



For Immediate Release

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Contact: Jim Pollard, PIO
Cell 601-942-3518 / Desk 601-368-2301
Jim.pollard@amr.net

TRAVELING SAFELY TO AND FROM SCHOOL: AMR's ADVICE

(Jackson, Miss.) — Whether on foot, on a bicycle or in a bus, children need specific knowledge and skills to avoid getting hurt going to school and back home.

Stan Alford, operations manager for AMR in central Mississippi, advises parents to teach their children the following rules to stay safe when traveling to or from school.

While school buses are the safest way for children to travel to and from school, nearly 12,000 children are injured and approximately 26 die each year in school bus-related incidents. Most children injured and killed in association with school buses are harmed **while getting on and off the bus, not while riding.**

Getting on or off the bus:

- Stay outside the “danger zone” around the bus -- a zone ten feet wide all the way around the bus (for little children, say six “giant steps”). At that distance from the bus, the driver can see a child.
- If you drop something near the bus, signal the driver and tell him or her. Never try to pick it up first because the driver may not be able to see you.
- Always stay away from the wheels of the bus.
- Hold on to the hand rail and that also applies to getting off the bus.
- Never assume other vehicles have stopped for the school bus. Keep watching for other vehicles as you walk in front of the bus.

Getting to the bus stop:

- Parents should walk smaller children to their stop.
- Each child should be dressed in contrasting bright colors.
- Leave home early enough to avoid running to the bus. Running to the bus can be dangerous.
- Older children should watch the younger ones closely.
- Children walking or standing in groups are easier for drivers to see than one child alone.

Waiting for the bus to arrive:

- Always stand at least ten feet from the curb or edge of the road.
- Do not run or play while waiting for the bus.
- Do not take anything out of backpacks while waiting so that nothing gets dropped or blows away in the wind.

Getting on the bus:

- Be sure the bus driver can see you and you can see the bus driver.
- Enter the bus in a single file with the younger children first.
- Never walk behind the bus.
- Go straight to a seat.

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While the bus is in motion:

- Stay seated, facing forward.
- Be! Keep your hands to yourself. Talk quietly. Don't talk at all at railroad crossings so the driver can listen closely for sounds of a train. Do not distract the driver.
- Keep the aisles clear. Keep your belongings on your lap.
- Do not block emergency exits with sports equipment or big musical instruments.

Getting off the school bus:

- If you have to cross the street, walk at least ten feet ahead of the bus until you can turn around and see the driver.
- Make sure the bus driver can see you.
- Wait for a signal from the bus driver before beginning to cross.
- When the bus driver signals for you to cross, walk across the road while also keeping an eye out for sudden traffic changes.
- If you leave something on the bus, never go back to get it. The bus may already be moving and the driver might not see the child.

Walking to school:

- Always walk on the sidewalk when one is available.
- Cross the street only at intersections or street corners.
- Before you begin to cross the street, stop and look left, right and left again to spot oncoming cars.
- If no cars are coming, it is safe for you to cross but continue looking left-right-left as you cross.
- Walk, don't run.
- Do not dart into the street between parked vehicles.

Riding a bicycle to school:

- Always wear a helmet when riding your bicycle.
- Make sure that your helmet fits correctly.
- Ride on the right side of the road in the same direction other vehicles are going.
- If two or more bikers are together, ride one behind the other, not side by side.
- Come to a complete stop before crossing streets.
- Make sure clothes, shoes and the bicycle have reflective materials so drivers can see you more easily.

For more information on back to school safety, visit the National Safety Council website, www.nsc.org.

AMR companies in Mississippi are the state's busiest ambulance services. AMR and MedStat provide 911 ambulance service in 17 counties. The Mississippi Department of Health has reported AMR companies transport more ambulance patients than any other service in the state.

About American Medical Response

American Medical Response, Inc., America's leading provider of medical transportation, provides services in 40 states and the District of Columbia. More than 28,000 AMR paramedics, EMTs, RNs and other professionals work together to transport more than 4.8 million patients nationwide each year in critical, emergency and non-emergency situations. AMR also provides fire services through Rural Metro Fire Department, www.ruralmetrofire.com. AMR is a subsidiary of Global Medical Response, www.GlobalMedicalResponse.com. For more information about AMR, visit www.amr.net and follow American Medical Response on Facebook @AMR_Social on Twitter and Instagram.