



GRADES 4–5 PEDESTRIAN SAFETY LESSON

2A: CROSSING STREETS SAFELY

KNOWLEDGE BUILDING (15–20 MIN)

Overview

The instructor will identify reasons for crossing the street, explain the complexities of crossing the street midblock, and review how to cross the street safely.

Crossing the street requires multiple skills and can be complicated for children to learn. This lesson reviews the basic skills for crossing the street, such as scanning for vehicles (look left-right left), stopping at the edge, and using all senses to detect oncoming vehicles, which establishes a skill base for the more complicated crossing of intersections in Lesson 3. Instructors can use their discretion on how much time is needed and on which concepts to place emphasis. **Remember that skill building activities are essential to children applying what they learn about how to cross intersections safely. Please see lesson 2B for skill building activities to accompany this lesson.**

At this age, children are still developing the cognitive abilities required to make safe pedestrian decisions, and concepts related to crossing midblock may be too complex for some children. Children develop the ability to understand and make decisions about their safety at different rates. As noted in Lesson 1, parents/caregivers should make the decision about when their child is able to walk without supervision as they become more independent. This lesson encourages supervision and discussion with adults as students learn more complicated safety skills.

This lesson includes a discussion guide for the video “Let’s Play Ball” to emphasize some of the key learning points in this lesson.

These lessons include a parent/caregiver tip sheet that may be sent home with students upon completion of lesson and skill building activities to encourage reinforcement of skill-building. Parent/caregiver tip sheets are available in multiple languages and can be accessed at phila.gov/safe-routes-philly.



Outcomes

Students will be able to:

- Recognize that in many situations, it is safest to still cross the street with an adult or older sibling.
- Understand the difference between crossing at an intersection and crossing mid-block.
- Recognize the safety hazards that occur when crossing midblock.
- Explain why they need to use care and caution when crossing street.
- Explain the steps to crossing a street.
- Demonstrate how to look left-right-left.

Materials

Appendix A: Visual Aids

- Pictures of Safe and Unsafe Streets
 - Street Image A: Quiet, neighborhood street
 - Street Image B: Neighborhood street with crosswalk
 - Street Image C: Major city road
 - Street Image D: Major road with traffic

Appendix B: Pedestrian Safety Brain Teaser Guide

Appendix C: Pedestrian Safety True or False

Appendix D: Pedestrian Safety True or False Answer Key

Optional:

- **Appendix E:** [“Let’s Play Ball”](#) (1:26 minutes) Video Guide



LESSON PLAN

1

INTRODUCTION

1. Introduce the lesson by having students discuss why it is important for them to know how to cross the street safely. Responses could include:

- a. For my own safety / So I don't get hurt
- b. To be a role model to younger children and other community members
- c. To show adults that I know how to be a safe pedestrian (so they will begin to let me walk places independently)

2

MAIN LEARNING ACTIVITY – WHERE WE CROSS THE STREET


1. Review that the first step to crossing the street is to find a safe place to cross.

- a. Explain that the best place is to cross the street at an intersection.
It is almost always better to cross at an intersection because there are stop signs and traffic lights to help everyone know whose turn it is to cross. On big roads with a lot of cars, it is especially important to cross at the intersection. We'll talk more about crossing the street at an intersection in the next lesson.

INSTRUCTOR NOTE:

At this age, children are still developing the cognitive abilities required to make safe pedestrian decisions. While they can begin learning and practicing these skills it is best for them to be accompanied by an adult when walking and especially when crossing streets.

- b. Explain that sometimes it might be okay to cross in the middle of the block (midblock) on certain types of streets, but this is a big decision because it can be very unsafe.
 - i. **Mid-block** is the middle of the block. It is at some place along the street, not at a corner or intersection.
 - ii. Sometimes, on very quiet neighborhood streets or in locations where you would have to walk a long distance to cross at an intersection, an adult may give you permission to cross mid-block. This is a very important decision and you must always talk with an adult about which streets are okay to cross at midblock on your own, if any.
 - iii. Crossing at mid-block can be unsafe because drivers will not be expecting you to cross. At midblock, cars do not have to come to a stop. It can be very hard to judge how fast cars are going and if there is time to cross in between them.

