

INTRODUCTION

Through a cooperative agreement with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), the American School Bus Council (ASBC) has developed free resources to help spread the word about school bus ridership. These resources have three primary objectives:

Letting communities know about the benefits of school bus ridership.



Informing communities and caregivers about how to keep children safe in and around the school bus.



Letting others know about the ways they can support the school bus in their community.



This material is available online for anyone to use and is free of copyright restrictions. We encourage parents, school administrators, communities, industry stakeholders, media, and legislators to use it to spread the word about school bus ridership.

You can access this material at schoolbusfacts.com.

PRODUCT TYPES

The material offered is grouped by the three primary objectives—all of which support the overall goal of maintaining and influencing school bus ridership. All products are fully 508 compliant for sight-impaired audiences, and contain working hyperlinks whenever possible.

- **Posters** are good for posting in public areas such as community centers, schools, libraries, and transportation centers. Because they are larger than fliers, they can be seen from a greater distance.
- **Fliers** are ideal for distribution to a larger audience. They are conveniently sized to fit in folders and print inexpensively on desktop printers. Electronic fliers can be posted online, and emailed. All fliers provided are one-sided to preview well within the body of most desktop email software.
- **Tip sheets** are a form of flier that provide instructional information on a particular topic. These can be distributed directly to intended audiences or used as resource material to instruct through other methods.
- **Tri-fold brochures** are ideal for mailing and other proactive outreach efforts. They fit a standard envelope and their narrow format makes them ideal as portable handouts at events.
- **Social media graphics** can help spread the word in a viral way. Images garner more exposure than copy through social media, and are more likely to be shared or liked.
- **Animations** also have viral potential. Thirty-second animations are timed for social media exposure, while a two-minute instructional animation can communicate safety practices in a way that captures attention and details information more effectively and efficiently than verbal instructions.
- **Drop-in articles** are written for journalists of all types to use to help spread the word. The information can be used verbatim or personalized by the author.
- **Supporting graphics** are key pieces of information that allow marketers to use elements from the products in other ways.



THE BENEFITS OF SCHOOL BUS RIDERSHIP

Less traffic, cleaner air and more affordable transportation—these are just some of the benefits that the school bus provides. And since the school bus is the safest way to travel to and from school, it's hard to find a reason to send children to school any other way. Yet there are many people who still don't know how safe the school bus is, or how important it is to communities. So ASBC created material to inform communities about the safety statistics and benefits of the school bus, and to help them spread the word.



PRODUCTS

- Posters*
- Fliers*
- Tip sheets
- Animated infographics
- Social media graphic
- Drop-in articles

*Shown

THE GOAL

Research has indicated that the statistics supporting school bus ridership were compelling. The challenge is that very few people know about them. Headlines about school bus safety aren't as prevalent as headlines involving school bus crashes. The goal is to make the public as familiar with school bus safety (and other) benefits as they are with the safety statistics surrounding air travel compared to other methods of transportation. Exposure is the primary goal for these products.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE TARGET AUDIENCES

- **Students:** Focus group testing revealed that given the option, most students who had the choice to ride with parents or a friend would not be motivated to ride the school bus instead—regardless of the safety statistics. For this reason, most material does not directly target students.
- **Parents:** While parents are more likely to support school bus ridership than students, focus group testing revealed that safety is the prevailing motivational factor that would prompt them to modify their behavior and have their children ride the school bus. For this reason, cost and convenience are not the primary message factors in products that target parents. The “My choice... their ride.” tagline empowers parents to take a stand and make the safer decision on behalf of their children.
- **Communities:** Community members without school-age children may not realize that school bus ridership affects them too. Like other forms of public transportation, the school bus benefits the entire community. For this reason, material has been developed to illustrate how important the school bus is to all community members, not just families of school-age children.



PRODUCT DESCRIPTIONS

POSTERS

The True Cost Of Cutting School Bus Service illustrates financial, safety, carbon footprint, and convenience benefits that the school bus offers communities. When decision makers consider the cost of school-related transportation, it's important that they take into consideration exactly what school bus ridership saves. This poster is intended to let all community members know what a cut in school bus service would really cost.

