

# **Back To School Safety - Be Prepared**

On Monday, August 18th, close to 80,000 students and 5,000 teachers with the Lee County School District will begin the 2008/09 school year. As a result there will be nearly 700 school buses on the road, along with the many parents who choose to drive their children to school. The Lee County Sheriff's Office would like to remind citizens of a few back to school safety tips.

## **Bus Riders:**

- Have a safe place to wait for your bus, away from traffic and off the street.
- Never sit on the roadway while waiting for your bus.
- Stay away from the bus until the driver gives his/her signal that it's okay to approach.
- Be aware of the street traffic around you. Protect yourself and watch out!
- While riding the bus, remain seated and conduct yourself in an orderly fashion.  
Aisles in the bus should remain clear.
- Don't stick anything out side the bus windows

## **Walkers and Bike Riders:**

- Parents should take the time to carefully review their children's route to school before the first day and stress the importance of not wandering off.
- Mind all traffic signals and/or the crossing guard -- never cross the street against a light, even if you don't see any traffic coming. Learn what traffic signals and signs mean.
- Walk your bike through intersections.
- Walk with a buddy.
- Wear reflective material...it makes you more visible to street traffic.
- Stay off the road.
- Never walk between parked cars.

## **Riding in a Car:**

- You might have heard before that most traffic crashes occur close to home ... they do.
- Safety belts are the best form of protection occupants have in the event of a crash. They can lower your risk of injury by 45%.
- Without safety belts, you are four times more likely to be seriously injured or killed in vehicle in a crash.
- Everyone needs to be buckled up properly. That means older kids in seat belts, younger kids in booster seats and little kids in child safety seats.

## **Dealing with strangers:**

- Always tell your parents where you are going and when you will return.
- Always walk with a friend. Don't take shortcuts through woods or back streets.
- Never approach strange vehicles or people. Keep your distance and always give yourself room to run from strangers. Strangers should always ask directions from adults not children.
- Never go with a stranger to look for a missing pet or to play a game.
- If a stranger follows or grabs you, yell loud and run away. If you need to, fight back and make as much noise as you can. Run to a safe place and call 9-1-1.

For more tips or information contact the Sheriff's Office Youth Services Division or Community Outreach section at 477-1000.

Media inquiries are directed to the Public Information Officer at (239) 477-1340.