
Providing safe and secure communities

July 6, 2007

School's out! Motorists reminded to watch out for kids on Alberta's streets

Edmonton... With the school year over, motorists need to be on the lookout for children travelling and playing outdoors. Drivers should use caution in residential areas but also on streets with high traffic volumes, higher-than-average speeds and fewer crossing signals where children may dart out unexpectedly.

In Alberta, traffic incidents are the leading cause of death and injury to children under 14. Many of these incidents involve children being struck by vehicles. Studies show that children under nine are at greatest risk of being struck by a car, because they have difficulty assessing the dangers of crossing the road and are more likely to make impulsive decisions. Young children have limited peripheral vision and lack the ability to accurately judge the speed and distance of vehicles. This makes it difficult for them to decide when it is safe to cross the street.

Motorists should keep these safety tips in mind when driving near school, playground and residential areas.

- Scan farther down the road and obey posted speed limits.
- Always be prepared to slow down or stop.
- Avoid loud music and other distractions when driving.
- Be careful when backing out of a parking stall or driveway; remember to check for children and other pedestrians.
- Watch for children between parked vehicles and on sidewalks as they might dash out into the street after a friend or a toy.

Speed limits in playground zones are in effect every day of the year. The speed limit is 30 km/h unless otherwise posted. This speed limit is in effect from 8:30 am to one hour after sunset. During that time, a vehicle is not permitted to pass or attempt to pass another vehicle travelling in the same direction.

Improving traffic safety is one of the actions under Premier Ed Stelmach's plan to provide Albertans with safe and secure communities. Other priorities for the government are to govern with integrity and transparency, improve Albertans' quality of life, manage growth pressures, and build a stronger Alberta. For more information about traffic safety, contact the Office of Traffic Safety at (780) 422-8839 or visit www.saferoads.com.

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