

Parents' Tip Sheet: Children and Traffic

1. Young children have a physical disadvantage in traffic: their peripheral vision is two-thirds that of an adult.
2. Children have difficulty determining where a sound is coming from. Traffic noises and sirens may confuse them.
3. Most children lack a sense of danger. They do not understand that an automobile may seriously hurt or kill them if they collide.
4. Children are often restless and impatient. They have trouble waiting for things like traffic lights or cars heading in their direction.
5. Most children are unable to understand a complex chain of events.
6. Children believe that all grownups will look out for them. They think that if they can see an adult driving a car toward them, the driver must be able to see them.
7. Children often mix fantasy with reality. They may give themselves superhuman powers and do not understand that a moving vehicle can hurt them.
8. Children have difficulty judging the speed and distance of oncoming vehicles.
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10. Children are easily distracted and tend to focus on the things that interest them at the moment.

Make sure your child knows and uses the appropriate hand signals for turning, slowing, and stopping (see diagrams below). ***Please note... it is more important to keep control of your bicycle and look for traffic than to signal. Don't sacrifice control for signaling!***

