



NYAPT

NEW YORK ASSOCIATION FOR PUPIL TRANSPORTATION

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Our future is riding with us!

PRESS RELEASE

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SCHOOL'S OPEN—DRIVE CAREFULLY! *On these first days of the 2015-16 School Year, we applaud the Automobile Association of America in the 70th Anniversary of their SCHOOL'S OPEN-DRIVE CAREFULLY campaign! Since 1945, the AAA has urged motorists to be mindful of school buses and of the children who ride them, and board them. We thank the AAA for their support for school bus safety over all these years and recognize their continued partnership with the school transportation community all across America!*

MESSAGE: The New York Association for Pupil Transportation wants every parent to know that our members are doing everything in their power to ensure that every child is safe on their yellow school bus in the coming school year. School Bus Safety is no accident; it takes a lot of work by a lot of dedicated women and men!

MESSAGE: The New York Association for Pupil Transportation urges all motorists to STOP for school buses that are stopped with their red lights flashing, indicating that children are getting onto or off from a school bus. It's the LAW and it protects our children!

As the new school year starts, some 2.3 million school children will board a yellow school bus for their first ride of the year to their local schools!

This is an exciting time of year for the children but also for the Moms and Dads and caregivers who watch their children step onto our yellow school buses for the very first time and then wait expectantly each day for them to arrive home safely.

The New York Association for Pupil Transportation wants to remind families and parents about how important it is and how safe it is for our children to be able to ride the yellow school bus. As the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) stated in April 2002: ***"American students are nearly eight times safer riding in a school bus than with their own parents and guardians in cars."***

NYAPT wants to call to the public's attention to some of the reasons why the school bus is so safe and we want to underscore how hard we work to ensure that safe ride to and from your local school.

School buses are far and away the safest way for our children to get to school and back home each day. The 50,000 school buses in New York are built to exacting federal and state standards. They are maintained and inspected on a rigorous schedule by the state and each day by local drivers and mechanics to ensure they are worthy of carrying our children.

Moreover, the 50,000 school bus drivers in New York are prepared with a variety of state-sanctioned licensing procedures, medical screening, state-sanctioned training and regular testing of their abilities and their integrity as professional drivers. Their performance is monitored regularly to ensure they conduct their routes and transport our children safely and efficiently.

In addition, school bus operators, including school districts and school bus contractors, spend hours engaged in routing and scheduling to ensure the safety and the efficiency of their daily bus routes to and from school. Many have incorporated the newest technologies to monitor the progress and location of each school bus for security and efficiency purposes. All in the interest of safety and efficiency in transporting our children!

Local school boards and the school transportation community have done all we can to ensure that those 2.3 million children get to their classroom safe, on time and Ready to Learn! And, **most importantly**, we had another safe year in 2014-2015 where no children were killed as a result of a school bus accident.

NYAPT President David Adam (Marcus Whitman CSD) noted: "There is one thing that we ask the public and motorists in every community to do for our children: STOP when you see a school bus stopped to pick up or discharge students. Our buses have RED lights flashing and STOP arms extended from their sides! Illegally passing a stopped school bus is ***against the Law.***"

Getting convicted of illegally passing a stopped school bus carries stiff financial penalties and 5 points on a driver's license. However, no penalty is worse than the knowledge that you injured or killed a child while you were passing their school bus. So please STOP for our children! They are counting on you!

Let's have a great opening of school and a great school year ahead with every child in New York State getting on and off their yellow school bus safely every day!