

Policy Statement

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School Bus Safety

Revised June 2019, June 2013

Reaffirmed October 2006

Revised March 2000 with current title

Originally (April 1985) titled "School Buses"

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School Bus Safety

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The American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP) supports a comprehensive approach to school bus safety. Individuals involved in school bus safety, including government regulators, investigators, manufacturers, standards organizations, bus transportation leaders, school officials, public health officials, physicians, and parents, have an obligation to advance safety and advocate the protection of children using school bus transportation. In support of these principles, ACEP believes the following:

- School bus safety research should be supported as a priority at the national level and funded accordingly.
- New technologies and approaches should be considered and implemented when evidence-based methods and best practices show a reasonable benefit and cost-effectiveness.
- The protection of children is paramount and the cost-effectiveness of implementing safety programs should weigh in favor of child safety.
- School bus safety programs should incorporate the age-specific factors of school-aged children.
- The entire school bus system and environment of driving should be considered in all safety programs.

This can include passenger waiting and bus stop areas,

the immediately adjacent streets and sidewalks, loading and unloading, vehicle visibility, design- and crashworthiness, passenger restraint and crash mitigation systems, passenger ingress and egress, and other factors important for safety.

- School bus drivers should be selected, trained, and maintained with an emphasis on safe driving.
- The behavior of other drivers is a major factor in ensuring the safety of children using school buses. Efforts to improve school bus safety will necessarily need to consider other users of the road.
- States and municipalities should require mandatory school bus safety education programs and driver training for all vehicle licensees and enact enforcement laws that strongly discourage unsafe behaviors.
- States should collect and report school bus safety data by using standardized methods, and the federal government should analyze the data and provide an annual report to the public.

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