

## **NEWS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE** \_\_\_\_\_

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### **SCHOOL'S OUT: SUFFOLK POLICE PROVIDE SUMMER SAFETY TIPS**

SUFFOLK, VA (June 18, 2018) School is out for summer, and the Suffolk Police Department wants all children to have a safe and enjoyable summer vacation. They would like to remind drivers and parents about the importance of keeping children safe throughout the summer months.

Drivers should be extra cautious in looking for child pedestrians and bicyclists during the summer.

#### Tips for Drivers:

- Be alert, especially in residential areas.
- Expect the unexpected. Children may cross the street at the wrong place or suddenly run or ride in front of you.
- Obey all laws. Slow down if there are children along the road or crossing the street. Come to a full stop at intersections.
- Be predictable. Don't make sudden maneuvers that others, particularly children on foot or on a bicycle, are not expecting.
- Double check behind you and around you when backing out of a driveway or parking space.

- Don't be distracted. Put down the coffee, put down the cell phone, and put both hands on the wheel. Avoid distractions within your vehicle, including loud music.
- Yield the right of way to pedestrians. It isn't just courteous, it's the law.

Parents can help by reminding their children about staying safe on the roads.

#### Tips for Parents:

- Focus on the basics. Teach your children to make eye contact with the driver before they cross, even if the walk signal is on.
- Remind them to walk, don't run across the road and;
- To stop, look and listen before crossing the street.
- Teach your children to cross at intersections that have a marked crosswalk or a pedestrian crossing light.
- Teach children to watch out for cars that are backing up.
- When walking with your child, avoid unnecessary shortcuts like walking through a parking lot. Drivers may not see children between parked cars and the children may not see the cars moving.
- Remind children not to play in or around vehicles.

All children should be taught the importance of the following personal safety tips:

- Be alert and aware of people and their surroundings.
- Familiarize your child with your neighborhood.
- Make sure they know their full name, address, as well as their parent's name(s) and phone numbers.
- Walk/play with other children. There is safety in numbers.
- Stay in well-lighted areas.
- Teach your child to report suspicious persons to you, teachers, or police officers.
- Teach your child what to take notice of when they encounter a suspicious vehicle or person: Type and color of vehicle, license plate number, male/female, clothing description, and distinguishing marks.
- Talk to your child about their friends and get to know them.

- Speak with your child/children about gun safety. If you have a gun in the home, make sure it has a gunlock on it or is locked in a safe. Teach your child that if they see a gun, they should never touch it. They should run away and tell an adult.

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