-  **2.** Display Visual Aid: Pictures of Safe and Unsafe Streets] Discuss the types of streets that students may need to cross. Discuss whether or not these streets look safe to cross at mid-block. *There are many different types of streets in Philadelphia. There are wide ones with 6 lanes, and there are small ones in quiet neighborhoods. There are also one-way streets where traffic must travel in a single direction. Are these streets safe or unsafe to cross at the mid-block?*

- a.** [Street Image A] – Quiet, neighborhood streets are easier to cross.
- b.** [Street Image C] – Wide streets take a long time to cross, and there are lots of vehicles making different movements and blocking your view of other vehicles.
- c.** [Street Image D] – Drivers may not be paying attention to pedestrians on streets with a lot of traffic.
- d.** Explain that it is unsafe to cross some streets mid-block if there is....
 - i.** A lot of traffic because it's hard to find gaps in traffic to cross safely.
 - ii.** Fast moving traffic because it's harder for drivers to see you and stop.
 - iii.** More than one lane of traffic because it can take a long time to get across, and when one driver stops, they may block the view of the drivers in the next lane.
 - iv.** A lot of trucks or buses because it's hard for the drivers of these large vehicles to see you. Buses and trucks are usually traveling on busy roads.
 - v.** A street where you can't see in both directions because you can't see if traffic is coming.

- e.** Explain that students will benefit from crossing complex streets with a caregiver. Students should discuss with their caregiver which types of streets they are allowed to cross, if any. Streets like C and D should only be crossed at an intersection and with an adult.

INSTRUCTOR NOTE:

Crossing at mid-block is complex. Students do not have the cognitive ability to make these decisions and have trouble judging speed, distance, and gaps in traffic all at the same time. An adult should be involved in crossing the street to address these complex decisions.

Students who are still learning to walk safely can benefit from walking with adults who can demonstrate and explain more complex situations. Students confident in their abilities should talk with their caregiver about when they can walk independently and on which streets.

3

MAIN LEARNING ACTIVITY – HOW WE CROSS THE STREET

- 1.** Review the rest of the steps to crossing the street by asking students to pretend they were explaining it to a younger student. The instructor may act as a younger student and ask students to define words they use or ask other clarifying questions.
 - a.** Stop at the edge.
Facilitate student review of stopping at the edge, including:
 - i.** Define an “edge,”
 - The curb or side of the road; the edge is the line between where pedestrians walk and the road where traffic moves.

- ii. Explain why stopping at the edge is important,
 - It is a place where you can see cars moving, but you are still safely away from the road.

- iii. Explain how to tell if it's a safe place to cross
 - No visual barriers, a place where they can clearly see in both directions.

- iv. Give examples of visual barriers,
 - Parked cars, trucks and buses, tall bushes, trash cans, trees etc.

- v. Explain what to do if there is a visual barrier
 - Look for another place or move to "second edge" where there is no barrier

b. Look and listen for traffic.

Facilitate student review of the second step of looking Left-Right-Left before crossing the street, including:

- i. What we are looking for?
 - For traffic – cars, buses, bicyclists.
- ii. Why we look left-right-left in that order?
- iii. How to use our ears and what sounds to listen for?
- iv. Ask students to model for a younger child how to look Left-Right-Left.

c. Cross quickly and safely.

Facilitate student review of how to cross the street quickly and safely, including:

- i. Walk, don't run,
- ii. Don't look at your phone,
- iii. Keep looking for traffic,
- iv. Cross in a straight line.

2. Use the brain teasers in Appendix B to facilitate discussion of more complex pedestrian safety scenarios.

- a. Use Appendix C to check for understanding.



MAKE IT INCLUSIVE!

- Emphasize the different cues people use to cross the street safely – looking, listening, etc.

4

WRAP UP

1. Reiterate the importance of crossing with an adult and asking caregivers what streets students can cross.

Always remember that if you are ever scared of a road or unsure about how to cross safely, stop and ask an adult to help you. You are still learning, so it's okay if you don't always know what to do.

2. Remind students that it is best to cross at an intersection, but it is important to know how to safely cross smaller streets mid-block.
3. Reiterate the steps for crossing the street
 - a. Find a safe place to cross,
 - b. Stop at the edge or second edge,
 - c. Look left-right-left, and listen for traffic, and
 - d. Cross quickly and safely in a straight line while continuing to look left-right-left and listen for traffic.
4. Ask students verbally or have them write a short response: How will you use what you've learned today outside of school?

APPENDIX A: Visual Aids



Safe and Unsafe Streets

Street Image A



Safe and Unsafe Streets

Street Image B



Safe and Unsafe Streets

Street Image C



Safe and Unsafe Streets

Street Image D



APPENDIX B

PEDESTRIAN SAFETY BRAIN TEASERS

Directions: Use brain teasers to facilitate discussion of more complex pedestrian safety scenarios.

What if we see a car coming but it looks like it's far away?

- We wait for it to pass, then we look left-right-left again before crossing.
- We wait for the car to pass because it may be moving faster than we think and we may not get all the way across the street before it gets to us.

But won't drivers see us if we're in the road?

