

Newspaper Article 042314

Walking, walking, walking! Most all of us do it! Some of us do it with the aid of walkers or wheelchairs, but we are pretty much all pedestrians! Last week we refreshed our memories with some safety tips for pedestrians from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). So what is different when we are driving? Should we still practice pedestrian safety – you bet! It's up to us as drivers to help keep pedestrians alive and well.

Sometimes when we are driving, we are distracted thinking of so many other things we should be doing or somewhere else we want to be. Driving is a task that requires full concentration and should not be taken lightly. We should always look out for pedestrians everywhere, at all times. Safety is a shared responsibility.

Use extra caution when driving in hard-to-see conditions, such as at night or in bad weather or fog. Don't be afraid to slow down and be prepared to stop when turning or otherwise entering a crosswalk or intersection.

Yield to pedestrians in crosswalks and stop well back from the crosswalk to give other vehicles an opportunity to see the crossing pedestrians so they can stop, too, and never pass vehicles stopped at a crosswalk. There may be people crossing that you can't see. Use extra caution when backing up, as pedestrians can move into your path quickly.

Follow the speed limit, especially around people on the street. Follow slower speed limits in school zones and in neighborhoods where there might be children present. Use extra caution in other areas where children may be active, such as near parks or ball parks. Children may be unpredictable and may dart out into a street, or be hidden by a large object or vehicle, such as a bus.

Always be a positive role model for them! When they're in the vehicle with you, point out pedestrians who are using good safety procedures, such as looking LEFT-RIGHT-LEFT for traffic in all directions before and while crossing the street or a parking lot. You can also point out the adults holding a child's hand, leading them safely. Besides that warming your hearts, it might also help you Be Safe Out There!
