



# Institute of Advanced Motorists

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## Fact Sheet 13/001

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### THE SCHOOL RUN

Many children are injured close to their home on residential roads. Over 70 per cent of drivers break the speed limit on these roads - and many of those drivers are parents. The "school run" brings with it a 20 per cent growth in rush hour traffic and as a result, a greater risk to pedestrians. But the IAM and other experts such as the AA say that realistically the school run is here to stay until cultural attitudes change and key barriers are removed. This advice has been prepared by the IAM to make the "school run" safer.

- Avoid taking the car if you can. Walking, cycling and public transport are all better options, not only for children, but also the environment. Children cycling to school should be proficient and wear a helmet, with bright, all-weather clothing.
- If you have to drive, offer to car share with other parents and take it in turns rather than add to congestion around schools. When you have an informal arrangement, set an example by attending a defensive driving course such as that offered by the IAM.
- Allow plenty of time for the journey. Crashes cause delay and are normally caused by drivers going too fast and driving too close to the car in front. Leave five minutes earlier to reduce stress.
- Drive well within the speed limit. Maintain a sensible safety gap - remember the "two second rule". At 35mph you are twice as likely to kill someone as you are at 30mph. Yet within the car, this feels hardly any different. The school approach presents many hazards - including children not concentrating fully as they cross the road.
- Park considerately and safely. Never double park, block driveways or simply rely on the footbrake to keep the vehicle still as children climb out of the car. Consider parking 100 yards or so away from the school gate and completing your journey on foot. This gives you an opportunity to teach children about using the road and reduces congestion at the school gate itself.
- Never stop on the yellow "zig zags" by the school gate, even briefly. Always ensure you let the children out on the pavement side (or if there is no pavement, the side away from the traffic).
- Do not drive on the pavement in an attempt to allow oncoming vehicles to pass. Wait until the way ahead is clear rather than risk injuring a pedestrian.