



**For Immediate Release:**  
Tuesday, August 02, 2016

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## **DRIVING SAFETY FOR BACK TO SCHOOL**

**ATLANTA** –Students heading back to school means more traffic, increased congestion and the need for extra safety precautions. From school buses loading and unloading, to kids walking and biking, to parents dropping off and picking up - dangers abound.

As back-to-school gets into full swing, Georgia DOT urges drivers to put safety first – especially in and around school zones, buses and children.

- **Pay attention to school zone flashing beacons and obey school zone speed limits.**
- **Obey school bus laws.**
  - **Stop behind/do not pass a school bus that is stopped to load or unload children.**
  - **If the lights are flashing and the stop arm is extended, opposing traffic must stop unless it is on a divided highway with a grass or concrete median.**
- **Watch for students gathering near bus stops, and for kids arriving late, who may dart into the street. Children often are unpredictable, and they tend to ignore hazards and take risks.**

According to the National Safety Council, most children who lose their lives in school bus-related incidents are four to seven years old, walking and they are hit by the bus, or by a motorist illegally passing a stopped bus.

“It's never more important for drivers to slow down and pay attention than when kids are present – especially in the peak traffic hours before and after school,” said Patrick Allen, Assistant Metro District Engineer. “If you are driving behind a school bus, increase your following distance to allow more time to stop once the lights start to flash. The area 10 feet around a school bus is the most dangerous for children; stop far enough back to give them space to safely enter and exit the bus.”

Whenever you drive – be alert and expect the unexpected. By exercising a little extra care and caution, drivers and pedestrians can co-exist safely in and around school zones. Let us make this new school year safer for our children.

**DriveAlert ArriveAlive** calls attention to an alarming increase in roadway fatalities across Georgia, many resulting from preventable crashes and distracted driving. **DriveAlert ArriveAlive** implores motorists to buckle up; stay off the phone and no texting; and drive alert. Visit [www.dot.ga.gov/DS/SafetyOperation/DAAA](http://www.dot.ga.gov/DS/SafetyOperation/DAAA). #ArriveAliveGA For more information about Georgia DOT, visit [www.dot.ga.gov](http://www.dot.ga.gov). You may follow us on Facebook ([www.facebook.com/GeorgiaDOT](http://www.facebook.com/GeorgiaDOT)) and Twitter (<http://twitter.com/gadepoftrans>).