



Media Release

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Student Transportation of Eastern Ontario School Bus Safety Week October 17 – 21, 2016

(Prescott) – Student Transportation of Eastern Ontario (STEO), the transportation consortium for the Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario (CDSBEO) and the Upper Canada District School Board (UCDSB), is joining other transportation consortia and school transportation companies across Ontario, in promoting the importance of school bus safety during *School Bus Safety Week*.

In Ontario, over 800,000 children and teenagers ride safely, in over 18,000 school buses, each day. Studies show that school buses are the safest method for transporting young people – up to 22 times safer than passenger cars.

“Ensuring the safety of students as they enter and exit the bus is crucial,” said STEO General Manager and Chief Administrative Officer, Ron Cotnam. “We are continuously training our bus drivers to be cautious while on and off-boarding students, but we also need support from motorists in the community to make sure they stop for school buses as they load and unload children. No issue is so urgent that motorists cannot wait for a school bus.”

The law requires motorists to stop for a school bus any time it has stopped to load or unload. In Ontario, buses display red flashing lights and a stop sign is extended from the side of the bus, to alert motorists to stop. Motorists can also take steps to support safe driving around buses, including avoiding distracted driving and scheduling for morning traffic delays.

Mr. Cotnam offers the following tips to students as they get on and off the bus:

- Always remain in direct view of the bus driver;
- Always cross in front of the bus, but only when the bus driver signals that it is safe to do so;
- Always follow the driver’s directions for how to cross the street;
- Take ten giant steps back from the curb while waiting for the bus and ten steps away when exiting the bus;
- Be alert to traffic and look both ways;
- Never try to get anything left on the bus after exiting;
- Never reach underneath the bus;
- Get to the bus stop in plenty of time to avoid having to rush to catch the bus.

Bus operators throughout the region will be conducting contests and promotions in conjunction with local schools in support of *School Bus Safety Week*. Police departments throughout the region will also be diligent in ensuring drivers are following all rules and laws pertaining to bus safety.

To obtain additional information about school bus safety and events being conducted during *School Bus Safety Week*, parents and students can access STEO’s website at www.steo.ca.

Student Transportation of Eastern Ontario operates approximately 800 school vehicles, which transport 35,000 students, across districts in Eastern Ontario.

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For more information, please call:

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