

TRAINER'S GUIDE

How to prevent Danger Zone accidents



You will need:

"Danger Zones" DVD which has 8 sections:

1. Introduction
2. Understanding Danger Zones
3. Why Children Enter Danger Zones
4. Instructions to the Students
5. Check the Danger Zones
6. Learning from Past Accidents
7. Recovering From Distractions
8. Final Exam

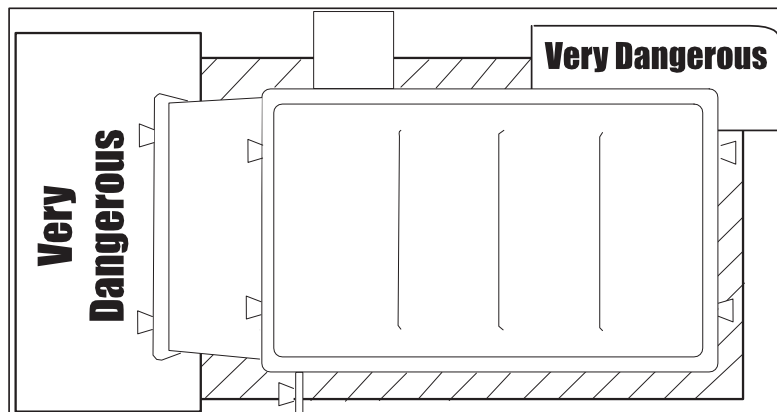
Before you start, give each driver a copy of the handout for drivers.

Items in bold are for you to read out loud to the group.

Before starting the DVD, say this to the group:

The children are most at risk before they board the bus and after they leave it, when they may be in the danger zones around the bus. In the USA, over the past 10 years an average of 11 children each year are killed by their own bus or by other vehicles passing the bus. This program is to help you make sure you keep your passengers safe before they board and after they leave the bus.

One of the most important steps you can take is to clearly tell the students about the danger zones at the start of the year and then reinforce these points throughout the year.



Start the “Danger Zones” DVD. Click on “INTRODUCTION.”

After this section has played, emphasize the point that younger children, below grade 3, are far more at risk. Three times as many younger children are killed in the danger zones than students in grade 3 and above.

These younger students are still care free and do not know the dangers with the big bus.

Click on the next section – “UNDERSTANDING DANGER ZONES”

After this section has played, explain that by far the greatest risk is to students who have to cross the street. If there is any way we can avoid crossovers, we should do so.

If not we need to pay extra diligence every time students have to cross the street.

Click on the next section – “WHY CHILDREN ENTER DANGER ZONES”

After this section has played, discuss past experiences you’ve had with children entering the danger zones.

Discuss the reasons with the group

- ▶ Having to cross the street
- ▶ Dropping something and trying to retrieve it
- ▶ Taking a shortcut close to the front of the bus
- ▶ Trying to cut between parked buses
- ▶ Running after the bus, hitting the side, (when late)
- ▶ Interacting with kids still on the bus
- ▶ Walking away from bus, then coming back (**very dangerous**)

Discuss some ways you could prevent children from entering danger zones.

Also, discuss with the group that many students have been killed from running after the bus and falling under the rear wheels or being hit by another vehicle. What can they do to prevent students running after the bus?

Click on the “INSTRUCTIONS TO STUDENTS”

When this section finishes, tell the drivers that at the start of each school year they should tell the students, in a serious manner that it is very dangerous around the bus and they must pay it the serious respect it deserves. The driver should then go over the eight safe practices as detailed on the next page.

1. **Instruct children who cross the street to walk ten steps ahead of the bus, before they turn to cross. They should then look to the driver for the “okay” signal when it is safe to cross (and enforce its use). Students should then walk to the end of the bumper of the bus and stop. They should then look left and right themselves and only continue to cross if safe to do so.**
2. **Say this to the students: “NEVER, repeat NEVER pick up anything you drop near the wheels, under the bus or in front of the bus. Tell me, your driver and I will instruct you what to do, or I will pick the object, paper or money up for you.” This is very important.**
3. **Say this to the students: “NEVER run after the bus, this is very dangerous. NEVER bang on the side of the bus. If you are late, go home. Do not run after the bus. If I, the driver see you running after the bus, I will stop, but you will NOT be allowed to board the bus -you will be sent home.”**

There have been many fatalities caused by students who run after the bus and fall under the wheels or get hit by a car as they run across the street. Make sure the children understand that there is no point because they will not be allowed to board anyway.

Caveat

Sometimes when we take action to prevent an unsafe act (running after the bus), we create new problems. If the student has no one at home or another reason we cannot refuse to transport them, the driver should allow them on the bus. However, everyone should recognize that running after a moving bus is an extremely unsafe act and appropriate action must be taken. Principals and parents should be informed and the student must be made aware that they are NEVER to do this again. It is too late to take action after a student is killed.

