

MY PROMISES AS A ROAD USER

BEFORE CROSSING THE ROAD, I ALWAYS **STOP, LOOK** BOTH WAYS AND MAKE SURE **IT IS SAFE TO CROSS**.

I KNOW THAT THE SAFEST PLACE TO CROSS THE ROAD IS AT **A PEDESTRIAN CROSSING WITH TRAFFIC LIGHTS**. I ONLY CROSS THE ROAD WHEN THE LIGHT IS GREEN.

I AM CAREFUL EVEN WHEN THE LIGHT GOES GREEN. BEFORE STEPPING OUT ONTO THE ROAD, I MAKE SURE **EVERY VEHICLE HAS STOPPED**.

BEFORE CROSSING THE ROAD AT AN UNREGULATED I.E. 'ZEBRA' CROSSING, I **MAKE SURE** THE DRIVER HAS NOTICED ME, THEIR VEHICLE HAS STOPPED AND THEY ARE GIVING WAY TO ME.

I CROSS THE ROAD IN THE **DESIGNATED PLACE**. IF THERE ARE NO CROSSINGS NEARBY, I CROSS THE ROAD AT A POINT WHERE THE ROAD IS **CLEARLY VISIBLE** IN BOTH DIRECTIONS.

I BEAR IN MIND THAT **IT IS DANGEROUS TO RUN OUT ONTO THE ROAD**, BECAUSE DRIVERS CANNOT STOP THEIR VEHICLES IMMEDIATELY.

I ALWAYS MAKE SURE THERE ARE NO OTHER CARS COMING UP **BEHIND A CAR THAT HAS STOPPED** AT THE PEDESTRIAN CROSSING.

I KNOW CROSSING THE ROAD **FROM BETWEEN PARKED CARS** IS DANGEROUS, BECAUSE IT IS DIFFICULT FOR DRIVERS TO SEE ME.

I AM VERY CAREFUL WHEN WALKING ALONG AND CROSSING ROADS, AND IF I NEED TO TALK ON THE PHONE, I STOP AND DO SO ON THE PAVEMENT.

I PAY CLOSE ATTENTION TO WHAT IS GOING ON AROUND ME WHEN WALKING ALONG ROADS **WITH MY FRIENDS**. IF WE ARE WALKING ALONG MAIN ROADS, WE DO SO **IN SINGLE FILE**, NOT SIDE BY SIDE.

WHEN I GET OFF THE BUS, I CROSS THE ROAD AT THE **NEAREST PEDESTRIAN CROSSING**, BECAUSE IT IS **DANGEROUS** TO CROSS FROM BEHIND OR IN FRONT OF A BUS.

IF THERE ARE NO CROSSINGS NEAR THE BUS STOP, I **WAIT** UNTIL THE BUS **HAS LEFT THE BUS STOP** AND ONLY THEN CROSS THE ROAD.

I **ALWAYS WEAR A REFLECTOR** WHEN IT IS DARK OUTSIDE. I MAKE SURE MY REFLECTOR IS VISIBLE TO DRIVERS AND THAT I ALWAYS HAVE IT WITH ME.

I STAND OUT MORE TO DRIVERS IF I AM WEARING **BRIGHTLY COLOURED CLOTHES WITH REFLECTOR STRIPS ON THEM** OR HAVE **REFLECTIVE STICKERS** ON MY BAG AND COAT.

I WALK ON THE **LEFT-HAND SIDE** OF A MAIN ROAD OR A CITY STREET WITHOUT A PAVEMENT SO THAT I CAN SEE APPROACHING CARS.

WHEN RIDING MY BIKE, I **ALWAYS WEAR A HELMET**. I ONLY RIDE MY BIKE ON THE ROAD IF MY MUM AND DAD ARE WITH ME.

SMART KIDS ON THE WAY TO SCHOOL

This leaflet is designed to help children and their parents remember and call to mind the basic rules of traffic safety.

Dear parents,

The instructions you give and the example you set are crucial in ensuring that your children behave safely and considerately in the midst of traffic. First and foremost, children learn from what they see and often mirror the behaviour of their friends and family. If you are an exemplary road user at all times, the fundamentals of your child's behaviour will develop on the basis of those values.

Children become significantly more independent – including when getting around on their own – once they start school. This is when they start setting out alone or with their friends instead of their parents, and travelling longer distances on their own. As a parent, you have an important role to play in shaping your child's ability to navigate our roads safely and understand how traffic works.

If your child is about to start school, it is important to practise taking the school route at different times and in different weather conditions. Things that are self-evident to adults may not be so clear to children. When teaching your child, make sure you keep new information to a minimum and constantly reinforce what they have learnt. Explain to them that the intensity of traffic on one and the same road can vary at different times. Nor do children know to take changes that occur in traffic due to darkness, fog, icy conditions, snow and the like into account.

