

For more information on traffic safety:

www.tmcec.com/drsr
www.texaslre.org



by
Jeanne Wray



illustrated by
Nathan Jensen



About Driving on the Right Side of the Road

This publication is a part of the Driving on the Right Side of the Road (DRSR) program, developed by the Law-Related Education Department of the State Bar of Texas, Law Focused Education, Inc., and the Texas Municipal Courts Education Center with funding from the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals and the Texas Department of Transportation. These organizations are very concerned about traffic safety in Texas communities. Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for 5-20 year olds in the United States. Young children are often hurt if they do not sit in a booster seat, do not wear their safety belt, do not obey traffic signals, or fail to wear protective equipment when bicycling, rollerblading, or skateboarding. The purpose of the DRSR program is to offer a preventive educational resource to encourage responsible decision-making and adherence to safe practices when children are in a car, on the street, or out in public.

DRSR has created a series of lessons for social studies classes at the elementary and secondary levels on citizenship education and traffic safety. The program is aligned with the TEKS (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills), which all students are tested on in Texas public schools. Upper grade level lessons use student-centered, interactive strategies to teach traffic safety while studying city, state, and national government, the three branches of government, and the responsibilities of citizenship. Elementary lessons also use traffic safety content to teach language arts and math skills. Traffic safety games and information are also available on the DRSR website.

DRSR's Information Sheets provide teachers with background information about traffic laws and municipal court. DRSR can assist teachers in contacting local municipal judges, court support personnel, and city prosecutors to ask them to serve as resource persons in the classroom. Resource persons can bring the lessons alive by providing real life or hypothetical examples, accurate descriptions of what the law requires, and serve as positive role models for students.

We thank you for using these materials in your classrooms.

For more information and resources, please visit:
www.drsr.info www.texaslre.org www.tmcec.com

SAFE T



SQUAD

by
Jeanne Wray

illustrated by
Nathan Jensen

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For further information, contact:
Texas Municipal Courts Education Center
2210 Hancock Dr.
Austin, TX 78756
512.320.8274

The illustrations were rendered in gouache on Arches paper
The text type was set in Verdana
Composed in the United States of America

Graphic layout by Nathan Jensen

Production supervision and coordination by:
Lydia Bryan-Valdez, CTCM, Paralegal, TxDOT Safety Program Manager
Jim Hollis, TxDOT Traffic Safety Programs Director
Terry Pence, TxDOT Traffic Safety Section Director
Carol Rawson, TxDOT Traffic Operations Division Director

Fourth Impression
10 9 8 7 6 5 4 (SC)
ISBN 978-0-615-40878-1
Printed in Austin, TX