4. **Tell the students that there should be NO horseplay, pushing, shoving or running when the bus is arriving, waiting or leaving.**
5. **Tell the students to look for and remove strings hanging off of jackets and backpacks. Ask parents to remove them.**
6. **Instruct children to walk ten feet straight away from the bus when they exit, then they can turn in the direction they wish to go.**
7. **Make sure students understand that when they wait for the bus, they should stay at least 10 feet away from where they board the bus.**
8. **The students are never to go behind the bus or cross between buses.**

All these points are detailed in the driver's handout, so drivers can use it for reference.

Before you go back to the DVD, ask this question to the group:

You also just heard a list of ways to limit the possibility of children accidentally entering Danger Zones. What were some of those ways? Can you think of any others?

1. Teach the children how to safely cross the street
2. Begin the school year with candid discussion about Danger Zones
3. Have them walk 10 big steps ahead of the bus before crossing
4. Give O.K. signal when it is safe to cross (enforce this)
5. Never tolerate horseplay in or around the stairwell
6. Never allow students to run after the bus
7. Watch for strings hanging off of clothing and book bags
8. Tell kids to walk 10 feet away from the bus (straight out from the door)
9. Watch the direction the children go when leaving the bus
10. Count the kids getting off, and count again when they are away
11. Have kids wait away from the curb until the bus stops and door opens
12. Tell kids to walk, not run, to the bus when boarding
13. No pushing or shoving
14. Instruct children to be seated. Do not move the bus until they are and they should remain seated
15. Park bumper to bumper in school yard to leave no room for students to enter Danger Zones, or the street

Click on the "CHECK THE DANGER ZONES"

When it finishes, go over the points made

1. Become familiar with where each student boards and leaves the bus. Also, remember who has to cross the street so you can watch out for them
2. Be more careful if you see any horse play
3. Double check vehicles are stopping before you open the door
4. Make sure the students are very clear about the signal to stop and the signal to cross
5. Count the kids away
6. Check your mirrors
7. Do not rush away
8. If there are too many kids to count away, double check the mirrors, toot the horn and do not rush away
9. Never back the bus anywhere near students

Discuss how many kids you can count away and how many is too many.

Discuss what to do when more than seven kids get off and all go in different directions.

Click on **"LEARNING FROM PAST ACCIDENTS"**

After this section has played, go over the data again.

In the past 10 years, a total of 111 children have been killed in the danger zones of school buses.

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|---|----|
| 1. Killed by a passing vehicle | 50 |
| 2. Killed by front of their own bus | 28 |
| 3. Killed as running after the bus | 12 |
| 4. Killed as staying close to side of the bus | 12 |
| 5. Killed after being dragged by draw cords | 2 |
| 6. Other causes, i.e. car mounting sidewalk | 7 |

Total = 111

Discuss why these causes require us to pay the most attention to students crossing the street.

Remind the drivers that children 7 and younger have had three times the rate of fatalities as the older students.

This data tells us to:

1. Pay closer attention to younger students
2. If possible, avoid crossovers
3. Enforce safe crossing procedures
4. Keep kids away from the front of the bus
5. Never allow kids to run after the bus

Click on "RECOVERING FROM DISTRACTIONS"

After this section has played, discuss what can cause distractions

Horseplay

Child who is sick or has a problem

A passing car

Parent with a question

Construction

Nearby accident

Click on "REVIEW AND FINAL QUIZ"

Discuss again the actions to prevent danger zone accidents

1. Explain the safe practices to the students at the start of the year.
2. Make sure the students clearly understand the signals for stay and cross and they know and follow the safe crossing procedures.
3. Learn which students get on and off at each stop and who has to cross
4. Count the kids away
5. Never allow students to run after the bus
6. Make sure the students know what to do if they drop anything under or near the bus

Before you leave, remind the group of the following points:

1. **It's important to check your Danger Zones, not just at bus stops; but anytime you're stopped around pedestrians, children or adults..**
2. **Remind the children of the safe steps to use when they get on and off the bus. Don't tolerate horseplay on the bus or at the stop.**
3. **Know where all the students are before you move the bus -count each child and know their location.**
4. **Tell the students to be at the stop 5 minutes before the bus is supposed to come. If they are late, tell them they are NEVER to run after the bus, they should return home. They are NEVER to bang on the side of the bus, EVER.**
5. **If a child drops anything, they are to alert the driver for help or advice on how and when to retrieve the item.**
6. **Finally, crossing the street is the most dangerous practice. Clearly explain and follow the safe practices and make sure the students follow them.**

These are the five steps to save lives

- 1. Clear instructions at the start of year and throughout**
- 2. Follow and enforce safe crossing procedures**
- 3. Count each child**
- 4. Know where they are**
- 5. Clear you're mirrors before you move**