School Traffic Safety in the City of Toronto

What makes a safe pedestrian environment in the City of Toronto for children?

- Built environment
- Speed humps
- Changes to the built environment
- Fewer road crossings
- Drivers following the rules of the road
- Designated car drop-off areas

Our studies have found:

- Presence of school crossing guards was related to 14% more walking to school.
- Collision rates within elementary school attendance boundaries varied greatly.
- Most child pedestrian collisions occurred outside of school travel times (62%). Most collisions that occurred during school travel times occurred in locations without crossing guards (86%).
- The installation of speed humps was associated with a 45% decrease in collision rates in children.
- Each dangerous driving behaviour during school drop-off period were associated with 45% times greater risk of collisions.
- Poor driving behaviours are observed less at schools with:
  - less traffic congestion
  - designated car drop off areas
  - school crossing guards
- Schools with greater social disadvantage had higher collision rates.
- 67% of children were observed walking to school but this varied greatly between schools (28-98%).
- Parents are concerned with traffic environment safety throughout the route to school and not just at the school site.

Implications:

- Researchers, school boards and cities need to continue to work together to ensure a safe environment around schools and beyond so that children can walk safely to school.

Key messages:

We are interested in:

Evidence-based interventions related to both reducing pedestrian collisions AND increasing active school transportation.

High quality evaluation of interventions.

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Research articles:

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