

The Safe Migration Project

Starting Secondary School

Ensure your child travels safely to secondary school with these important tips.

Slow down when driving

Children and teenagers can be easily distracted and unpredictable when using the roads. This makes young people among our most vulnerable road users.

- Slow down and take extra care when driving around school neighbourhoods to protect young people.
- Driving below the sign-posted speed limit helps make children and school environments safer.

Plan the safest route

Whether walking or riding to school, it is important to:

- spend time with your child planning a safe route - **the quickest way isn't necessarily the safest**
- travel the route together before the school year begins to become familiar with the path and ensure it is safe
- help your child plan to avoid potential hazards, such as busy, high-speed roads and complicated intersections on their way to school
- plan to travel on streets and roads with lower speed limits (ideally 40 km/h or less).

Encourage walking safely

Walking is a great form of active travel to school because it improves health and wellbeing and is better for the environment. If walking:

- encourage your child to eliminate distractions, such as using a mobile phone, especially when crossing roads
- remind your child to always cross at pedestrian crossings, pedestrian lights, pedestrian refuges, and places where drivers can clearly see them.

Smart public transport use

Travelling to secondary school often involves using public transport. To do so safely:

- plan and practise using public transport with your child before the school year starts
- when waiting for trains, buses, and trams, encourage your child to stand behind the yellow line on train platforms and away from the roads at bus and tram stops
- remind your child to get off buses and trams onto the nearest footpath - never cross the road in front of or behind a bus or tram.

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Safe cycling

Cycling is a great active travel option for getting to school. To help your child cycle safely:

- assist them in planning the safest route, prioritising bike and shared-use paths where possible
- when bike and shared-use paths are unavailable, and children feel comfortable, choose low-speed roads with dedicated cycle lanes and infrastructure
- bikes must have a bell, an effective brake, and a rear reflector
- ensure your child knows they must wear a helmet when riding – **helmets reduce the risk of head injury by 74%**¹
- helmets must meet Australian standards and fit correctly to provide proper protection.

It is also important that your child knows:

- the law requires that a helmet is worn (and done up) while cycling – **failure to do so results in a fine of \$254**
- it is dangerous and illegal for children under 16 in Victoria to ride an e-scooter – **they can be fined \$305 if they do**
- there is a range of laws about when and how e-scooters can be used, and significant penalties apply.

Drive and park safely if driving to school

If you drive your child to school, it is important to:

- ensure all passengers wear a seatbelt – to stay safe and comply with the law
- use dedicated drop-off and pick-up zones and park safely. If possible, park a bit further from the school gate to help reduce congestion and risks.

The Safe Migration video resource



Scan this QR code to watch an engaging video that includes practical tips for parents and carers with children starting secondary school.

Additional resources

Click the below links to learn more.

[Public Transport tips](#)

[Cyclist safety](#)

[E-scooter road rules](#)

[Bike Ed Program for schools](#)

[Road Safety Education Victoria](#)

¹ Bambach, M. R., Mitchell, R. J., Grzebieta, R. H., Olivier, J.
The effectiveness of helmets in bicycle collisions with motor vehicles:
A case-control study. Accident Analysis and Prevention, Issue 53, 2013.