

# FitFUTURE

Strategies for  
Better Living.



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**M**ost parents are diligent in teaching their toddlers and elementary school-aged children how to cross the street safely. As children grow, parents may shift their concern and guidance to driving safely, avoiding alcohol and other risky behaviors. Recent studies indicate that youths' use of mobile devices can lead to safety issues when walking as they are not paying attention to their surroundings. In fact, unintentional pedestrian injuries are the 5th leading cause of injury-related death in the United States for children ages 5 to 19.

## Tips for encouraging safe walking:

- Walk on sidewalks, safe paths and cross at street corners using signals and crosswalks. Most injuries happen mid block or someplace other than the intersection.
- Put down devices and look left, right and left again when crossing the street.
- Be aware of others who may be distracted and speak up when you see someone who is in danger.
- Make eye contact with the driver before crossing the street. Never dart



out between parked cars.

- Set a good example by putting down your own mobile devices when walking.
- Children under 10 should cross the street with an adult.
- National attention and stricter laws are also being enacted when it comes to texting and cell phone use while driving. Other passengers in the car can also lead to distracted driving.



## Tip for safe driving:

### 1 Set ground rules:

- Place phones on mute while driving. If the phone must stay on pull over to a safe location before answering.
- Avoid loud music and ear phones while driving.
- Limit the number of passengers especially for inexperienced teen drivers.

### 2 Be prepared:

- Insure your children's needs are met before driving with them.
- Have items such as tissues, snacks and toys within easy reach

to maintain your focus on the road.

- 3 Use your mirrors rather than turning around to check on children.
- 4 Distract young children with soft music, singing or having them read a book while you are driving.
- 5 Take extra care when driving to give pedestrians the right of way, looking out for bikers and runners.
- 6 Follow the speed limit, maintain safe distances between vehicles and turn on headlights to increase your visibility and help others see you.

SOURCE: *Consumer Reports News*, Jan. 25, 2010

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<http://www.safekids.org>

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