A **crossing** is a point in a road where pedestrians can safely cross it. These places are made safe by means of traffic management and physical solutions (safety islands, lighting, speed limits, good visibility, etc.).

AS A PARENT, HOW CAN I SUPPORT MY CHILD WHEN THEY START SCHOOL?

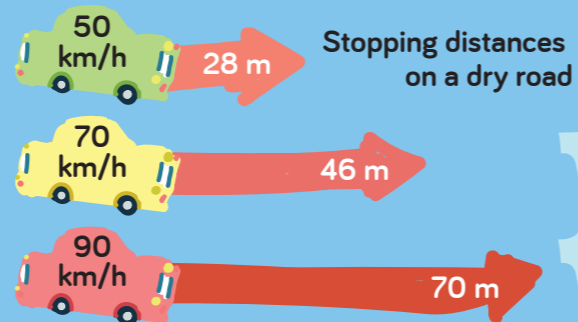
The biggest challenge for any parent when out and about in traffic with and instructing their child is **to put themselves in their child's shoes**. Bear in mind that a child's field of vision is much more limited due to their height and that the way they perceive the people and vehicles around them is still developing.

Expert recommendations:

When planning your child's route to school, remember that it is better to take a longer but safer route and to **minimise the number of times they have to cross the road**.

In your own neighbourhood, make sure your family always crosses the road **in the same place** so that your children develop safe traffic habits early on. When teaching your child how to cross the road, walk beside them the first few times, then **keep slightly back from them and observe** their actions and decision-making process. Ask them to explain what they are doing and why. This will help embed what they have learned and promote the **development of the right habits**.

Your child will follow **your lead**, so always stop before crossing the road. **Look both ways and make sure** no vehicles are approaching, or that all vehicles have stopped. When your child is learning how to cross the road, make sure they also look to check whether any vehicles are **approaching from a distance**.



It is easiest to cross the road at an **intersection with traffic lights or a pedestrian crossing**. Even if the light is green, you should still check that all vehicles have stopped, because although the traffic light is telling pedestrians that they can cross the road, it is still their responsibility to make sure it is safe to cross.

Identify the **safest spots** to cross the road along your child's route to school. If there are no traffic lights or pedestrian crossings, choose a location where visibility is **good in both directions** (and which is illuminated when dark) and where it will be easier for drivers to see your child.

Explain to your child that it is dangerous to cross the road **from behind parked cars or from behind bushes**, because drivers may not see them. It is also important to make it clear to your child that **vehicles themselves do not have eyes**, but that drivers have to be able to spot children themselves.

You must always give way to **emergency vehicles sounding their sirens**. Discuss with your child dangerous situations that might arise and how to avoid them.

In regard to **public transport**, teach your child which bus, trolleybus or tram they can take to get home, how to get on and off it and **how to behave** while in it. Discuss why it is important to hold on tight in buses, trolleybuses and trams and explain that if there are safety belts on the seats, they should wear them.

After getting off a bus, trolleybus or tram, you should cross the road at the **nearest crossing**. However, if there are no crossings near the stop, teach your child that it is safest for them to **let the bus, trolleybus or tram leave the stop** and only then cross the road, because another vehicle may be approaching from behind and the driver may not notice them.

Explain to your child **how a reflector works** and make sure you yourself wear one on city streets and main roads when it is dark outside. Ensure that everyone in your family has at least one proper reflector.

If you wish to phone your child after school, **agree with them on specific times**.

Tell them that if they need to **use their phone while out and about**, they must **stop and do so on the pavement**. Bear in mind that setting positive examples on the street and while driving will help your child develop the same behavioural norms even without saying anything.

Make sure your child takes off their backpack and puts on their seat belt if you are driving them to school. Ensure that the seat belt's diagonal strap is positioned over their collarbone between the shoulder blade and the neck and that the horizontal strap is positioned over their thighs as close to the hip joint as possible. **Ask your child to make sure** that the seat belt is not twisted and that it is as close to their body as possible.

It is safest for children to get into and out of cars via the door opening onto **the pavement or the side of the road**.

Teach your child to check that **it is safe to open the door** before getting out and to keep their eyes open for reversing vehicles. If the **rear lights of a vehicle are lit**, this means that it may be about to reverse and that it will be safer to pass it from the front. Due to their size, children may go unseen by drivers in their rear-view mirrors, and vehicles also have blind spots where drivers can see nothing.

Remind your child that riding their bike by themselves is only permitted **from the age of 10** after they pass their cycling test.

More information is available online at www.liikluskasvatus.ee or www.transpordiamet.ee

