



## **Pedestrian Safety & Distracted Walking**

Every year, nearly 20,000 pedestrian injuries occur in the United States. Unfortunately, about 500 of those pedestrians are children who die from their injuries.

“Studies show that children younger than 10 are not cognitively developed enough to gauge how fast cars are going,” says Deb Carpenter, childhood injury prevention coordinator at Bronson Methodist Hospital. “Poor judgment calls are one of the many ways children get injured. It’s vital that people of all ages take precautions to remain extra careful and alert while crossing the road or turning street corners.”

Help equip your kids to be safe pedestrians by having them follow these simple tips:

### **Walking Safely**

- When crossing the road, remind your kids to look left, right then left once more.
- Teach your kids to make eye-contact with drivers before crossing in front of any vehicle, even if it looks like a car is slowing down for them to cross.
- Stress the importance of using a sidewalk whenever possible.
- When walking outside in the dark, ensure that your kids wear proper attire. Wearing light or reflective clothing helps make them more visible to other drivers.

### **Get Rid of Distractions**

- Teach your kids to press pause on their devices and remove their headphones before crossing the street. Texting and talking on their phones while walking can be especially dangerous.
- If your kids need to use their phone, remind them to talk or text in a safe area where they’re not walking while distracted.

### **For Parents**

- Set a good example of undistracted and safe walking— your actions influence your children’s behavior.
- Always supervise and walk with children under the age of 10.
- Don’t text or answer phone calls while driving. Children are very likely to follow suit of their parent’s driving habits.
- Be extra cautious and slow when driving through school zones and neighborhoods.
- Always give pedestrians, walkers, runners and bikers the right of way.

Sources: [safekids.org](http://safekids.org)

*This article is brought to you by Bronson Children’s Hospital, southwest Michigan’s only children’s hospital. For more information about children’s health, visit [bronsonhealth.com/children](http://bronsonhealth.com/children)*