

School bus safety becoming a priority this year in Missouri

Written by Australian Business

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School is underway, meaning buses carrying children abound. With such precious cargo, bus drivers and surrounding vehicles need to be cognizant of bus safety. Children must also be made aware of and obey bus safety rules, but of course children do not always recognize the potential dangers while on a bus or while entering or leaving a bus. Several unfortunate examples of recent bus crashes in Missouri highlight the prospective dangers posed to children on school buses in the state.

On September 11, a school bus carrying 12 high school students in St. Louis, Missouri was involved in a chain crash involving two other vehicles. None of the students were injured. Law enforcement has yet to issue a cause for the accident.

One, perhaps more frightening, example of the dangers posed to children on school buses occurred recently in Montgomery County. A school bus carrying 18 people, three of whom were adults, overturned while carrying 15 children who attend the Missouri School for the Deaf. Of the 15 children, at least ten had to remain in the hospital for some time, although none sustained serious or permanent injury. Some children sustained broken bones and missing teeth.

Last but certainly not least, this past August a school bus leaving from Kansas City, Missouri overturned in northeastern Kansas, injuring 20 people. Emergency personnel on the scene rushed several adults and 20 sixth-grade girls to nearby hospitals. Fortunately, authorities described the injuries sustained as mild to moderate. Bus safety

Common sense precautions can help to mitigate some of the risk of a school bus crash. The most dangerous time for a child is entering or leaving the bus. Vehicles must obey the stop sign on school buses. It's not just against the law to run through a stop sign at a school bus; doing so can injure or kill children and is an easy law to follow. Obeying other traffic laws and driving with caution also prevents accidents.

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Another proposed safety measure would be to install seatbelts on buses. After a 2005 school bus crash in Liberty, Missouri that killed two adults and severely injured two children, then-governor Matt Blunt created a task force to study seat belts on buses. However, the task force did not issue an opinion, and to this day the only buses that have seat belts are for preschoolers and special education students. In fact, the only real protection on a school bus is foam padding around steel bars on the bus. That may make the risk for severe injury, including traumatic brain injury, more likely. Negligence a danger

The biggest dangers to children on school buses are the actions of other vehicles and the driver of the bus. Distracted driving is epidemic and a major cause of traffic accidents.

Drunk driving remains all too common. Obeying common sense safety rules is an easy way to prevent most crashes. People in Missouri who have had children injured in a school bus crash can hold negligent parties responsible for their actions. Contact a personal injury attorney regarding potential compensation for medical expenses and other costs associated with such tragic and otherwise avoidable accidents.