

Bus safety rolls into public, private Walled Lake schools

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April Morrison-Harke likes to tell the story of a little girl named Suzy who dropped one of her school papers on the ground while getting on the school bus one morning.

Not thinking it was a hazard, Suzy retrieved the paper from the curb area, but the bus driver didn't know she was there because she had just settled an argument between two kids at the back of the bus.

Little Suzy was in the "danger zone" and could have been killed,

said Morrison-Harke, regional community safety coordinator for AAA Michigan.

She's been telling that story to elementary school students in the Walled Lake area through a bus safety program that will continue into May at public and private schools in the area.

"It's a good story because it stresses the importance of being quiet on the bus and describes the danger zones around the bus," she said. "Suzy should have taken 10 giant steps away from the bus so the driver could see her."

Morrison-Harke's presenta-

■ 'It's a good story because it stresses the importance of being quiet on the bus and describes the danger zones around the bus. Suzy should have taken 10 giant steps away from the bus so the driver could see her.'

April Morrison-Harke
—AAA Michigan safety coordinator

tions are helping the Walled Lake schools transportation department start its own school bus safety program, said Marilyn Nieman, supervisor of transportation for the district.

Nieman said the district's pro-

gram will be presented annually, starting in October.

The AAA Michigan presentation involves school bus etiquette for kids, danger zone identification, evacuation procedures and street-smart safety measures.

Nieman said it's important that all students see the program, even those who don't ride the bus every day. All students, at some point, will ride buses for field trips and such, she noted.

Students in kindergarten through second grade are most likely to be hit by a school bus while loading and unloading, said Morrison-Harke, and older students are more likely to get hit by passing vehicles.

In 1998, there were 162 school bus accidents in Oakland County, injuring 53 people and killing one person, according to statistics from the Michigan State

Police Office of Highway Safety Planning. Of those 162 reported accidents, 132 occurred on local streets and five on interstate highways.

School bus safety is a community-wide responsibility, noted Morrison-Harke. She commended the Walled Lake school district for starting its own safety program.

"It's nice that everybody is out there achieving safety," she said. "We're glad to help them out and get them on the right track. It's so important to educate everybody, because it takes teamwork."

AAA Michigan offers drivers and kids plenty of tips for the road

DRIVE SAFELY
AAA Michigan offers these tips for drivers:

- Get in the habit of recognizing school zones on your route
- Look for bicycles, children

playing and school safety patrol, which indicate children are nearby.

- Scan between parked vehicles and other danger zones for children
- Drive with headlights on at all times so children and other

drivers can see you

- Watch your speed and be prepared to take quick action
- Avoid using cell phones while driving, especially during school start and end times when children are likely to be crossing streets

SAFETY TIPS FOR KIDS

- Look both ways and over your shoulder before crossing the street
- Cross only at crosswalks
- Obey the adult school crossing guards and the AAA school safety patrol

- Walk, never run, when crossing the street
- Wait for the school bus at assigned bus stop and stay away from the road
- Arrive on time to the bus stop

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Census 2000 workers will canvass neighborhoods for follow-up

Black-and-white canvas bags and white identification badges with red-and-blue lettering are the official designations of a Census 2000 Enumerator.

Census workers will be canvassing neighborhoods, gathering the missing pieces of the pop-

ulation puzzle that the Census Bureau is putting together. Those households that did not mail back their census forms will get a visit from an enumerator.

The operation is called Non-Response Follow-Up and is the most labor intensive part of the

nation's largest peace time mobilization. Hundreds of thousands of workers will visit households all over the country. Census workers will generally be in the neighborhoods between the hours of 9 a.m. and 9 p.m. Most census enumerators will work during the evenings and weekends when residents are home.

They are trained to complete the census interview from porches and doorsteps and generally do not go inside homes. Enumerators will explain their visit and its importance. If the resident speaks a language the enumerator doesn't understand, an effort

will be made to get another sworn census enumerator fluent in that language to the household to facilitate the interview.

This phase of Census 2000 is one of the most public parts of the operation. It will require a great deal of cooperation from individuals and families. What has not changed are the measures the Census Bureau has taken to maintain everyone's privacy. Every enumerator has been through an FBI background check and has taken a solemn, legal oath to keep all census information confidential.

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DISTINGUISHING ARTHRITIS FROM IT STRAIN

Physicians have a problem when treating you for a long term arthritis such as rheumatoid or osteoarthritis. Medicines abound. If one doesn't work, another becomes.

In rheumatoid arthritis, the physician's incentive for change is great as the medical literature supports bringing on medicines to therapies not presently working. It is appropriate to add Extra!, Tylenol, or roxycodone to a maximum dose of Motrin as if that drug alone does not suffice to control joint pain and swelling.

However, choosing a new medicine and adding more medicines brings you both expense and risk. Before your physician decides the present regimen is not enough, he must be sure that your present pain and disability comes from uncontrolled inflammation. He must ascertain that what you experience is your hands, knees or shoulders is not the result of past arthritis.

It is as if your car engine is not performing properly. If the cause is bad gas, then you should bear the expense and upgrade your fuel. If the cause is worn out spark plugs, then the money put into higher-octane gas is wasted.

Your physician makes his determination by asking when the joint pain is worse, what brings on the pain, and by examining the joints for the presence of fluid or reversible deformities.

Doctors realize that you come to the appointment with the expectation that other medicines you have heard about will now come to your aid. Often the most difficult decision he makes is how to break the news to you that these drugs will not help you.

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