Did you know that older teens now account for half of all pedestrian deaths among children 19 and under? Pedestrian injuries among 16-19 year olds have increased 25 percent over the previous five years.

A recent study by Safe Kids Worldwide found that one in five high school students and one in eight middle school students were observed crossing the street while distracted by technology.

Of the students crossing streets while distracted:
- 39 percent were typing on a cellphone.
- 39 percent were listening to headphones.
- 20 percent were talking on the phone.
- 2 percent were using another electronic device such as a tablet or game.

Safe Kids recommends:
- Before kids get their first mobile device, go over the basics of pedestrian safety. Tell them to:
  - Cross at crosswalks and street corners.
  - Obey traffic lights.
  - Always look left, right and left again before crossing.
  - Emphasize the importance of putting devices down and looking up.
  - Make eye contact with drivers when crossing the street.
  - Watch for cars that are turning, backing up or pulling in and out of driveways.
  - Empower kids to speak up they see someone who may be distracted while driving or crossing the street.
  - Adults should also set a good example when driving and crossing the street. You should:
    - Be alert in residential neighborhoods and school zones.
    - Lookout for bikers, walkers or runners.
    - Give pedestrians the right of way.
School bus safety top tips

1. Walk with kids to the bus stop and wait with them until it arrives.
2. Have kids stand at least three giant steps back from the curb as the bus approaches and have them board the bus one at a time.
3. Teach kids to wait for the bus to come to a complete stop before getting on or off.
4. If your child needs to cross the street after exiting the bus, he or she should take five giant steps in front of the bus, make eye contact with the bus driver and cross only when the driver indicates it’s safe.
5. Teach kids to look left, right and left again before crossing the street.
6. Remind them to use handrails when boarding or exiting the bus.
7. Be careful of straps or drawstrings that may get caught in the door.
8. Have students tell the bus driver if they drop something.
9. Drivers, always follow the speed limit and slowdown in school zones and near bus stops.
10. Always stop when you are driving behind or across from a school bus that is flashing red or yellow lights.
11. Stay alert and look for kids who may be crossing the street to get to or from the school bus.

Safety tidbit: Be Safe, be seen on Halloween

- Make it easier for drivers to see kids.
- Have kids carry a flashlight or glow stick.
- Attach reflective wristbands or tape to outfits.

For more information, contact Safe Kids at 859-323-1153 or visit www.safekidsfayettecounty.com.

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