

Pedestrian Safety Teacher's Lesson Plans

for Preschools, Child Care Programs, and Head Start Programs

Lesson time: 1 hour

Age level: 4-6 years old

Background for Teachers

For children ages 5-14, pedestrian injuries are the third-leading cause of injury-related death¹. Injuries can occur anywhere, in fact most happen in residential areas and in close proximity to the child's home². Children are at much greater risk for pedestrian injuries than adults, as they see, hear, and process information differently than adults and lack developmental skills to adequately deal with traffic. The number of traffic-related injuries increases with age among adolescents, so it is important young children understand the traffic environment and driver behavior in order to build safe habits as pedestrians. To prevent injuries, kids must be aware of basic traffic signs and safe street crossing techniques.



Preparation and Materials

- Projector or computer to play online videos
- Printed handout for parents (found under "Extra Resources")

Optional activities include set-up of an indoor traffic crossing.

- Miniature traffic signs
- Painter's tape

¹ Preventing Child Pedestrian Injury: A Guide for Practitioners

² Pedestrian Injuries to Children Younger Than 5 Years of Age

Pre-Lesson Discussion (5 min)

- Ask students if they walk outdoors, and some reasons why.
- Explain to students that a **pedestrian** is a person traveling on foot, whether it be walking or running.
- Ask the class what might be **dangerous** about the street as a pedestrian.
- Explain to students that they should **always** walk with an adult until they are 10 years old, no matter how close they are to home.

Video Lesson (6 min)

Video should be played for students after the pre-lesson discussion. This video introduces important concepts about crossing the street that are also emphasized in the post-lesson discussion.

[Crossing Streets Safely](#) (5:16 minutes)



Post-Lesson Discussion (15 min)

- Ask the students what they learned and what they already know about pedestrian safety, and have them make a list of their responses. Make sure to address the following:

- Cross the street at the corner or at a crosswalk if there is one, and obey all traffic signals.
 - Walk on a sidewalk. If there is no sidewalk, walk on the left side of the street, facing oncoming traffic.
 - Make eye contact with drivers before crossing.
 - Watch out for cars that are turning or backing up.
 - Only cross in front of a school bus when the driver says it is safe. Do not cross behind the bus or where the driver can't see you.
 - Hold an adult's hand when you cross the street. Look left, right and left again before you cross and keep looking both ways until you reach the other side.
 - If a toy or pet goes out into the street, ask an adult for help getting it back.
 - When you are outside playing, play in a backyard or playground away from the street or parking lots.
- Ask the class if they have seen **drivers** do dangerous or safe things. Have they ever felt unsafe while walking? Why?
 - Ask the class to make a list of all the things that they can do, wear or use to make them more visible when walking on or near the road.
 - Light-colored clothing, clothing with reflective material, and a flashlight are all good ideas.
 - Ask the class if some roads and streets may be **harder** to cross than others. Why?



Demonstrate (30 min)

Use the miniature traffic signs and tape to construct a crosswalk similar to the photo below. Once constructed, have students line up on one side of the "street."

- Ask students if they know what each of the signs mean.
 - Explain how a **traffic light** works.
 - Explain how a **stop sign** works.
 - Explain what a **pedestrian crossing sign** looks like.
- Have the students point out where the crosswalk sign is. Each student should practice crossing the street at the crosswalk, using the methods described in the video (stopping at the edge of the street, and looking left, right, and left again).



Extra Resources

For parents: [Pedestrian Safety for Parents](#)
[Traffic Signs Every Parent Should Teach](#)
[Teaching Pedestrian Safety to Children](#)
[Pedestrian Safety Tips | Safe Kids](#)