



JUST THE FACTS

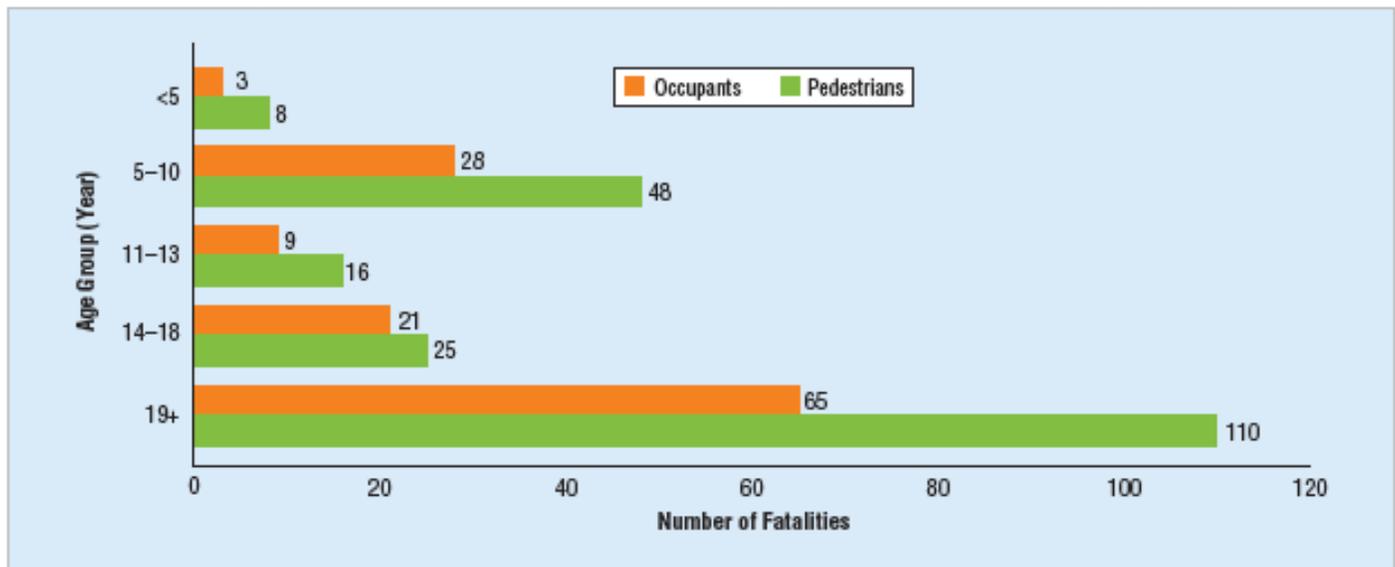
Texas:

- There are 20,855 public and private PK-12 schools in Texas.
- More than a million children and teens depend on buses to get them safely to and from schools in Texas every day.

Nationally:

- **School bus**-related **crashes killed 117 people nationwide** in 2018, according to **National Safety Council (NSC)** tabulations of data from the **National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)**.
- Each year, an average of 137 people are killed in **school transportation**-related **crashes**, and hundreds more are injured.
- From 2008 to 2017, 97 school-age pedestrians (18 and younger) have died in school-transportation-related crashes. Fifty-five percent were struck by school buses, 1 percent by vehicles functioning as school buses, and 44 percent by other vehicles (passenger cars, light trucks and vans, large trucks, and motorcycles, etc.) involved in the crashes.
- More school-age pedestrians were killed from 7 a.m. to 7:59 a.m. and from 3 p.m. to 3:59 p.m. than any other hours of the day.
- More than half (56%) of the school-age pedestrians fatally injured in school-transportation-related crashes were struck by school buses or vehicles functioning as school buses (2008 to 2017).

Total School Bus Occupant and Pedestrian Fatalities in School-Transportation-Related Crashes, by Age Group, 2008-2017



Source: FARS 2008-2016 Final File, 2017 ARF

Note: Occupant fatalities shown are for occupants of school buses and non-school buses used as school buses.

IT'S THE LAW

NAME OF OFFENSE	SECTION OF CODE	PENALTY	COMMENTS
Passing a school bus offense	Transportation Code, Sec. 545.066	Fines up to \$1,250 (or \$2,000 for repeat violators). Imprisonment if driver causes serious bodily injury.	Texas law requires that you stop for flashing red lights on a school bus, regardless of which direction you are headed. You may continue your trip once the bus has moved, the flashing lights have stopped flashing, or the bus driver signals that it is safe to pass.

- Texas has enacted a ban on the use (including texting) of a cell phone (handheld and hands-free) by bus drivers and drivers under 18 years of age.¹
 - In Texas, bus driver laws pertain to bus drivers with passengers age 17 and under.²
 - In Texas, persons under 18 years of age may not operate a motor vehicle while using a wireless communications device, except in case of emergency.³
- Texas has also recently banned the use of hand-held phones and texting while driving on all public-school property during certain times of the day.⁴

Adapted from [Texas Cell Phone Laws](#)⁵ and [Governors Highway Safety Association, Key Highway Safety Laws](#)⁶

KEEP IT SAFE

Safety Tips for Students

Respect your school bus driver and follow these rules:

- Get to the bus stop five minutes early.
- Stand far back when you are waiting for the bus - at least ten feet from the bus.
- Sit quietly in your seat so the driver can pay attention to the road.
- Look both ways if you have to cross the street after getting off the bus or wait for the driver to signal it's safe to cross the street.
- Be quiet at train crossings.
- Do not wear clothing with loose drawstrings.
- Make sure your backpack straps are short and do not get caught on the handrail or in the bus door.
- When stepping off the bus, look to make sure no cars are passing on the shoulder.
- Before crossing the street, take five giant steps out from the front of the bus so that the driver can see you.
- Tell the driver if anything drops on the floor so that he or she can help pick it up.

Safety Tips for Drivers

- Obey the posted speed limit.
- Fines double in school zones.
- Keep an eye on children gathered at bus stops.
- Watch for children who might run across the street to catch the bus.

Adapted from [School Bus Safety](#),⁷ [School Bus Safety Rules](#),⁸ and [Tips to Increase Your Child's School Bus Safety](#).⁹

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, [School Buses](#)¹⁰

¹ Texas Transportation Code Sections 545.424(a) and 545.425(c).

² Governors Highway Safety Association, Texas, Retrieved on October 14 2020 from <http://www.ghsa.org/html/stateinfo/bystate/tx.html>.

³ Texas Transportation Code Section 545.424(a).

⁴ See Texas Transportation Code Section 545.4252.

⁵ DrivingLaws.org, *Texas Cell Phone Laws*, Retrieved October 14, 2020 from <http://www.drivinglaws.org/texas.php>.

⁶ Governors Highway Safety Association, Key Highway Safety Laws, Retrieved on October 14, 2020 from http://www.ghsa.org/html/stateinfo/laws/cellphone_laws.html

⁷ See *School Bus Safety*

⁸ Texas Department of Transportation, *School Bus Safety Rules*, Retrieved on October 14, 2020 from http://fcs.tamu.edu/safety/passenger_safety/pdf/school_bus_safety.pdf.

⁹ National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, *Tips to Increase Your Child's School Bus Safety*, Retrieved on October 14, 2020 from <http://stnw.nhtsa.gov/parents/parents-bus.html>.

¹⁰ National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, *School Buses*, Retrieved on October 14, 2020 from <http://www.nhtsa.gov/School-Buses>