



NATIONAL PEDESTRIAN SAFETY MONTH 2021

RESOURCE GUIDE

OCTOBER 2021

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Introduction

A safe transportation system prioritizes people. It is designed to accommodate the mistakes people will make. Everyone - including those who plan, develop educational strategies, design, build, implement equitable enforcement policies, operate, and use our transportation system - shares the responsibility for road safety. We must all work together using all available tools to assist in achieving zero serious injuries and fatalities on our nation's roadways and creating a transportation system that allows all people to get to their destination safely and seamlessly.

During October's National Pedestrian Safety Month, we will highlight a different theme that States and other stakeholders can use to organize community-based projects, media events, and other activities to help create a transportation system for all people to easily and safely walk and roll.

These themes follow:

Week 1 - Everyone Is a Pedestrian

Week 2 - Safe Speeds Save Lives

Week 3 - Safe Vehicles

Week 4 - Safe Roads

As part of Pedestrian Safety Month, NHTSA is also encouraging stakeholders to learn more about the “Safe System Approach,” which has five main components:

- **Safe People:** Encourage safe, responsible behavior by people who use our roads, and create conditions that prioritize their ability to reach their destination unharmed.
- **Safe Speeds:** Promote safer speeds in all roadway environments through a combination of thoughtful, targeted, context-appropriate outreach campaigns, as well as judicious enforcement.
- **Safe Roads:** To encourage safer behaviors, and to facilitate safe travel by the most vulnerable users, design roadway environments to accommodate human mistakes and injury tolerances.
- **Safe Vehicles:** Expand the availability of vehicle designs and features that help to prevent crashes and minimize the impact of crashes on both occupants and non-occupants.
- **Post-Crash Care:** Enhance the survivability of people in crashes through expedient access to emergency medical care. Create a safe working environment for vital first responders and prevent secondary crashes through robust traffic incident management practices.

As we kick off Pedestrian Safety month please consider using the hashtag **#PedestrianSafety**.

PEDESTRIAN SAFETY FACTS

1. On average, a pedestrian was killed every 85 minutes in a traffic crash in 2019. (NHTSA, 2021)
2. Pedestrian deaths accounted for 17 percent of all traffic fatalities in 2019. Between 2015 and 2019, the overall pedestrian fatality rate increased by 27 percent. However, the pedestrian fatality rate increased by 42 percent among Black or African American people between 2014 and 2018. (Source: FARS 2014 and 2018 Final File; Population – Census Bureau)
3. A study assessing pedestrian death risk among wheelchair users found that the risk of pedestrian crash death is significantly higher for pedestrians using wheelchairs than those who do not. The pedestrian mortality rate was 36% higher than the overall population pedestrian mortality rate. (Kramer & Benton, 2015)
4. Older adults, African Americans, Indigenous people, and people walking in low-income communities continue to be disproportionately represented in fatal crashes involving people walking. People of color, especially Black or African American, and American Indian or Alaska Native people, continue to die while walking at higher rates compared to White, Non-Hispanic, Hispanic, Asian, and Pacific Islander people. (Smart Growth America, 2021)
5. In 2020, there were 1,099 pedestrian rail trespass fatalities and injuries. (FRA, 2021)
6. A population-based study that included motor vehicle crash-related deaths in 2,268 United States counties from January 1, 2013, through December 31, 2015, found longer emergency medical service response times were associated with higher rates of motor vehicle crash mortality. (Mann, Dai, Mason, et al., 2019)

7. Arterial roadways often provide both access for vehicles, as well as access to destinations. A recent study found that of the top 30 pedestrian crash hot-spot locations in the United States, the majority have multiple lanes, high traffic volumes, speed limits above 30 mph, and 97 percent have adjacent commercial land uses. Seventy-five percent are also bordered by low-income communities. Making arterial roadways safe for all travelers necessary to address pedestrian safety.

BENEFITS OF WALKING

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) report that more than 145 million adults include walking as part of a physically active lifestyle. The CDC also states that physical activity such as walking can help improve overall health, and lower the risk of heart disease, stroke, Type 2 diabetes, depression, and some cancers. Additionally, more than 6 in 10 people walk for transportation purposes, exercise, relaxation, or for other activities.

The benefits of walking extend beyond personal and physical, to environmental benefits that can lead to healthier, quieter, cleaner, and safer streets. Walking can also improve local economies and enhance social and community engagement, leading to more vibrant, resilient, and livable spaces.

For more information on the benefits of walking, see this compilation of resources from [America Walks](#).

PEDESTRIAN SAFETY MONTH SOCIAL MEDIA MESSAGES

- October is Pedestrian Safety Month
- Always look out for people crossing the street while you're driving.
- It's Pedestrian Safety Month and we're urging ALL drivers to put the phone down and watch out for pedestrians.
- Fewer modes of transportation are more relaxing than walking around. Why do you like to walk?
- Take a moment to RETHINK your driving. Are you alert and focused?
- Take a moment to RETHINK your driving. are you looking out for people walking?
- Take a moment to RETHINK your driving. Are you obeying all posted signs and speed limits?