- It is important to never assume that a driver will see you. If you start crossing the street and the car comes up faster than you thought, they may not see you even though you can see them. Drivers can get distracted too. It's best to be safe and wait for any cars to pass.
- Sometimes crazy things happen that make it really hard for drivers to see us. Have you ever had to squint or put your hand over your eyes because the sun was shining in them so brightly that it hurt? That can happen to drivers too, and the sunlight can shine on the windshield of the car so brightly that they can't see anything at all.
- Remember that just because you can see them, drivers may not always see you so don't cross the street until you are sure it's safe.

What if a driver stops and waves for you to cross the street?

- If the driver stops and shows that they see you by telling you to cross the street, check again to make sure that there is no car coming from the other direction before crossing the street.
- Wave back to the driver to let them know you're crossing.
- Keep looking left-right-left as you walk.

What if it's raining or snowy?

- Does it feel different to walk in the rain or snow than it does when it's sunny? Why?
 - You have to wear a raincoat or carry an umbrella.
 - There can be dark clouds when it's raining or snowing so it's not as light out.
 - If it rains or snows really hard it can be difficult to see things.
 - You have to look out for puddles.
 - Sometimes the sidewalk gets slippery.
- Drivers also experience things differently when it's raining or snowing. They can have:
 - Difficulty seeing things, like other cars or pedestrians (they have to turn on windshield wipers and heavy rain or snow can make things look blurry).
 - Difficulty stopping – just like sidewalks, the road can get slippery when it's wet or has snow on it and sometimes tires will slide when the drivers try to stop.
- When we're crossing the street in bad weather, it is important to think about what drivers can see and do and make smart pedestrian decisions:
 - Be extra careful about where and when you cross the street. There's no hurry; it's worth spending much longer than usual waiting for a safe time to cross the street.
 - Wear bright-colored clothes or reflective material or carry a flashlight to help drivers see us.

APPENDIX C

PEDESTRIAN SAFETY TRUE OR FALSE

Directions: Circle true or false for each scenario. If false, explain your reasoning.

1

I can always assume a person driving will see me crossing or waiting to cross.

True

False

Why?

4

I should look left, then right, then left again before I determine if it's safe to cross.

True

False

Why?

2

Weather can sometimes affect whether a person driving can see me.

True

False

Why?

5

It is always important to practice safe pedestrian behavior, even if others around me are not.

True

False

Why?

3

If there's a visual barrier in the road, I should move to the second edge before seeing whether it's safe to cross.

True

False

Why?

6

When I look to cross the street, I am just looking for other cars in the road.

True

False

Why?

APPENDIX D

PEDESTRIAN SAFETY TRUE OR FALSE ANSWERS

ANSWER KEY:

1. **F** People driving may be distracted or not see someone crossing. It's always important to make sure the person driving sees the person walking. Tell a trusted adult to help you retrieve the ball.
2. **T** Rain, fog, snow, and other weather phenomenon can make it difficult for people driving to see pedestrians. Remember, people driving have a responsibility to drive responsibly and safely and should always be watching for pedestrians! Find a safe place to cross to walk on the sidewalk where the sidewalk is open.
3. **T** Sometimes, objects like cars and garbage cans block visibility. Moving to the second edge can help me see the street better.
4. **T** If I look left, then right, then left again, I can see whether or not vehicles are coming.
5. **T** It's important for me to do my part in Philadelphia. People driving, people walking, and people biking should all practice safe habits to make sure our streets are safe.
6. **F** Transportation comes in all different forms – cars, trucks, bicycles, and busses are all vehicles that help people get around.

APPENDIX E

WILLIE WHISTLE VIDEO GUIDE

Directions: To reinforce the messages in the lesson and test student understanding, instructors can show the Safe Routes Philly video “Let’s Play Ball” and use the discussion guide below.

Video Title: [Let’s Play Ball \(1:26\)](#)

Topic Area: Lesson 2 – Crossing Streets Safely

Play the first section of the video, until you see the screen that says “Was that Safe or Unsafe?” and then hit pause to discuss the behaviors with your students, recording their answers on the board if you choose.

Play the final review section to remind students of the vocabulary word, “Visual Barrier” and brainstorm possible visual barriers in the city (trees, dumpsters, snow mounds, etc.) Visual Barrier Definition: Any object that blocks your view when crossing the street.

The first section is unsafe for the following reasons:

- The child runs into the street without stopping at the curb to look left, right, left
- The child runs into the street in between two parked cars (visual barriers)

Play the next section of the video until you see the screen that says “Was that Safe or Unsafe?” and then hit pause to discuss the behaviors with your students, recording their answers on the board if you choose.

