch in the handrail.

DRAWSTRINGS CAN BE DANGEROUS

Children's clothing, especially drawstrings, can cause death or injury. A drawstring can catch in a small gap in playground equipment, a bus handrail, or a bolt. As a child gets off the school bus, a dangling drawstring or loose object may catch in the handrail. If the bus doors close and the child isn't seen, she/he could be dragged and run over by the wheels (A).

Items that can cause these problems include:

- jackets, sweatshirts, and other clothing with drawstrings at the neck or waist
- backpack straps
- dangling key chains
- scarves
- belt buckles
- other loose items of clothing



How a drawstring can catch in the gap of a bus handrail.

One type of repair to a faulty handrail.

SCHOOL BUS IMPROVEMENTS HELP REDUCE THE DANGER:

- School bus manufacturers and school districts have repaired or are repairing the handrails on old buses (B and C).
- New buses are being designed to make handrails safer.
- Bus drivers are trained to watch children as they get off the bus. Your child's bus driver should make sure each child has completely cleared the bus when leaving. He/she should look for clothing that could get caught.



These drawstrings are too long. They have large toggles that are more likely to catch.

Clothes without drawstrings are safer.

SIMPLE STEPS MAKE CLOTHING SAFER:

- Choose clothes without drawstrings - snaps, Velcro, buttons, or elastic are better choices (D).
- Remove hood and neck strings.
- Remove drawstrings from the waist and bottom of coats.
- Warn children about dangling key rings, large buckles, and other objects hanging from their backpacks.