Consider using **#PedestrianSafety** on your social media channels.

PEDESTRIAN SAFETY VIDEOS FOR SOCIAL MEDIA

- [Walking Safely Motion Graphics](#)
- [Driving Safely Around Pedestrians](#)

Everyone Is a Pedestrian

Use Week 1 to celebrate walking for all, focusing on being a safe driver at all times - especially when driving in and around areas with younger pedestrians and others who walk or roll.

On October 6, 2021, individuals across the nation will support National Walk to School Day. We encourage all stakeholders and elected officials to focus on the benefits of walking - not just on October 6th, but all year long. Walking provides many health and environmental benefits and promotes a better quality of life for our youth and everyone else who uses and relies on our roadways to travel to and from school and extracurricular activities on a frequent basis. Find more resources here: [Walk & Bike to School](#)

Focused messaging near where children live, play, and attend school can bring additional attention to the importance of enhanced awareness of road users' surroundings. Unfortunately, injuries and fatalities among school-age children occur more often on the way to and from the bus stop, or outside the school bus. Missing crosswalks and sidewalks, and speeding motorists who fail to heed the stop-arm laws also put children at risk. From 2010 to 2019, 23 percent of all pedestrians killed in school-transportation-related crashes were children 5 to 10 years old.

Your community may want to consider the implementation of a [Safe Routes to School \(SRTS\)](#) Program if you don't currently have one. The SRTS Program encourages increased physical activity through safe and active transport to and from school and promotes walking, biking, or other forms of transportation as healthy alternatives.

SRTS programs can be implemented by a department of transportation, metropolitan planning organization, local government, school district, or even a school.

KEY MESSAGES:

- Celebrate walking as a healthy form of transportation - get up, get out, and get moving!
- All pedestrians have the right to arrive at their destinations safely.
- Lookout for pedestrians, especially in areas where you know they may be present, such as near schools, parks, shopping areas, and transit stops.
- Because kids and teens are less predictable, and younger children move more slowly, they need more time to cross the street. Be especially cautious and alert for children on residential streets, near parks and playgrounds, and in school zones.
- Elderly pedestrians, persons with disabilities, and wheelchair users may need more time to cross streets.

SAMPLE SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS/MESSAGES:

- Happy National Walk to School Day—we're working with kids, parents, and teachers to build safer, healthier communities one step at a time!
- School is in session, and that means increased foot traffic around schools. Keep kids safe – don't speed, and always watch out for pedestrians.
- If you're driving around neighborhoods, schools, and parks, always drive with extra caution.
- It takes motorists time to adjust their vision to the early darkness associated with the end of Daylight Saving Time. Drive extra cautiously and be alert.

Consider using **#PedestrianSafety** on your social media channels.

INFOGRAPHICS



[Ped Motion Graphics - Driving Safely - YouTube](#)

BACKGROUND FOR STAKEHOLDERS:

During Pedestrian Safety Month, we will prioritize messaging about how safe driving behaviors keep pedestrians safe. Safe behaviors by all road users is a key element of the Safe System Approach. How people generally use the roads is essential in determining the safety outcome - lapses in judgement or risky behaviors such as impairment from alcohol or other illegal substances, distraction, fatigue, or lack of seat belt use contribute to thousands of fatal crashes per year.

Focused messaging near where children live, play, and attend school can bring additional attention to the importance of enhanced awareness of your surroundings and focusing on the driving task.

SAFE SPEEDS

This week's theme recognizes the importance of how motorists reducing their speeds can save lives and prevent serious injuries in three ways: reducing impact forces, providing additional stopping time and distance, and improving visibility. Pedestrians are unlikely to survive high-speed crashes. (FHWA, 2020).

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:

1. Conduct a community "speed study" on a street where speed has been identified as a safety issue in your community. Invite local stakeholders and transportation officials to use a speed gun or smart phone app to measure vehicle speeds, note results, and discuss solutions afterwards.
2. Hold a virtual forum to discuss solutions to speed problems in your community.
 - ▶ Example: <https://live.worldbank.org/streets-life-saving-lives-road-through-safe-speeds>

KEY MESSAGES:

- Slower speeds save lives.
- Speeding endangers everyone on the road but puts pedestrians at the greatest risk for death or injury.
- Speed limits aren't suggestions. They are road- and situation-specific to save lives and benefit all road users' safety.
- Addressing speed is fundamental to the Safe System Approach to making streets safer. A growing body of research shows that speed limit changes alone can lead to measurable declines in speeds and crashes.