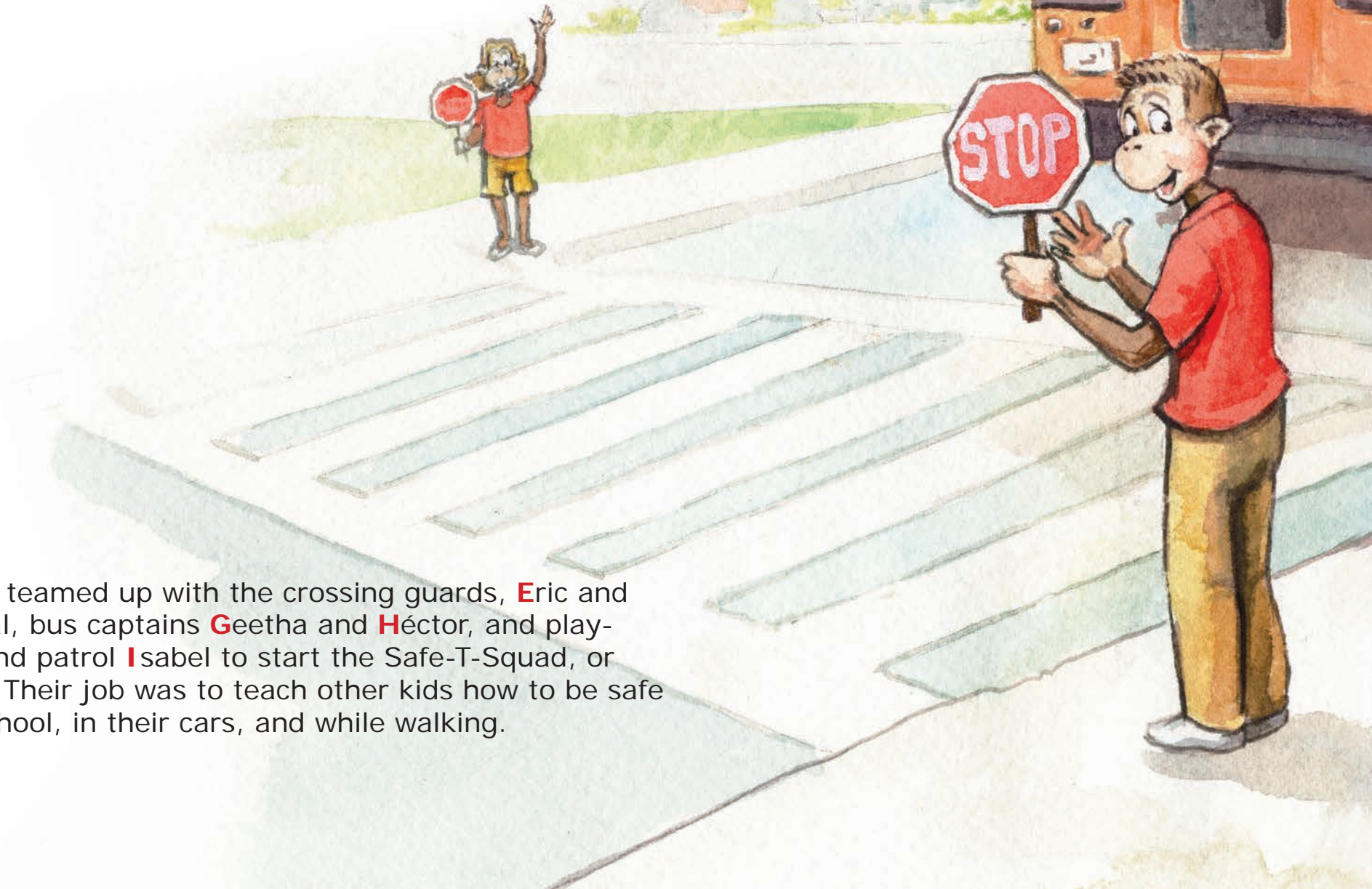


SCREECH!! The tires squealed as the car came to a sudden stop in front of the school. A small boy named **A**neel stopped just as suddenly, much too close to the car. His face was white as a sheet, and he was shaking all over. He hadn't seen the car coming when he started across the street.



Benjamín, Clara and Dae-sung saw Aneel almost get hit by that car because he didn't go to the crosswalk in front of the school to cross the street where it was safe. That's the day they got the idea for the

Safe-T-Squad.



They teamed up with the crossing guards, Eric and Faisal, bus captains Geetha and Héctor, and playground patrol Isabel to start the Safe-T-Squad, or STS. Their job was to teach other kids how to be safe at school, in their cars, and while walking.





One day, as they entered the school, Benjamín, Clara and Dae-sung saw their friend, Jin-joo. "What's up, Jin-joo?" said Benjamín.

"Hi, guys. Cool shirts. What does STS stand for?" asked Jin-joo.

"STS stands for Safe-T-Squad. After that car almost hit Aneel, we asked the principal, Mr. Kirkland, if we could get a group together to watch out for kids being unsafe," said Benjamín. "It's up to everyone to make sure people know how to stay safe, not just the Safety Patrol."

"Can I join?" asked Jin-joo.

"Sure, but first you have to see someone being unsafe and teach them about it," said Clara.

"I know just who to look for," answered Jin-joo.





After school Jin-joo saw Lisa at the bike rack. "Hey, Lisa! Wait up. Where's your helmet?"

"Oh, it's too hot today for a helmet. I'll wear it next time."

"Bad idea," said Jin-joo. "Helmets protect you if you have a crash."

"Maybe you're right," said Lisa. "Anyway, my mom wouldn't like it if she saw me without a helmet."





The next day before school, Jin-joo and Lisa found Benjamín. Jin-joo introduced Benjamin to Lisa and said, "I was telling Lisa about the STS you started."

"Jin-joo reminded me about wearing my bicycle helmet, even when it's hot," said Lisa.

