



In memory of Haim & Betty Gordon

CHEVRA HATZOLAH MELBOURNE INC.

CHILDREN'S TRAFFIC SAFETY

Children are not little adults, yet we often expect them to behave as adults do. Road accidents are the biggest killer of school age children. Accident investigations show that young children do not have the skills and abilities needed to be safe in traffic on their own.

WHY ARE CHILDREN AT RISK?

- Young children are less likely to take notice of objects not directly in front of them. Unless they deliberately turn their heads they may not notice vehicles to their left or right
- Children have trouble judging the speed of cars. They may let a slow car pass and try to cross in front of a fast one
- Young children often have problems working out where sounds are coming from. They may anticipate traffic from the wrong direction
- Children are small, so they can't always see over bushes or parked cars. This also means that they can't easily be seen by drivers
- Often children concentrate for only a short time, which can be very dangerous in traffic
- As children are constantly on the move, they cannot be relied on to consistently behave safely. They may behave differently when they are with other children

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Up to 5 years old:

Always be with your children in or near traffic – they are too young to cope alone.

- Hold your child's hand when you are near traffic and while crossing roads
- Explain what you are doing when you are crossing the road together – this helps your child understand how you decide when it is safe to cross
- Ask your child "Where could traffic come from?"
- SET A GOOD EXAMPLE FOR YOUR CHILD TO COPY
- Don't allow your child to ride a bicycle in or near traffic

- Ensure that an adult helps your child get into and out of the car on the kerb side
- Insist that your child wears an appropriate and properly adjusted seat belt on every car trip
- Involve your child in choosing safe places to play

From 5 to 10 years old:

Supervise your child at all times near traffic (both when crossing roads and riding bikes).

- Explain traffic movement using words like “fast”, “slow”, “near”, “far”
- Discuss traffic lights and signs
- Identify and discuss why some places are safe to cross the road and others aren't
- Teach your child how to cross roads - stop at the kerb, look both ways and listen for traffic and then think about whether or not it is safe to cross
- Ensure that your child is supervised on the way to and from school
- Do not let your child ride a bike on the road - they can ride on bike paths and in parks
- Insist that your child wears a properly fitted and securely fastened bike helmet (helmets should meet the Australian Standard AS 2063)
- Insist that your child wears an appropriate and properly adjusted seatbelt on every car trip
- SET A GOOD EXAMPLE FOR YOUR CHILD TO COPY

From 10 years and up:

Children of this age can cope more safely in traffic on their own, but you can still help in the following ways:

- Check that your child **stops, looks, listens** and **thinks** when crossing the road
- Talk to your child about road laws in simple terms
- Go for rides and walks together
- Plan together safe routes to school and places that your child often goes
- Talk about where the child can safely ride
- Insist that an approved, properly fitted and securely fastened bike helmet is worn whenever your child rides a bike
- Ensure that your child wears colours that are easy to see – reflective safety vests should be worn when riding in darkness
- Insist that seatbelts are worn on every car trip
- SET A GOOD EXAMPLE FOR YOUR CHILD TO COPY