



# Walking to school

If your child walks to school, take a few moments to think about how you will prepare your child to stay safe along the way.



## Plan a safe route

Choose a route that has footpaths (if you can) and crosses very few, if any, busy streets.

## Walk the route with your child

Before school starts, walk the route together and talk about the things your child needs to remember along the way – staying on the footpath or if there isn't a footpath, walking along the edge of the road as far away from traffic as possible, and facing oncoming traffic.

## Teach your child the basic rules about being a pedestrian while you're walking with them

You can practise the rules about the road and traffic with your child during your walks. Make it fun by playing 'I Spy' with the road signs or street names. Praise your child when they get it right. In this way, by the time your child is old enough to walk to school without your help, none of the pedestrian road rules should come as a surprise to them.

## Always stop, look, listen and think before stepping onto the road

Each time you cross the road make sure your child stops back from the kerb. Train your child to use their eyes and their hearing together when checking for traffic. Tell your child to look in all directions and listen for traffic they cannot see. Be sure to tell your child not to rely only on their hearing as some newer vehicles can be extremely quiet.

## Ask your child questions about what they'd do in certain situations when you're walking

When you come to a crossing, ask your child what they should do. You should expect your child to answer something like: 'I stop, look in all ways to check the cars are actually stopping before I cross and only when I am sure they've stopped can I go across'.

## Find the safety houses along the way

Point out the homes that have 'safety house' plaques on their letter boxes or homes of family or friends where your child might stop for help in case of trouble.