

Southern Pines Police Department
Safety Tips
School Bus Safety

School bus safety is no longer a part-time concern. With year round schools in session, parents, children and motorists must keep this important topic in the forefront all throughout the year. Still, with planned breaks during the school year, some children might need to be reminded of basic precautions they need to take as school begins again after a recess. Parents, take a few minutes to discuss bus safety before the start of school. Remind your children to look both ways and wait for the bus driver to indicate it is safe if they must cross the road. They must keep away from the bus as it approaches the bus stop or leaves them at the end of the school day. Talk with them also about being a responsible passenger. Most schools have a code of conduct that governs behavior on the bus. It is important to follow these rules so the driver is not distracted and the ride goes smoothly. Bus drivers are professionals who are concerned about the safety of the children and go to great lengths to keep them safe.

Remember, too, your responsibility as a driver to stop for a school bus displaying flashing red lights when approaching from any direction on the same street, highway, or public vehicular area. This includes buses on school property. Motorists must stop regardless of the direction they are travelling, whether approaching the bus from the front or overtaking it from the rear. Penalties for passing a stopped school bus are stiff because the potential for tragedy is great. Keep a focus on your driving and be observant. Make the conscious decision to keep aware of school busses, bus stops and children who walk in and around the schools as well as the safety issues that face our children and our community.

It happens every day on our roads. Motorists, possibly in a rush to get to their destination or preoccupied with any number of things on their mind, pass a stopped school bus that is displaying red lights. Are they aware of their unsafe driving? Do they even realize they passed a stopped school bus? Did they not even notice the bus, let alone the flashing red lights and STOP sign? Well, the reason doesn't really matter. They have put children in jeopardy and that is unacceptable. Each year, many children are hit by motorists who illegally pass stopped school busses. Some of those children die. The memory of hitting or killing a child may be one you carry for the rest of your life, so remember to slow down and be aware.

For more information or a presentation on this topic, contact the Community Services Coordinator at (910) 692-2732.