"Good job, Jin-joo. Welcome to the Safe-T-Squad. You can join, too, Lisa, if you remind someone to be safe," said Benjamín.







Later Lisa saw **M**aría starting to cross the street in the middle of the block to get to her mom's car quicker. "Wait, María! Eric's right there at the crosswalk - you won't have to dodge the cars if you cross there. Remember about Aneel."

"OK, that's probably a good idea. There are lots of cars around today," said María.

That night Lisa called Jin-joo to tell her about María and the close call crossing the street. "Great," said Jin-joo. "Now you can be in STS, too. Do you think María would like to join?"

"I'll ask her tomorrow," replied Lisa. "She might even want to be a crossing guard some day, now that she knows how important it is to cross at the crosswalk."



Sure enough, María was all for it. The next morning, when Naree was getting out of the car at school, María noticed that she wasn't using a booster seat, even though she was only in 1st grade. "Naree, why don't you have a booster seat?"

"Oh, those are for babies. I'm way too big for a booster seat," said Naree.

"But there's a law that says kids under the age of 8 have to ride in a booster seat unless they are 4'9"!" reminded María. "You'd better tell your parents before they get a ticket. Besides, lots of booster seats are cool - they get you up higher where you can see a lot better."

"OK," said Naree, "but I'm still not sure I like the idea."

When María bumped into Clara the next day in the cafeteria, María told her about Naree and the booster seat. "Great job, María. Do you want to be on the Safe-T-Squad? Would you like one of those cool STS t-shirts?"

"Sure," said María. "And I'll tell Naree. First graders can watch out for each other, too."







María saw Naree later that day and told her about the Safe-T-Squad.
“Well, I saw Olivia chasing a ball into the street today at recess. Does that count?”

“Sure it does, if you tell her about it,” said María.

“OK,” answered Naree, “I will. Here she comes now.”

“Olivia, you scared me today when you chased that ball into the street. I was afraid there might be a car coming.”

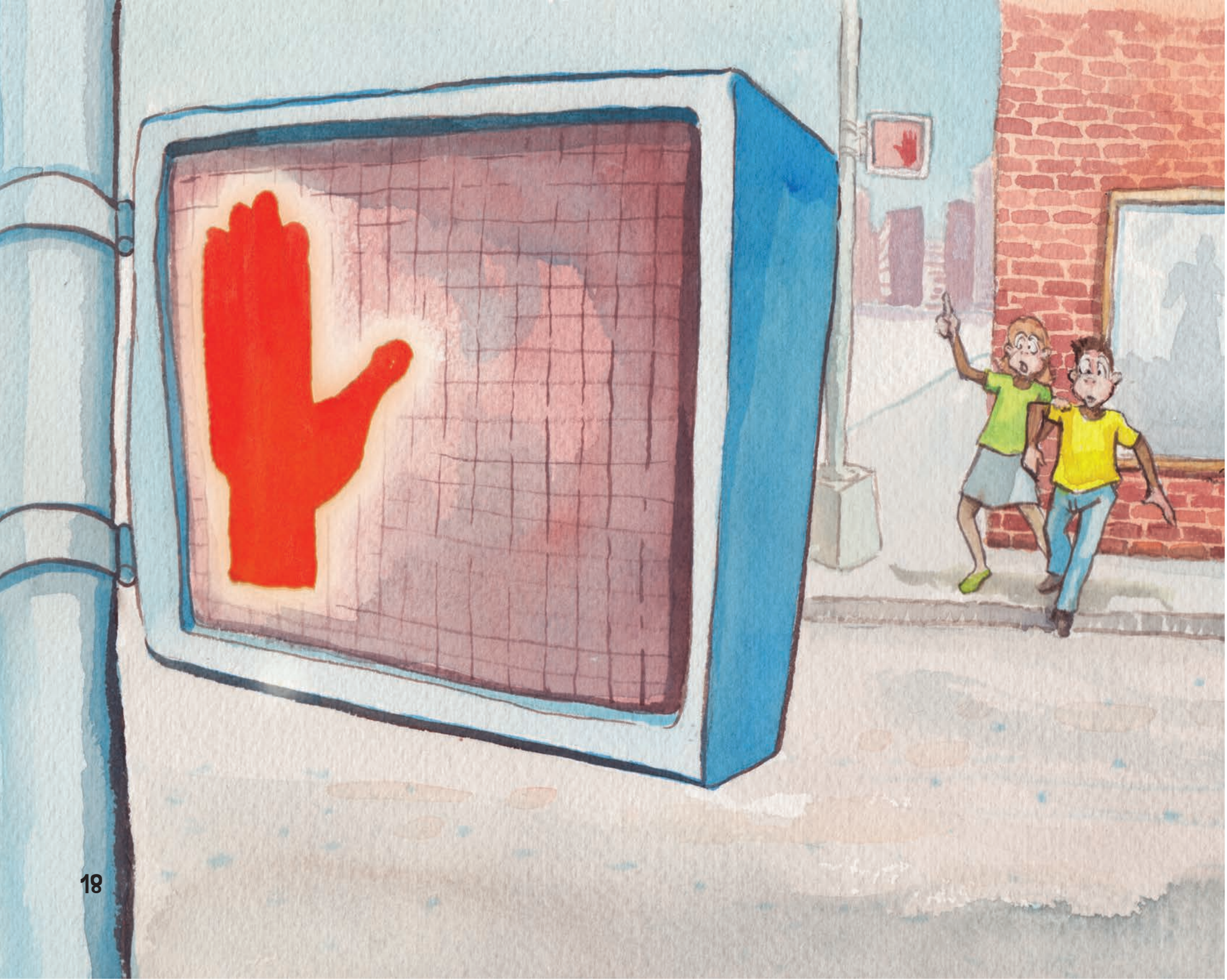
Naree told Olivia about Aneel and the Safe-T-Squad. It felt good to help somebody learn.



