



Main points of the Cool Wayz

The transition from childhood to adolescence is an exciting but demanding time for young people. It often coincides with the move to a new school, making new friends and starting to travel on their own.

This transitional period is also a stressful time for parents / guardians who are trying to balance the need of keeping their child safe, with the need of helping them grow into confident and independent young people.

The BMW Education Programme 'Cool Wayz' is about helping students to travel safely, to make wise choices and to start taking responsibility for their own safety and well being.

Below are some reminders of the things you can do to help your child travel safely.

Walking

- Make sure your child knows how to cross roads safely and has had a lot of practise. Let them take the lead in deciding when and where to cross and only intervene if they are doing something unsafe.
- Encourage them to use pedestrian crossings – even if they need to walk a bit further. You can get them into this habit by doing it yourself, every time you are out together.
- Show them how to use all types of pedestrian crossing facilities in your area correctly. Young people often do not realise that traffic cannot stop immediately for them – they need to wait at the kerb until all traffic has stopped.

Cycling

- Before you let your child cycle in traffic make sure they have had some basic training. Your local Road Safety Unit at the council offices will be able to advise you on courses available in your area.
- Make sure your child always wears a cycling helmet when riding and that the helmet is fitted correctly with the straps done up.
- Show them how to check that their bike is roadworthy and that it is the right size for them. You will need to re-check the fit every 3-4 months as your child is still growing. Avoid having the handlebars and saddle at their maximum height.
- Make sure they can be seen easily by other road users – fluorescent cycling accessories with reflective strips are excellent for visibility at all times.

Public transport

- Buses, trains (including underground trains) and trams are a common way for young people to travel around. Give your child plenty of practice by using them together. If you drive most of the time, plan several special trips by public transport.
- Plan trips with your child and show them how to find information on bus and train routes and timetables. Consider getting them a student travelcard.



- Show them where to wait for buses – away from the kerb – and how they must wait for the bus to drive away before crossing the road. Inside the bus, to sit near the driver and to hold on to the handrails.
- At train stations, show them the best place to stand on a platform – away from the edge and within range of the CCTV cameras. Explain that they must avoid getting in carriages with no people and if they find themselves alone in a carriage, to move to another one with several people in.

In the car

- You are legally responsible for making sure any children travelling in your car are properly restrained. Depending on their size and weight, they should be restrained using a child seat, a booster cushion combined with a seatbelt, or just a seatbelt on its own.
- Help your child to get into the habit of wearing a seatbelt on every trip. Make it a rule that everybody in the car must wear a seatbelt (including of course adults).
- Show your child the safe way to get in and out of a car – from the side furthest away from traffic.
- Emphasise the rule that they must never get into the car of a person they do not know well **and** trust. Work out strategies of what they should do if you are late to pick them up or the car breaks down, etc.

Personal safety

- Teach your child how to avoid alleys and badly lit streets and to stay in public places and near busy roads. Help them plan their route to school, to friends' houses and other places they are likely to travel to. Show them some 'safe' places they can stop at on the way, if they get into trouble – for example, friends' houses, shops, police stations, public buildings, etc.
- Discuss with them what to do if they are approached by a stranger – help them work out **realistic** strategies.
- Explain why they must always let you know where they are going, how they plan to travel and to let you know if there is a change of plan. Also, agree a time for them to be back. This way, you will know early if something has gone wrong and you will be able to get help to them quickly.
- Tell them that if they get into trouble, to make sure they keep themselves safe – not their possessions.
- Most important of all: establish trust between you and your child so that they know they can confide in you if there is something that bothers them.

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Does your child know?

- Your home address and telephone number, as well as your work and mobile telephone numbers. If they need to write them down, make sure they use initials rather than full names.
- How to use a public phone – both those using coins and those needing a phone card.
- Whom to contact in an emergency and how to call the emergency services.
- What to do if they lose their purse / wallet, keys, travelcards, etc.
- Whom to approach at school if they have a problem.

Do you know?

- How your child plans to travel, every time they are going out on their own, and whether they will be alone or with friends.
- All their friends, where they live and their telephone numbers.
- Your child's teachers at school.
- The school's policy on letting parents know if anything happens to a student, if they keep a student in detention, or if a student has not arrived at school.

Does your child's school know?

- Your contact details in case of emergency.
 - What you want them to do if you are late to pick up your child.
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