SAMPLE SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS/MESSAGES:

- Slow Down! Speeding kills.
- Driving a few miles over the speed limit might not feel like a big deal, but if you collide with a pedestrian, it can be difference between life and death.
- Following the speed limit gives you enough time and distance to STOP.
- Following the speed limit makes you more aware of your surroundings.
- The chances of a pedestrian surviving a crash rapidly decrease when the vehicle speed is above 30 mph. Slower speeds save lives.
- Keep your community and neighbors safe! When driving, always obey speed limits and look out for pedestrians!

Consider using **#PedestrianSafety** on your social media channels.

INFOGRAPHICS:



STEP SPEED VIDEO:

What's Speed Got to Do with It? Learn about countermeasures to improve pedestrian crossing safety.
<https://youtu.be/Ws8wOmq4uaE>

Bystander first aid is likely to increase survival rates in instances of trauma injuries for crashes involving pedestrians. (Tannvik, et al. 2012 & Ashour et al. 2007)

Learn more about Bystander Care: [Pedestrian Bystander Care](#)

BACKGROUND FOR STAKEHOLDERS:

The Safe System Approach anticipates human mistakes by designing roads to encourage safe speeds, and to protect travelers both inside and outside of vehicles. By designing and operating roads that accommodate human mistakes, we can reduce the potential for crashes and reduce the severity of the crashes that do occur. We know that pedestrians are unlikely to survive high-speed crashes (Leaf, 1999), and reducing speeds can save lives and prevent serious injuries in three ways: reducing impact forces, providing additional time for drivers to stop, and improving visibility (FHWA, 2020).

SAFE VEHICLES

This week's theme focuses on Safe Vehicles. Vehicles provide crash protection to their occupants through well-designed vehicle structures and lifesaving technologies, such as seat belts and air bags. They can also help prevent crashes from occurring in the first place through the use of Advanced Driver Assistance Systems (ADAS), such as automatic emergency braking, forward collision warning, and lane departure warning. Vehicles can also help provide protection to pedestrians and other vulnerable road users outside of the vehicle through pedestrian automatic braking, rear backup cameras, pedestrian-friendly front structures, and better headlights for identifying pedestrians and other road users during inclement weather, low light conditions, or at night.

- Promotion (social media, web, and stakeholders) of NHTSA Jason Fenske vehicle technology videos www.nhtsa.gov/equipment/driver-assistance-technologies
- Identify and participate in traffic safety podcasts and other forums

KEY MESSAGES:

- Learn more about newer vehicles with lifesaving technologies that can help protect pedestrians.
- Technologies such as pedestrian automatic emergency braking, rear backup cameras, pedestrian-friendly front structures, and better headlights are all technologies that will help keep pedestrians and others safer.
- NHTSA's Five-Star Safety Ratings system provides information on vehicle safety and tested technologies that keep all road users safe.
- Safety features like blind spot and collision warnings are just some of the new car features that keep pedestrians safe. Learn more at www.nhtsa.gov/equipment/driver-assistance-technologies.
- School buses are designed differently than passenger vehicles and have features that make them safer than cars in crashes and preventing passenger injuries.
- School buses are one of the safest forms of transportation and the safest way for children to get to school.

SAMPLE SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS/MESSAGES:

- Drivers – focus when behind the wheel, and take extra care in neighborhoods, around schools, and anywhere pedestrians might be.
- When you're driving, stay focused. Put down your phone. Slow your speed. Yield to pedestrians.
- Be vigilant about using your headlights at night. About 75 percent of pedestrians killed in traffic crashes are killed when it's dark outside.
- Developments in vehicle safety have saved 27,621 lives over 50 years.
- New vehicle technologies like backup cameras, blind spot detection, forward collision warning, and automatic emergency braking systems continue to help save lives - including pedestrians.
- Newer vehicles mean enhanced safety technology, and that means more lives saved on America's roads, including pedestrians. Learn more at www.nhtsa.gov/equipment/driver-assistance-technologies.
- Safety features like pedestrian automatic emergency braking and rear automatic emergency braking help keep people outside of a car safe. Learn more at www.nhtsa.gov/equipment/driver-assistance-technologies.

Consider using **#PedestrianSafety** on your social media channels.

INFOGRAPHIC



BACKGROUND FOR STAKEHOLDERS:

The automotive industry's recent advances in technology provide a variety of tools to enhance roadway safety through the safe vehicles element of a safe system approach. Technology provides a key opportunity to address the fact that humans make mistakes. It better supports drivers where mistakes can be anticipated and mitigates some of the outcomes that could result from unsafe behaviors. Rapidly evolving technology has added a new component to the vehicle safety space and will improve the next generation of motor vehicles by mitigating harm to those outside of the vehicle when a crash occurs.

