

# Pedestrian Safety for Kids: A Parents' Guide



Walking is a great way for children to have fun, get exercise and simply to get around. It's a great family activity too.

But before your kids lace up their shoes, you need to discuss pedestrian safety with them. Here are some facts about child pedestrian injuries and some tips that will help your children to get out and walk safely this summer.

## The Facts About Child Pedestrian Injuries:

- Every week in Canada, an average of 80 child pedestrians are hit by a motor vehicle. One of them dies and 10 have major injuries.
- Children who survive their injuries often do so with long-term disabilities, resulting in months, years or a lifetime of emotional and financial burden on themselves and their families.
- Children aged 5 to 9 years are most at risk because their judgment and perceptual skills are not fully developed, yet they are eager to cross the street on their own in order to demonstrate independence.
- As with many other causes of injuries, boys are injured as pedestrians more often than girls. Children living in low-income neighbourhoods are also more likely to be hit by motor vehicles.
- At least 70% of pedestrian fatalities in Canada occur in urban areas or on roads with speed limits less than 60 km/h. In most cases, child pedestrians are struck where there is no form of traffic control such as traffic signals, crosswalks or stop signs. Most fatal pedestrian crashes occur between 5 and 9 p.m.

## How to Prevent Child Pedestrian Injuries:

- Your children should not cross the street alone until they are at least 10 years old. Adult supervision is essential until your child can clearly demonstrate that they know how to cross the street safely.
- The installation of traffic calming measures, such as speed bumps, is one of the most effective ways to reduce pedestrian injuries. Think about ways to calm traffic in your neighbourhood.
- Children should not be allowed to play in driveways, streets or parking lots.
- Poor visibility adds to the risk of collision so encourage your children to wear bright, easy to see clothing.
- Teach your children these safety steps and practice with them:
  - Stop at the curb and check both ways for traffic before crossing a road. Keep looking both ways while crossing.
  - Understand and obey traffic signals and signs.
  - Cross only at intersections, never in the middle of the street.
  - Use streets with sidewalks. Where there are no sidewalks, walk facing traffic and stay as far to the left as possible.
  - Watch for cars that are turning, backing up, or coming out of driveways.
  - Never run onto a street without stopping at the curb or road edge.

To learn more about child pedestrian safety, visit [www.safekidscanada.ca](http://www.safekidscanada.ca) or call 1-888-SAFE-TIPS (723-3847).



Winnipeg Regional  
Health Authority

*Caring for Health*

Office régional de la  
santé de Winnipeg

*À l'écoute de notre santé*