

News You Can Use

Personal Injury | Medical Malpractice | Workers Compensation

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BACK TO SCHOOL EDITION

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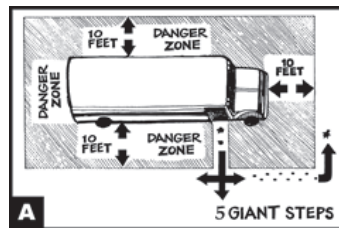
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School Bus Safety

With schools just starting up, it's a good time to think about school bus safety. According to the Nation Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), school buses are the safest way for kids to get to school (nearly 8 times safer than passenger vehicles), but there are still dangers present for children, especially when getting on or off the bus.

The NHTSA has the following tips to help parents teach their kids how to be safe around buses:

- When getting on the bus, stay away from the



The Danger Zone is the area on all sides of the bus where children are in the most danger of being hit. Children should stay ten feet away from the bus (or as far away as they can) and never go behind it. They should take five giant steps in front of the bus before crossing, so they can be seen by the driver.

danger zone (see picture below) and wait for the driver's signal. Board the bus one at a time.

- When getting off the bus, look before stepping off the bus to be sure no cars are passing on the shoulder (side of the road). Move away from the bus.
- Before crossing the street, take five "giant steps" out from the front of the bus, or until the drivers face can be seen (see picture below). Wait for the driver to signal that it's safe to cross.
- Look left-right-left when coming to the edge of the bus to make sure traffic is stopped. Keep watching traffic when crossing.

How can I help my child stay safe while riding the school bus?

There are three important rules you can teach your kids that will help keep them safe on the school bus. First, tell kids that they should always stay seated for the entire trip and that switching seats is something that should never be done. Additionally, make sure kids know the proper way to sit on the bus – with their faces forward and feet straight down in front. Keeping out of the aisles and sitting directly behind the seat in front of you helps protect passengers in the event of an accident. Second, let kids know that speaking with quiet voices, instead of yelling or shouting, helps the driver stay focused and lets him/her hear in case of an emergency. Finally, tell kids to avoid unnecessary injury by keeping windows closed (unless otherwise directed) and to keep hands and arms inside the bus at all times. Preventative measures such as these can help reduce the risk of more serious injury should an accident occur.

"JUST ASK JIM"



Overloaded Backpacks Can Cause Injury

Fall fills the air as the yellow buses are once again rolling around Kansas and Missouri neighborhoods. Inside, school children come well equipped for the first days and weeks of a brand-new school year. Notebooks, pens and calculators, new textbooks, and other back-to-school gear fill the backpacks schoolchildren proudly wear to school.

Back-to-school shopping is a yearly rite of passage for school kids, from the early elementary grades on up to the more fashion conscious high school students who simply want to look their best for the new school year. As conscientious parents check their young scholars' fashion choices for fit and function, there is another concern. Along with the debate of age-appropriate attire, questions about the choice of a backpack should occupy parents' minds as well.

Why backpacks? Backpacks that are worn incorrectly can lead to back pain and unnecessary strains on the backs of children and young adults. According to Neal Tanner, a physical therapist at St. Francis Outreach Rehabilitation, too much strain on the muscles and joints can cause pain if it is done routinely. The result of backpack strain would "basically be muscular or a skeletal injury" according to Tanner.

How do you know when there is a problem? According to Tanner, recurrent pain that does not subside needs medical attention. Pain can normally be managed by laying off the heavy backpack for a few days. Anti-inflammatory pain medicines may give relief as well.

Back pain and injury can be avoided if backpacks are not overloaded and are worn properly. A child's backpack should be no more than five to ten percent of the student's body weight. If you notice your child walking with a forward lean, it is a sign the backpack is too heavy. Other signs include struggling with the straps, or placing a hand between the strap and the shoulder as if to relieve the pressure. An overly loaded backpack may cause the child to struggle to walk in a normal stride beneath the weight.

Backpacks should never be worn over one shoulder. The weight should be evenly distributed between the shoulder blades. According to Tanner, stress angles can form on certain body parts. Padded straps can help alleviate some of the pressure. Good backpacks will also come with multiple compartments to more evenly distribute the weight. Finally, rolling backpacks are a great alternative to more traditional shoulder-strapped backpacks, though many school districts prohibit their use.

For those of you without young children heading back to school, here's an article just for you...

Hydroplaning - Was It Caused by a Road Defect?