Imagine A Day Without The School Bus also illustrates financial, safety, carbon footprint, and convenience benefits that the school bus offers by imagining the repercussions that would become reality if the school bus were to disappear for a day. This poster indicates how all community members could be negatively affected without the school bus.

FLIERS

Fact: The School Bus Is The Safest Way To Travel To And From School illustrates statistical data from trusted sources on just how much safer the school bus is than other forms of transportation.

Fact: The School Bus Is Designed To Be Safer Than Other Vehicles provides information on exactly why the school bus is safer than other forms of transportation.

Fact: School Buses Keep Over 17 Million Cars Off Roads Each Year details the amount of traffic and pollution that school buses save communities. Additional information indicates other convenience and savings benefits to families.

TIP SHEETS

How The School Bus Benefits Communities details how the school bus benefits all community members.

Safety Features Of The School Bus details the safety features of the school bus.

ANIMATED INFOGRAPHICS

Information from some of the posters and fliers has been recreated in animated form. Each of the following animations is under one minute long.

- *Imagine A Day Without The School Bus*
- *Fact: The School Bus Is The Safest Way To Travel To And From School*
- *Fact: The School Bus Is Designed To Be Safer Than Other Vehicles*
- *Fact: School Buses Keep Over 17 Million Cars Off Roads Each Year*

SOCIAL MEDIA GRAPHIC

Safety Benefits Facebook Post can communicate the benefits of school bus ridership to a large audience with a simple like or share, while generating traffic to schoolbusfacts.com. Facebook graphics can also be used on Twitter.

DROP-IN ARTICLES

What Every Parent Should Know About School Bus Safety is intended to educate caregivers on the safety, convenience and cost benefits of school bus ridership. It encourages parents to send their children to school on the school bus, and to support school bus ridership in their community. Suggested resources from the media toolkit can provide the author with supporting graphics.

How The School Bus Benefits The Entire Community indicates how communities could be impacted without the school bus, and provides rationales for support. It encourages readers to support school bus ridership in their community. Suggested resources from the media toolkit can provide the author with supporting graphics.



KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE IN AND AROUND THE SCHOOL BUS

Obstructed views and distracted drivers put children at risk, which is why it's important that parents and educators talk to children about ways to stay safe in and around the school bus.

Motorists put children's lives in danger when they fail to stop for the school bus as it loads and unloads its passengers. Yet it's estimated that over 10 million drivers illegally pass school buses every year. So it's critical that motorists learn and follow the laws pertaining to school buses in their state.

The following material has been developed to help keep children safe.



PRODUCTS

- Fliers*
- Animated infographic
- Brochure*
- Tip sheet
- Social media graphic
- Drop-in article

*Shown

THE GOAL

While the school bus is the safest way for children to get to and from school, the area around the school bus can still be dangerous. The goals are to make caregivers and motorists aware of how they can help keep children safe around the school bus and reduce social tolerance for motorists who don't obey stop arm laws in their state.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE TARGET AUDIENCES

- **Students:** There are two age groups that can benefit from safety messaging. Older children can receive information directly, but are less likely to be concerned with their own personal safety than an adult would be on their behalf. Younger children require more direct supervision. For these reasons, safety information that is intended for students targets caregivers.
- **Parents:** Safety messaging for parents is intended to supplement the safety benefits messaging. It's important that parents know that the school bus is the safest method of transportation for students, but it's also important that the risk factors about the area around the school bus are identified and addressed.
- **Communities:** How other motorists behave around the school bus is a considerable safety factor. Social tolerance for unsafe and unlawful driving behavior around the school bus needs to be reduced. In order for risk and safety messaging to reach motorists, products targeting motorists will need to involve parents and communities to help spread the word.



PRODUCT DESCRIPTIONS

FLIERS

Fact: Motorists Who Are Careless Around The School Bus Put Children In Danger is intended to build awareness of the risk factors involved with sharing the road with the school bus, educate motorists about driving safely and reduce social tolerance of unsafe driving behavior.

