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Contact Information:

Anna E. Silva
757-393-8689, extension 203
757-438-8340
silvaa@portsmouthva.gov

Back-to-School Safety

- From your Department of Portsmouth Fire, Rescue and Emergency Services and the National Fire Protection Association -

Say goodbye to summer and hello to fall. It's school time again! Just like teachers, books, and homework go hand in hand with the school year, so should safety.

Parents and guardians, after conducting your monthly smoke detector and battery check, please take a moment and share these back to school safety tips with your children.

While waiting for the bus, take five giant steps back from the curb until the bus has stopped completely.

Safety on the Bus

- Inside the bus, stay seated at all times.
- Keep head, arms and hands inside the bus. Never throw anything out of the bus window.
- Always hold on to the bus handrails when you are getting on or off the bus so you don't fall.
- Be careful that clothing, book bags, and key rings don't get caught in the handrails or doors
- When getting off the bus, go to the closest sidewalk or side of the road and take five giant steps away from the bus.
- If you drop something near the bus, tell the bus driver. Never bend over to pick it up; the bus driver may not be able to see you.

Department of Fire, Rescue and Emergency Services
Fire Administration

309 County Street, Suite 100*Portsmouth, VA 23704-3701 * (757) 393-8765*Fax (757) 393-5161

Street Crossing Safety

- Children under age 10 should never cross a street without a grown-up.
- Choose a safe route to school. Look for the most direct route with the fewest street crossings.
- When crossing the street, stop at the curb or edge of the road.
- Look left, then right, then left again for moving cars before crossing.
- Keep looking left and right until you are safely across the street – and remember to walk, not run.
- Follow all traffic signals and markings.
- Don't enter the street from between parked cars or from behind bushes or shrubs. Drivers might not be able to see you.

Bike Safety

- If you are old enough to ride a bike alone, plan a safe route to school and have a grown-up ride with you the first few times.
- Children under 10 shouldn't ride on the road without a grown-up.
- Be sure that your helmet fits. It should sit evenly on top of your head –not rocking in any direction–and always fasten the safety strap.
- Learn the proper hand signals and use them when you turn or stop.
- Walk, do not ride your bike across the street.
- Come to a complete stop before entering driveways, paths or sidewalks, then look left, right and left again for bikes, cars or pedestrians heading your way.
- Do not ride at night.

Lastly, if you are riding in a car to school the safest place to be if you are 12 years old or younger is the back seat buckled up safely. Remember, you should be in a booster seat until you are eight years old.

Parents/Guardians feel free to stop by any of our Customer Service Sites (Fire Stations) for assistance with installation of a child restraint seat or call our Support Services Division at 393-8689.

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