

School Traffic Safety in the City of Toronto



What makes a safe pedestrian environment in the City of Toronto for children?

- » Built environment
- » Speed humps
- » Changes to the built environment
- » Fewer road crossings
- » Drivers following the rules of the road
- » Designated car drop-off areas

Our studies have found:

- » Presence of school crossing guards was related to 14% more walking to school.
- » Collision rates within elementary school attendance boundaries varied greatly.
- » Most child pedestrian collisions occurred outside of school travel times (62%). Most collisions that occurred during school travel times occurred in locations without crossing guards (86%).
- » The installation of speed humps was associated with a 45% decrease in collision rates in children.
- » Each dangerous driving behaviour during school drop-off period were associated with 45% times greater risk of collisions.
- » Poor driving behaviours are observed less at:
 - » downtown schools compared to inner urban schools;
 - » schools with designated car drop-off areas;
 - » schools with crossing guards.
- » Schools with greater social disadvantage had higher collision rates.
- » 67% of children were observed walking to school but this varied greatly between schools (28-98%).
- » Parents are concerned with traffic environment safety throughout the route to school and not just at the school site.

Implications:

- » Researchers, school boards and cities need to continue to work together to ensure a safe environment around schools and beyond so that children can walk safely to school.

Key messages:

Walking to school

is **not related** to child pedestrian

collisions if the **built environment** is **safe**



Pedestrian injury

must be **considered** when implementing programs to

increase

walking to school



Built environment modifications may reduce

unsafe driver & pedestrian behaviours leading to a

reduction in collisions



We are interested in:

Evidence-based interventions related to both reducing pedestrian collisions AND increasing active school transportation.

High quality evaluation of interventions.

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Research articles:

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