



Hamilton

## General

The issue of congestion around schools is prevalent in today's society for several reasons and all related to the safety of children. Whether it is due to exposure to traffic or "dangerous strangers", all parents are attempting to provide their children with a safe environment. Unfortunately, the increase in automobile traffic around schools is only compounding the problem of street safety and increasing the risk to children who do walk to school. Most of our schools and roadways were built many years ago and were not designed to deal with the increase in vehicular traffic.

Parents or caregivers can help in resolving these issues with little impact in their lives, in fact, there may be positive results. In all cases, parental effort to help involves some walking.

In some situations parents drive their children to school as it is simultaneous to their trips to work. It is obvious that elementary children should not be left at home and then walk to school at some point in time after the parent has already left for work. In these situations, it is suggested that the parent park their vehicle one or two blocks from the school and walk the short distance to the school ground. This concept is known in communities as a "Walk a Block" program. It has been met with some success and has the benefit of allowing for exercise, practice of safety rules between parents and their children and providing the beginning of independence by providing knowledge of their neighbourhood streets.

A second concept used in some neighbourhoods involves children walking to school with a neighbour and his/her children. There is usually always a neighbour who walks their child to school. If this is the case, speak to that parent and they are likely to be receptive to having your child walk with their children. In some communities this is referred to as the "Walking School Bus".

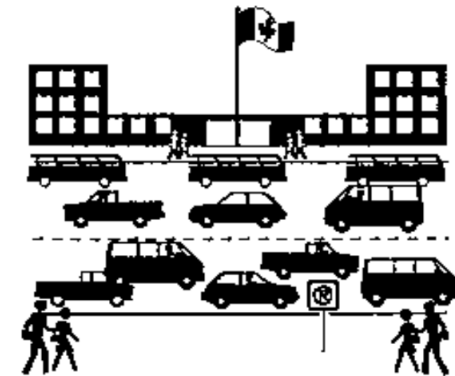
**Remember, for every car we as a community can keep away from the school, it is one less car that can be in a collision involving a school-aged child.**

## **Other Traffic & Parking Related Brochures Available:**

- ◆ Parking for Persons with Disabilities
- ◆ Residential Permit Parking Programs
- ◆ Residential Boulevard Parking (Front Yard Parking)
- ◆ Municipal Parking & Traffic By-Laws
- ◆ Traffic Safety Training Education Program

If you have any questions or comments concerning parking, please call the Hamilton Municipal Parking System at (905) 540-6000.

## **PARKING IN THE VICINITY OF SCHOOLS**



The safety of children is paramount to all in our community. Pedestrian activity is obviously more prominent in neighbourhoods in close proximity to schools. During morning entry and evening dismissal periods there is a "beehive" of activity in the immediate vicinity of the school. Children walking to school and the high number of drivers picking up/dropping off children can potentially create an unsafe situation. In fact, many of the parents driving children to school are doing so because of the decreased safety caused by the congestion around schools.

In an effort to improve safety around schools, various parking regulations are enacted. When motorists obey these various regulations they are in effect creating a safer environment. At times drivers are unaware of the intent behind these regulations and in fact, do not know the meaning of the regulations. The following regulations are commonly found around schools.

**No Parking** – means the standing of a vehicle, whether occupied or not, except when standing temporarily for the purpose of and while actually engaged in loading or unloading merchandise or passengers.



Specifically around schools, this means that a vehicle can stop in these areas and drop-off/pickup their children. It doesn't mean that the driver can arrive 15 minutes before school is dismissed and wait for their child. In many cases, the No Parking areas around schools are during specific periods of time, such as from 7:00 a.m to 6:00 p.m.

The No Parking areas are the areas where it is safest should you need to stop your vehicle to pickup/drop off your children. A 10 minute grace period is afforded to those vehicles occupied where unoccupied vehicles may receive a penalty notice immediately.

**No Stopping** – means the halting of a vehicle, even momentarily, whether occupied or not, except when necessary to avoid conflict with other traffic or in compliance with the directions of a constable or other police officer or of a traffic control sign or signal.



In the immediate vicinity of schools, these areas are likely to be found at intersections, school crossing guard locations or walkways, where there is a high concentration of students crossing the roadway. Should a driver park in these areas they are jeopardizing the safety of children attempting to walk to/from School.

Parents should never, use the No Stopping areas for picking up/dropping off their children. This is an illegal act and is detrimental to the safety of children.

**School Bus Loading Zone** – has the same meaning as a No Stopping area but exempts or allows school buses to stop in these areas. Private cars are not allowed to stop in these areas.



In most cases, school bus loading zones are present due to a conflict with private automobiles. Due to a shortage of curb space, there is not always room for both cars and buses. When drivers use the School Bus Loading Zones to load/unload children, the school bus is usually left with nowhere to stop and load or unload. This will then lead to the bus stopping in the middle of the road and wait for the cars to leave the designated school bus loading zone. This will cause congestion on the street, therefore reducing safety for students.

Schools initiate these loading zones in their current locations due to the location of the school doors such that the children do not have to walk any great distance to load/unload from the school bus.

Again, parents should never use the School Bus Loading Zones for picking up/dropping off their children.

**Taxi Stand/Wheelchair Chair Loading Zone** – are also No Stopping areas but exempts taxis and vehicles that are transporting handicap individuals. Private automobiles are not allowed to stop in these areas.

These areas have been designated as such to provide a dedicated area for "special needs" or handicap children and are located to allow the shortest distance for school staff to travel when taking the children into the school or onto the bus. Again, parents should not use Taxi Stands or Wheel Chair Loading Zones for picking up/dropping off their children.

### Enforcement

Enforcement of parking regulations around schools is done to encourage compliance and thus a safer environment for children. In many cases the affected schools have attempted to resolve the parking issues through school newsletters, flyers, school council meetings etc...

When the issue of parking violations cannot be resolved by these means, dedicated enforcement is undertaken upon the request of the school and only after more compassionate methods have failed.

Currently, the fines associated with these violations are as follows:

No Parking - The set fine for this violation is \$33.00 or if paid within 7 days, \$26.00.

No Stopping – The set fine for this violation is \$75.00 or if paid within 7 days, \$60.00.

School Bus Loading Zones – The set fine for this violation is \$75.00 or if paid within 7 days, \$60.00.

Taxi Stand/Wheelchair Loading Zone – The set fine for this violation is \$75.00 or if paid within 7 days, \$60.00.