The next morning on the school bus, Olivia noticed that **P**arul was turned around in her seat, on her knees, talking to her friend, who was sitting behind her. Olivia was pretty sure that the driver, Mr. **Q**uintero, had reminded everyone to sit on his or her pockets. Suddenly, Mr. Quintero had to hit the brakes to keep from hitting a dog, and Parul bumped her head. Mr. Quintero came back to check on her.

"Hey, Parul, have you ever heard of the Safe-T-Squad?" asked Olivia. The bus captains, Geetha and Héctor, who had helped get it started, told her all about it. Parul especially needed to learn about bus safety.



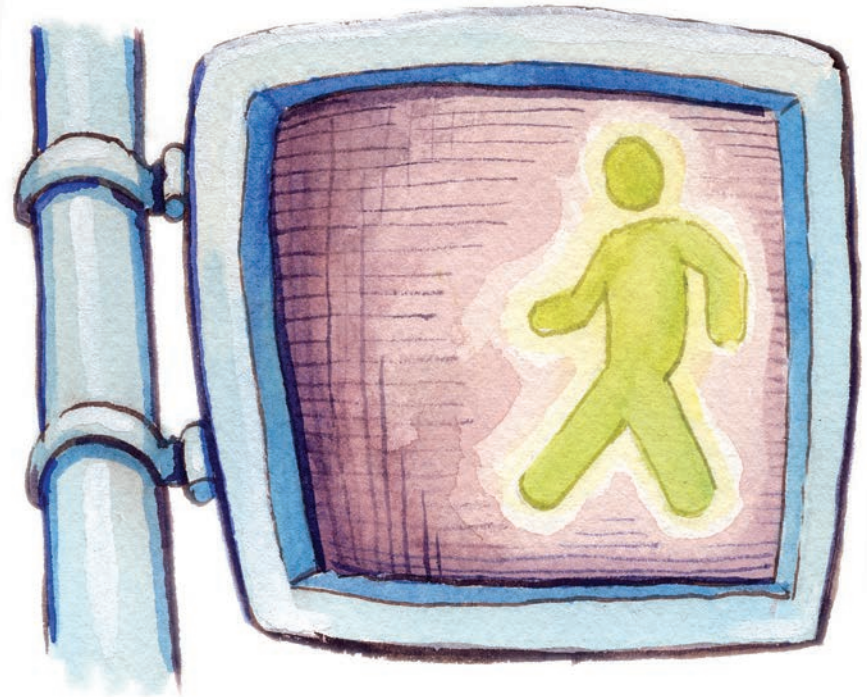


That afternoon, Parul noticed that when **R**oland started to cross the street, the "Don't Walk" signal was flashing. He made a mad dash across the street.

