

Road safety for teenagers

Road safety is everyone's responsibility

Teenagers are more at risk on the roads than they think.

Most teenagers don't realise that they are more likely to be killed or injured in a road collision than any other age group. Find out how to help your teenager stay safe.

Help protect your child

You should talk to your child and reinforce road safety messages to help keep them safe:

- Stress the need to concentrate and be careful at all times.
- Warn of the dangers of distractions – phones, wearing headphones or even chatting to friends while walking are big distractions.
- Keep talking about the dangers of traffic.
- Point out people who are endangering themselves.
- Encourage your teenager to practice judging the speed and distance of approaching vehicles on busy roads and identify safe gaps in the traffic.
- Stress that your child should never lose concentration and follow others blindly into dangerous situations.

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Cycling

It is a good idea to:

- ▶ Buy and encourage your teenager to wear a cycle helmet, and something fluorescent and reflective to improve their visibility.
- ▶ Encourage your child never to take lifts on the back of a friend's bike.
- ▶ Ask your child never to listen to music while they are cycling.
- ▶ Make sure your child knows that cyclists must obey all traffic signs and traffic light signals.
- ▶ Encourage your child to complete a Bikeability course. For more information email: highways@southwark.gov.uk



Bus safety

Your teenagers probably take the bus to school and back all the time, maybe even every day. In fact, they're probably so used to it, they do it without paying much attention. But not paying attention could cost them their lives. It only takes a moment's lapse of concentration to cause death or serious injury.

So your children should always expect the unexpected and never take risks going to and from the bus or crossing roads nearby. You should re-mind them:

- ▶ Just because they're not small children does not mean they should not use the Green Cross Code.
- ▶ Just because their friends are chatting doesn't mean it's safe for them.
- ▶ Most school bus related collisions happen to pupils before they get to or after they leave the bus.

Reinforce their skills

Talking to your teenager often about road safety will keep it fresh in their minds. You could ask your child where the risks are on their route, for example hidden entrances, or play games guessing what speed cars are travelling.

You could also talk about the routes your child takes regularly, and ask questions about what is on the route to see if they take notice of their environment.

Peace of mind

For your peace of mind, have routines that you can both stick to. You could try discussing the following points and finding an answer for each of them:

- ▶ What will they do if they miss a bus home?
- ▶ Do they have a mobile (fully charged), or know who a safe stranger is?
- ▶ What should your teenager do if they have to stay behind at school.