"School Zone…Danger Zone" Tip Sheet

Traffic in and around school zones can create significant hazards for children and teens, as well as crossing guards, school officials, and volunteers. Parents often unknowingly create traffic hazards as they drop off or pick up their children from school. To ensure everyone's safety, be sure to do the following:

- **Carpool with neighbors or friends to minimize the number of vehicles in the school zone or at the bus stop.**

- **Review and always follow your school's student drop off plan. That means obeying all signs (i.e., no parking, stopping or standing) and/or individuals directing traffic, including volunteers. If your school does not have a plan, contact school officials and suggest one be developed.**

- **Drop your child off on the school side of the street, next to the curb. If that is not possible, park your vehicle legally (never double park) and accompany your child (using a crosswalk or at the corner) across the street to the sidewalk in front of the school.**

- **Follow instructions provided by school crossing guards -- remember they are there to help protect your child.**

- **Slow down and comply with the posted speed limit not only in school zones, but where children are walking or biking along the road. Research shows that neighborhood residents typically drive 10 mph faster than the posted speed limit in school zones.**

- **Resist the urge to "drop off and dash." Pull out slowly and look not only ahead, but along-side and behind your vehicle for pedestrians, bicyclists, cars, and buses.**

- **Eliminate all distractions -- particularly cell phones and other electronic devices that reduce your ability to react quickly in driving situations involving young children and their spontaneous actions.**

- **Teach your child to look all ways before crossing and to cross only in crosswalks or at corners (this is essential in communities that do not have crossing guards).**

- **Make sure that everyone in your vehicle is properly restrained in the appropriate child safety seat or booster seat or seat belt. New Jersey law requires all children under 8 years of age or who weigh less than 80 pounds to ride in a properly installed car or booster seat. All children between 8 and 18 years of age and all adults must wear a seat belt.**

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