

# Safety Fact Sheet



These programs offered by the Utah Safety Council offer practical strategies to reduce collision related injuries and fatalities on Utah roadways.

## PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

### For Adults:

- Make sure that motorists can see you. Wear bright colored clothing during daylight hours and, if walking when it's dark, make sure you have a flashlight and wear retro-reflective material.
- Know what traffic control signals mean. Do not enter a crosswalk while the "Don't Walk" sign is flashing. Be alert to turning vehicles even if the "Walk" signal is on.
- Walk against the flow of traffic. This enables you to see any oncoming traffic. Walking in the same direction as traffic forces you to rely only on your hearing to warn you of approaching vehicles. This also makes you slightly less visible to drivers.
- Joggers are pedestrians too. Joggers should run on sidewalks or pathways. When no alternative is available, joggers should run facing traffic.

### For Children:

- It is important to teach children about traffic safety and the proper way to cross the street. Adults often overestimate a child's ability to walk and cross streets safely. Children under age 10 do not always have the necessary skills to judge the speed or distance of oncoming traffic; in addition, their peripheral vision is 1/3 less than adults'. Because of their shorter attention spans and cognitive skills, children are often impulsive and behave unpredictably in traffic situations. Here are some tips to keep children safe.
- Find alternatives to playing near streets or in driveways. Children's small sizes make it difficult for a driver to see them. Adults should always supervise when small children are outdoors. Children ages 1-3 are often hit by vehicles that are backing up. Older children should be taught to never dash into the street and to always stop at the curb before proceeding.

### Teach children the proper way to cross the street:

- Stop at the edge of the road or at the curb. If there are parked cars present, check to make sure they are not about to move (engine running, driver inside). Proceed past the parked vehicle and stop again.
- Look left, right, and then left again to make sure there are no cars approaching. Teach children to fully turn their heads and eyes in those directions. Their limited side vision makes this necessary.
- If crossing at a corner, teach children to be aware of cars turning the corner. Children should enter the street only if there is no approaching traffic. Continue looking both left and right.
- If there is a car approaching, teach children to wait and repeat the checking process again before attempting to cross.
- When preparing to cross in front of a vehicle, children should make eye contact with the driver before proceeding.
- Explain the meaning of traffic control signals such as the "Walk," and "Don't Walk" signs. Never enter a crosswalk when the "Don't Walk" sign is flashing.
- Use retro-reflective material on children's outerwear. Do not allow hoods or umbrellas to block a child's vision.

*Set an example for children. Practice safe pedestrian and street-crossing habits.*



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## As a Driver:

- Be aware that Utah law requires you to stop for pedestrians in a marked crosswalk or an intersection with no marked crosswalk, where there are no traffic control signals present.
- Follow all posted speed limits. When children are present near schools, the speed limit is usually lower than that of surrounding roadways. In residential areas, be alert for children who may be playing near the street. Children often dart out from between parked cars or shrubbery.
- Be extra careful around school buses. When red lights are flashing, you must stop. Wait a few extra minutes after the bus is gone to make sure there are no children present.
- Elderly pedestrians may not be able to cross quickly or hear you approaching. Give older adults plenty of time to cross the street.
- Be alert when turning corners. If the car in front of you stops at a corner, be prepared for the possibility of pedestrians crossing.

*Pedestrian injuries are preventable. Take care to be a defensive pedestrian and a pedestrian-alert driver.*

*Source: National Safety Council, AAA and Safe Kids Worldwide*