

Walking helps children build healthy bodies and develop independence as they learn to get around their community. However, being a pedestrian can be dangerous, especially for younger children who are still learning how to safely navigate roads and traffic.

Here are some reasons why children are at greater risk:

1. Child's height

Children's smaller size can make them harder for drivers to spot, and it can also limit their ability to see approaching traffic around obstacles like parked cars.

2. Brain development

Children's brains are still developing, they may not always understand risks or make safe decisions around roads. This can lead children to copy unsafe behaviours and become distracted, putting them at greater risk around traffic. Children also have difficulty identifying where sounds are coming from and judging speed, which makes it harder to make decisions.

3. Experience with traffic

With limited experience around traffic, children may struggle to judge risks. For example, a young child might see a car but not realise that the driver may not be able to see them, such as when a vehicle is reversing out of a driveway.

Preventing pedestrian injuries

Parents and caregivers play an important role in keeping children safe by being good role models, explaining road rules, and closely supervising children near traffic. Here are some guidelines to help keep children safe as pedestrians:

- Hold your child's hand when near traffic, especially when crossing the road.
- Teach children to use the 'safety door' to get in and out of cars. This is the door on the kerb side behind the passenger seat.

- Teach children to use footpaths, and make sure they know to watch out for cars when passing or crossing a driveway.
- Explain words like "fast", "slow", "near" and "far".
- Teach children to "Stop, Look, Listen and Think" before crossing the road and make sure to explain what this means.
- Teach children about safe places to cross the road including crosswalks and traffic lights.
- Talk about signs and explain what they mean.
- Make sure children wear clothes that are easy to see when out and about.

For more information visit:

www.myresources.education.wa.edu.au/programs/challenges-and-choices



Kidsafe WA © 2026

Excerpts may be copied for educational purposes. Written permission is required to copy this fact sheet in its entirety.

For more information

www.kidsafewa.com.au
kidsafe@kidsafewa.com.au
(08) 6244 4880