Active safety systems, which are types of ADAS, proactively anticipate and assist drivers who may not respond immediately to surrounding dangers. Currently, NHTSA recommends several ADAS technologies that can help prevent or mitigate the impact of a crash. Examples of these technologies include AEB system technologies and electronic stability control, both referred to as active safety systems, providing momentary intervention during potentially hazardous situations.

Passive ADAS technologies alert drivers of potential risk situations to give drivers time to respond. Some examples of these systems include forward collision warning, which detects a potential collision with an object ahead and alerts the driver (some systems also provide alerts for pedestrians or other objects); lane departure warning, which monitors a vehicle's position within the driving lane and alerts the driver as the vehicle approaches or crosses lane markers; and blind spot warning, which detects vehicles in the blind spot while driving and notifies the driver of their presence (some systems provide an additional warning if the driver activates the turn signal). Note that these systems only provide a warning to the driver and do not take action to avoid a crash. The benefits of these various active and passive safety systems available now are well documented in helping drivers avoid or mitigate crashes when properly used, but they can only address a portion of related crash circumstances.

Large truck and bus drivers have an added responsibility to advance the safety of pedestrians simply because of their vehicles' size. With very large blind spots, commercial vehicle operators should continually scan their mirrors every 8 to 10 seconds, and ideally, employ advance blind spot detection warning systems. Texting is among the worst driving distractions. The odds of being involved in a crash, near crash, or unintentional lane deviation are 23.2 times greater for truck and bus drivers who are texting while driving. It is illegal for a commercial driver to text while driving, and there are restrictions on using mobile phones (devices must be hands free and dialed using no more than one button).

SAFE ROADS

This week's theme highlights the vital role that safe roads play in reducing fatal crashes and injuries.

Creating a road system that is safe for people who walk includes: implementing innovative speed management approaches, designing for safe speeds, installing street lighting and other infrastructure enhancements that increase nighttime visibility for all road users, separating users in space (i.e., sidewalks, bicycle lanes, and pedestrian overpasses), and separating users in time (e.g., an intersection crossing phase where pedestrians have exclusive access to the intersection while all vehicles are stopped).

To decrease the likelihood of serious injury or death of pedestrians, it is critical to focus on incorporating roadway design elements that offer the largest safety benefit and provide multiple layers of protection to prevent crashes and mitigate harm if they do occur. Roadways that can safely accommodate all road users can provide a solid foundation for use of emerging vehicle technologies and can actively encourage safe behaviors among drivers and other road users.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:

- We encourage stakeholders to use the [Walkability Checklist](#) to identify how walkable streets are in their community. Invite community leaders and/or media along to learn more.
- Listen to *The Bus Stop* podcast with the National School Transportation Association (NSTA) to learn more about school bus safety. [NSTA Podcasts - The Bus Stop | NSTA \(yellowbuses.org\)](#)
- Schedule safety events and corresponding messages around the importance of safe road use when driving around pedestrians on October 31 (Halloween).

KEY MESSAGES:

- At its core, the Safe System Approach emphasizes reducing the risk of fatal and serious injuries to road users, regardless of how they choose to get around. By focusing on eliminating death and serious injuries, the Safe System Approach inherently places a priority on pedestrians who are at a higher risk of death and serious injury than a person driving or traveling in a motor vehicle.
- By focusing on all pedestrian crossing locations - urban and rural - and by taking a systemic approach, agencies can comprehensively address a significant national safety problem and improve quality of life for all pedestrians by implementing proven education, engineering, and enforcement-based safety countermeasures.

SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS:

- Don't get left in the dark! Did you know that enhancing road user visibility saves lives?
- Enter and exit driveways carefully so you don't spook pedestrians.
- What's the rush? Slow down when driving in residential areas.
- Look out for little ghouls and boys who may be trick-or-treating and magically appear from between parked cars.

Consider using **#PedestrianSafety** on your social media channels.

INFOGRAPHIC



BACKGROUND FOR STAKEHOLDERS:

Creating a road system that is safe for people who walk includes: educating pedestrians and other road users about how to increase their safety, implementing innovative speed management approaches, working with law enforcement to identify equitable policing practices that reduce pedestrian risk, installing street lighting and other enhancements that increase nighttime visibility for all road users, separating users in space (i.e., providing travelers with a dedicated part of the right-of-way like sidewalks, cycle tracks, pedestrian overpasses), and separating users in time (e.g., including a pedestrian scramble phase at an intersection whereby pedestrians have exclusive access to the intersection while all vehicle movements are stopped).

To decrease the likelihood of serious injury or death to pedestrians, it is critical to focus on incorporating a variety of strategies that offer the largest safety benefit and provide multiple layers of protection to prevent crashes and mitigate harm if they do occur. Roadways that are designed to safely accommodate all road users can provide a solid foundation for the use of emerging vehicle technology and can actively encourage safe behaviors among drivers and other road users.