The second section is safe for the following reasons:

- The child stops at the edge of the curb and looks left, right, left
- The child stops at the edge of the car (the visual barrier) and looks left, right, left
- The child waits to retrieve the ball until there are no cars coming



GRADES 4–5 PEDESTRIAN SAFETY LESSON 2B: CROSSING STREETS SAFELY

SKILL BUILDING ACTIVITIES (10–30 MIN)

It is important for children to practice safe pedestrian behaviors that they learned during the knowledge building lessons for them to develop motor skills and replicate these behaviors in their everyday life. Research indicates that knowledge-building alone does not transfer to behavior change. For students to develop safe pedestrian behaviors they need to be given the opportunity to practice specific skills. Ideally, the practice opportunities will be performed in a real context (i.e. outside of a classroom or gym) but any practice opportunity is better than none.

The Safe Routes Philly Pedestrian Safety Skill Building Activities listed below provide three options for skill-building activities at increasing levels of real-world context:

- **Practice the steps with instructor guidance (inside the classroom):** In a classroom or virtual setting
- **Practice the steps with instructor guidance (outside of the classroom):** On school grounds
- **Take a walk in a nearby neighborhood with adult volunteers:** On nearby neighborhood roads Each

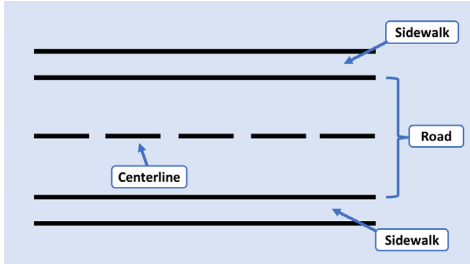
activity option includes details on space, time, materials and staff support required.

Prior to the activity, the instructor should review the Lesson 2 Knowledge Building materials and provide a brief review for students and model any behaviors/ body movements that will be part of the Skill Building activity.

These lessons include a parent/caregiver tip sheet that may be sent home with students upon completion of lesson and skill building activities to encourage reinforcement of skill-building. Parent/caregiver tip sheets are available in multiple languages and can be accessed at phila.gov/safe-routes-philly.



SKILL BUILDING INSIDE OR OUTSIDE

ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION	DETAILS
<p>Practice the steps with instructor guidance in the classroom or on school grounds</p> <p>(10-15 minutes)</p>	<p>LOCATION: Large classroom, gymnasium or on school grounds</p> <p>MATERIALS: Masking tape, rope, or other material to create a model street like the one below. You will need four long strips of material to make the street and two associated sidewalks, as well as several shorter strips to create a centerline for the street.</p>  <p>STAFF SUPPORT: No support needed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If time, partner students with younger students (i.e. grade level pairings of 4-5 and 2-3 or K-1). The older children can demonstrate safe behavior while teaching and modeling for the younger children. <p>INSTRUCTIONS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set up model street as shown above. Introduce the model street as the middle of a block. Review the complexities of crossing midblock from the Lesson 2A. Have student(s) practice the steps to cross the street: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stop at the edge Look and listen for traffic (look left-right-left) Cross quickly and safely, continuing to look for traffic <i>[Note: If done in classroom or with multiple students, have students take turns crossing.]</i> Use trash cans or large boxes to create visual barriers and help students practice moving to the second edge to cross. Have students take turn acting as pedestrians and traffic. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students acting as traffic may carry images of cars, buses, and bicyclists. Students may walk in the street at different speeds to simulate the flow of traffic. Student pedestrians must wait for the traffic to pass and the street to be clear before proceeding. Instructors should provide positive feedback and gently correct mistakes.



SKILL BUILDING NEAR TRAFFIC

ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION	DETAILS
<p>Take a walk in a nearby neighborhood with adult volunteers to practice and reinforce proper behaviors when crossing the street</p> <p>(20-30 minutes)</p>	<p>LOCATION: Outside</p> <p>MATERIALS: Walking field trip permission slips, signed by all students' guardians</p> <p>STAFF SUPPORT: Adult volunteers (1 adult for every 6-8 students)</p> <p>INSTRUCTIONS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Designate a route that is accessible for students that may have mobility impairments. Note: Consider assigning staff or older student helpers.• Student(s) should have the opportunity to practice the steps to crossing the street:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Cross with an adult○ Stop at the edge, stop at the second edge○ Look and listen for traffic (look left-right-left)○ Cross quickly and safely• Demonstrate crossing a one-way street by following the same steps.• Along the route, point out busy or wide streets that are best crossed at the intersection.• Remind students why they must perform safe behaviors when crossing the street. <p>Note: Given the time and staffing commitment, this activity may be most beneficial at the end of all 3 knowledge lessons.</p>