"Roland! It says 'Don't Walk'! That's dangerous!"

"It's OK if it's just flashing," says Roland. "That means you have time to cross if you hurry."

"That's not what my teacher said. The flashing 'Don't Walk' means don't start, wait for the 'Walk' signal. By the way, have you ever heard of the Safe-T-Squad?"



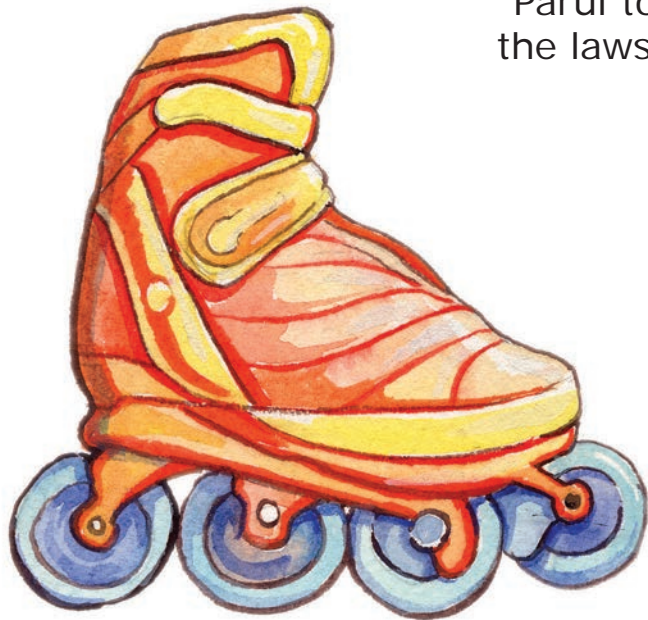
Parul was glad that she taught Roland to be safe. And now she could be on the Safe-T-Squad, too. She hoped Roland would do the same. Sure enough, when Roland saw Sung-min riding in the back of his dad's pick-up, he said, "Hey, Sung-min, isn't there room for you in the cab?"

"Yeah, but I like it back here," said Sung-min.

"My dad won't let me do that. It's against the law."

"Really?? My friend, Thomas, gets pulled on his rollerblades behind his dad's pick-up," replied Sung-min.

"Parul told me about a Safe-T-Squad at school. Maybe they know the laws for sure. Let's check with them," said Sung-min.





Later Roland and Sung-min joined Benjamín, Clara, Dae-sung and the others at the STS meeting. Mr. Kirkland was proud of the way the kids showed an interest in learning what the traffic laws say and helping other kids to stay safe. He explained the laws concerning pick-ups. Sung-min went to find Thomas to tell him that being pulled behind a pick-up on rollerblades can be very dangerous. It's even against the law.









After that, even Thomas was hooked on learning the law. When he saw Ursula's brother, Viktor, drinking a beer while driving, he asked Ursula how old her brother was.

"Oh, he's in high school - thinks he's a big shot."

"But I thought you had to be 21 to drink beer," said Thomas. "And besides, drinking while driving is against the law no matter how old you are."

"Yeah, you're right. I ought to say something. He's not acting too smart, is he?" answered Ursula. "He could get in big trouble."

Thomas and Ursula later noticed **W**alter riding on the handlebars of **X**uan's bike. "Whoa, look out! That's risky!" said Thomas.

"You sure know a lot about safety," said Ursula.

"Haven't you heard about STS? It's a club that Benjamín, Clara and Dae-sung started to help kids learn to be safe. Want to join?"

"Sure," said Ursula. "How do I do that?"

"Just remind Walter and Xuan that only special bikes are built for two. If Walter fell off and got hurt, Xuan would feel terrible," answered Thomas.

"Good thinking," said Ursula. And off she went.









The next morning, Benjamín, Clara and Dae-sung were in front of the school checking on the students arriving on the buses, when their teacher, Mrs. Young, came speeding down the street.

"She must be running late," said Clara. "It looks like she's going too fast for a school zone."

"Yes, and she's texting while driving. That's really dangerous, and against the law" said Benjamín.

"And she's not wearing her safety belt," said Dae-sung. "Neither is her daughter, Zoe, who's in the front seat!"



After Mrs. Young parked her car and was walking up to the building, Benjamín, Clara and Dae-sung all said, "Excuse us, Mrs. Young, but

WE NEED TO TALK!"