Fact: It's Important To Keep Children Safe Around The School Bus targets parents, caregivers, and educators and is intended to build awareness of the risk factors in the area surrounding the school bus, educate about safety practices and support caregivers in educating children about ways to stay safe around the school bus.

ANIMATED INFOGRAPHIC

Fact: Everyone Can Help Keep Children Safe Around The School Bus provides the information from the safety fliers in animated form. This instructional animation is just under two minutes long.

BROCHURE

Steps You Can Take To Make Riding The School Bus Even Safer For Your Child is a tri-fold brochure that targets parents. It is intended to identify risks and provide safety practices that can help keep children safe while riding the school bus.

TIP SHEET

Keeping Children Safe In And Around The School Bus provides language and methods for talking to children about school bus safety.

SOCIAL MEDIA GRAPHIC

Brake For The School Bus is a social media post image intended to reduce social tolerance of unsafe driving practices and generate traffic to schoolbusfacts.com.

DROP-IN ARTICLE

Keeping Children Safe Around The School Bus is intended to build awareness of danger zone risks, educate about safety practices, decrease social tolerance of unsafe driving practices, and encourage behavior modification among communities.



SUPPORTING THE SCHOOL BUS

There's no question that communities depend on the school bus. But school bus service is often at risk when budget cuts are considered. So what can you do to keep school bus ridership strong in your community?

Support is key. Individuals, groups and communities can all play a role in protecting school bus service in their district. ASBC has developed the following material to help build community support:



PRODUCTS

- Posters*
- Animated infographic
- Brochures*
- Tip sheets
- Print ads
- Social media graphic
- Drop-in article

*Shown

THE GOAL

While many recognize the value of the school bus, most may not be aware of the ways they can support ridership in their community. The goal is to get all community members involved in showing their support by letting others know how important school bus ridership is to them.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE TARGET AUDIENCES

- **Stakeholders:** Educators, school boards and those within the school bus industry can benefit from products that help them communicate about what influences the school bus within their district. For this reason, media was developed to detail how funding and support are directly tied to the characteristics of school bus ridership within a community.
- **Communities:** Communities have benefited from the school bus for a long time, so it may be easy for them to take it for granted. But many community members may not be aware that their support for the school bus is key in maintaining or improving ridership in their area. Material has been developed to inform communities on the importance of being heard by school transportation decision makers in their districts and to garner support from their communities for school bus ridership.



PRODUCT DESCRIPTIONS

POSTERS

School Bus Funding identifies the contributing factors that influence the school bus landscape within a community. It includes information about funding sources, making improvements, responding to budget cuts, and garnering support.

School Bus Milestones is a timeline of key reach and development milestones of the school bus. It illustrates the school bus' positive impact on communities, growth momentum and safety development features.

ANIMATED INFOGRAPHIC

Supporting the School Bus In Your Community is intended to build awareness of the positive impact of the school bus and ways communities can support school bus ridership in their district. This animation is just under one minute long.

BROCHURES

The Importance Of Supporting School Bus Ridership In Your Community informs parents and educators on ways they can help generate community support for school bus ridership.

Spreading The Word About School Bus Ridership: Resources Communities Can Use informs communities on ways to support outreach and marketing efforts for school bus initiatives.

TIP SHEETS

Promoting School Bus Ridership Through Facebook is intended to get the word out about the safety benefits of the school bus, direct traffic to schoolbusfacts.com, educate the community on safety practices around the school bus and encourage support for the school bus, through Facebook marketing. Note: Many of the suggestions can be adapted for Twitter.

How Everyone Can Support The School Bus defines the actions that can be taken to help support school bus ridership.

PRINT ADS

Spread The Word About School Bus Ridership is a group of three similar ads (small, medium and large) intended to generate awareness of media resources that can be used to support the school bus and promote use of the media toolkit.

SOCIAL MEDIA GRAPHIC

Support School Bus Facebook Cover Graphic can promote the importance of supporting school bus ridership with anyone who visits your page, and drive traffic to schoolbusfacts.com. Facebook graphics can also be used on Twitter.