It happens in the blink of an eye; one minute you're driving down the road on a rainy day, and the next thing you know, you lose control of your vehicle, it slides or spins and then you careen into the guardrail or off the road. Or, worse yet, you end up crashing into another vehicle.

Hydroplaning, which happens when your car, motorcycle or truck's tires become separated from the road surface by a layer of water, can be caused by excessive speed or poor tire tread, but in many cases, it is caused by something completely out of the driver's control – road defects.

Common road defects that can lead to hydroplaning include:

- Improperly designed roadways.
- Lack of appropriate warning signs.
- Insufficient cross slope (the slope from the middle of the road to the side of the road which helps prevent pooling of water).
- Poor road maintenance.

If you suffer a hydroplaning accident that you feel was caused by a road defect, it is important for you to contact a personal injury attorney who has the experience to guide you through a possible claim.

FEATURED TESTIMONIAL



"My first meeting with James I felt like he truly cared. He was empathetic about my situation and he was extremely honest about setting expectations of what may or may not happen... He was extremely knowledgeable with a case

like mine, which was a little bit tricky and difficult. You could tell that he is extremely passionate about his work and about his clients." –MELANIE A.

Remembering Safety in Youth Athletics

Even if your child does not officially play a sport, they are probably active in some way. Whether it's playing outside, partaking in physical education classes, or being involved in an organized sport, your child needs to be aware of the potential injuries that may occur while being physically active.

As kids grow older, sports typically become more aggressive. As a result, high school students are more likely to experience some sort of physical injury. Currently, there are almost seven million student-athletes in the United States and each year approximately 715,000 high school students are injured. That means that at least one in every ten students will face some sort of sports-related injury every single year. Moreover, an estimated 8,000 of those injuries each year will result in a trip to the emergency room.

As adults, we know that those injuries are not something to be taken lightly. Even though kids may quickly heal and bounce back, the pain of those seemingly temporary injuries will often become permanent and will likely be felt again as those kids age.

Luckily, the possibility of injury can be reduced. The National Athletic Trainers' Association (NATA) recommends taking the following steps to protect your child:

1. Consider whether your child is both physically and mentally the same age. Although a child may appear strong or fast, he or she may not have matured to the point necessary to be confident of his/her abilities in an aggressive athletic environment. Never push your child.
2. Send your child to the doctor for a physical examination every year.
3. Make it a point to meet the athletic trainers, coaches, and other personnel who will be protecting the health of your child.
4. In case of an emergency, provide medical information on your child to the athletic department in advance.
5. Feed your child appropriately. They should have the necessary food and drink items that will keep them healthy and nourish their bodies after physical activity. Lack of proper nutrition will put a strain on them physically, and kids are often unaware of how food affects their body.
6. Make sure your child's athletic department has a plan on how to deal with an athletic injury.

Again, child injuries are a serious matter, but preparing for them and educating your child on how to be a healthy athlete can help prevent serious injury from occurring.



There is no bigger compliment than referrals from our clients. A big THANK YOU to those who have recently referred new clients.

Connie G. ● Kansas Medical Malpractice

Attorney Richard B. ● Missouri Auto Accident

Each of the above referrals has resulted in a donation to the Roswold Foundation for Injured Children, founded by James Roswold and Heather Lottmann to provide assistance and educational materials to injured children and their families.

We thank you for these referrals.



For more information about Roswold Foundation for Injured Children, visit www.roswoldfoundation.org

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This publication is intended to educate the general public about personal injury, medical malpractice, and other issues. It is for information purposes only and is not intended to be legal advice. Prior to action on any information contained here, you should seek and retain competent counsel. The information in this newsletter may be copied and distributed as long as the newsletter is copied in its entirety.

Quote of the month

"The difference between school and life? In school, you're taught a lesson and then given a test. In life, you're given a test that teaches you a lesson." – Tom Bodett

FUN

The oldest school
in Kansas City
is St. Teresa's
Academy. It was
founded in 1866.

fact

MONTHLY CONTEST

How Would You Like to Win a Gift Card?

**What is the oldest public school
in the United States?**

Congratulations to last month's winner, **Patricia Dunnell**.

The first person to call us at 816-471-5111 with the correct answer wins a gift card. It's that easy!

**Safety
tip
of the month**

If your child walks to or from school, make sure they know how to safely cross any streets that intersect their route, especially those not patrolled by a crossing guard. Get them into the habit of looking "left-right-left" BEFORE they begin crossing.

