

Knowledge is Empowerment

- Back to School Safety -

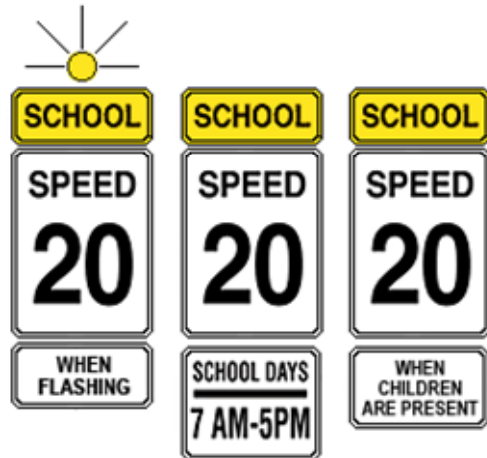
As Labor Day approaches, school is or will soon be back in season across the country. Increased traffic congestion, heavier pedestrian traffic, and inexperienced drivers all contribute to increased hazards on the road. Here are a few tips to help you avoid some of the hazards you may encounter:

Allow extra time for trips

Additional traffic volume increases driving hazards. Be prepared by applying what you have learned from the Smith Systems® Five Keys to Safe Driving:

Aim High in Steering®
Get the Big Picture®
Keep Your Eyes Moving®
Leave Yourself an Out®
Make Sure They See You®

Be particularly careful when approaching school buses as they make frequent stops. You must always stop for a school bus that has stopped, deployed its STOP sign and/or flashing lights. This is the law in all fifty states. Several states (e.g., New York, West Virginia, Alabama, Arkansas and Mississippi) require that you stop for a school bus in the opposing lanes on a divided roadway. Be sure to review and understand the school bus safety laws for the jurisdictions you frequent. Take extra care to look out for speed zones in the vicinity of schools and obey the posted speed limits.



Be on the look out for pedestrians

While traveling during the morning and afternoon rush hours be aware of the increased pedestrian traffic around schools, bus stops, residential streets and playgrounds. Obey the orders of traffic police and crossing guards and always remember: if you see a ball roll out in the street, a child is almost sure to follow!

Beware of inexperienced drivers



The increased traffic at this time of year also brings new and inexperienced drivers to the road. They may become easily confused by difficult traffic situations and make poor decisions. They may let themselves be distracted by cell phones, MP3 players or friends in the car with them. Be especially careful of drivers that are exhibiting erratic or aggressive driving behaviors. Give them plenty of space and let them go on their way.

Remember: slow down, give yourself more time and stay aware of your surroundings to help ensure safe travels.

Sources:

Smith Systems® Driver Training

<http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/portal/site/nhtsa/menuitem.e712547f8daccabbbf30811060008a0c/>