DROP-IN ARTICLE

How Communities Can Support School Bus Ridership informs parents and communities on contributing factors that influence the landscape of the school bus within a district and provides ways that everyone can support the school bus in their area.

SUGGESTED USES

Communications are the most effective when the target audience has access to multiple forms of coordinating media. The media prepared offers a coordinated messaging in a variety of formats.



EVENTS

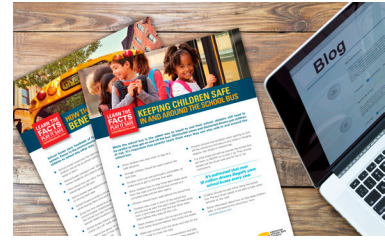
Products can be useful for trade shows, parent-teacher meetings, advocacy gatherings, fairs or festivals, school events, community meetings, public/educational hearings, or conferences.

- Create a Facebook invitation for your event about three to four weeks before the event date. Use images included in the toolkit to help craft the invitation. Be sure to include all the details of the event, tag any stakeholders or individuals involved, and offer details or incentives to attend.
- Update the invitation with additional images from the toolkit approximately one week prior to the event.
- A poster from the media toolkit can be used to attract attention from attendees.
- Print and distribute media from the media toolkit that supports your intended messaging. Set items up for others to grab.
- Check in at the event on social media. Post images of the media and activities for others to see. Tag any other attendees for further exposure.
- Wearable walkaways are a great way to give your message “legs.” For example: creating a pin from the “Learn the Facts...” badge can promote that call to action to a wider audience.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Graphics and hyperlinks can be circulated on pages and feeds, targeting appropriate groups through social media such as Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn.

- Post the social media graphics on your news feed(s). Tag relevant contacts who follow your feeds in your message to promote the school bus. Post social media graphics on the pages of any community or educational social media groups you have joined.
- Update your Facebook and/or Twitter cover image with social media cover graphics from the toolkit. Create a call to action button on your Facebook cover image that links to schoolbusfacts.com.
- Post the link to schoolbusfacts.com in your news feed(s). Wait a moment before you publish or post the message until the meta image and data is generated. Once the image is generated, you can remove the url from your message and personalize it with your own words. The image and metadata that links to schoolbusfacts.com will remain.
- Share the animated infographics by going to the ASBC YouTube page, selecting the animation you wish to share, clicking on the share icon, and selecting the social media network icons you are on.
- Follow American School Bus Council at www.facebook.com/ASBCHQ and post images of ways you are using their media to spread the word.



DIRECT COMMUNICATIONS

Products and information can be useful in communicating through USPS, e-mail, and in person to key individuals or groups.

- Print and mail brochures to your contacts. Target parent groups, educators, legislators, environmental groups, community organizations and school transportation decision makers in your district.
- Email relevant contacts and attach a PDF of one of the fliers that is relevant to your message. Encourage recipients to print or forward the attachment to help spread the word.
- Print relevant fliers or tip sheets for discussion at parent-teacher meetings, community meetings or school gatherings.
- Use statistical graphics from the toolkit in presentations at speaking engagements.
- Contact local legislators about showing support for the school bus. Find out who the key decision makers are in your district and engage them with material from the toolkit about how important the school bus is to the local communities.

JOURNALISM

Statistical information is generated by the [National Highway Traffic Safety Administration](#) and [American School Bus Council](#)—trusted resources.

- Use the drop-in articles in your blog, article or newsletter to help spread the word. Include appropriate graphics from the toolkit to attract attention and communicate in a visual way.
- Use statistical data from the infographics in broadcast segments for spreading the word about school bus safety. Refer to the fact sheets for additional information and calls to action.

PRINT ADVERTISING

On-location methods of communicating are effective for reaching strategic audiences where they work, travel, read, and play.

- Print and hang posters in public places including lobbies, libraries, office areas, recreation centers, schools, and other places that get exposure from parents, community members or stakeholders.
- Place ads from the toolkit in brochures, programs, newsletters, newspapers, circulars, magazines, and websites.
- Use posters and ads in and on public transportation venues and areas such as school bus stops.
- Send PDFs of ads and posters to local community groups and encourage them to help spread the word about school bus ridership.