

**Benton-Franklin  
Health District**  
www.bfhd.wa.gov

**Kennewick**  
7102 West Okanogan Place

**Pasco**  
412 West Clark Street

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www.safekids.org

**Washington Department  
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www.doh.wa.gov

**National Highway Traffic  
Safety Administration**  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## Back to School Safety Tips

*Safe Kids Benton-Franklin urges parents to talk to kids  
about pedestrian safety and more*

Kennewick, WA – Back to school is a busy time for children and families. Between school supplies, new clothes and sports tryouts, parents may not think about safety issues. During back to school time, Safe Kids Benton-wants to remind parents to talk to their children about how to stay safe.

To learn more [safety tips](#), visit the **Safe Kids website**.

Pedestrian safety is important this time of year as more than 19,200 children seek medical attention for injuries sustained while walking, and almost 500 children die every year in pedestrian accidents. According to a 2012 report by Safe Kids, pedestrian injuries among 16-19 year olds increased 25 percent over the previous five years. Teens now account for half of all pedestrian deaths among children 19 and under.

"Distraction is a big problem, both while driving and walking," said Kathleen Clary-Cooke, Safe Kids Benton-Franklin coordinator. "As kids head back to school, we're urging parents to talk to their kids to make sure they are paying full attention when crossing the street. And we adults need to follow our own advice. If we put our devices down, our kids are more likely to do the same."

Safe Kids Benton-Franklin recommends the following 6 tips for back to school.

1. **Talk to your kids about how to be safe while walking.** Teach kids at an early age to put down their devices and then look left, right and left again when crossing the street.
2. **Walk with your kids to the bus stop and wait with them until it arrives.** Tell kids to stand at least three giant steps back from the curb as the bus approaches and board the bus one at a time.

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3. **Make sure your carpool is safe.** Carpooling is a great way to save time for busy families. Make sure each child in the carpool has a car seat, booster seat or safety belt, based on individual age, weight and height. If there isn't, find an alternative way for your child to get to and from school.
4. **Receive a pre-participation physical exam.** Before playing organized sports, make sure your child receives a pre-participation physical exam, or PPE, by a doctor. This can help rule out any potential medical conditions that may place your young athlete at risk.
5. **Drink enough water.** Bring a water bottle to practice and games. Encourage children to stay well hydrated by drinking plenty of water before, during and after play. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends 5 oz. for an 88-pound child every 20 minutes or 9 oz. for a 132-pound adolescent every 20 minutes.
6. **Check playgrounds where your children play.** Look for age-appropriate equipment and hazards, such as rusted or broken equipment and dangerous surfaces. Report any hazards to the school or appropriate local office.

For more safety information, please visit [www.safekids.org](http://www.safekids.org).

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