



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Release

BOONE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

1905 Indianapolis Ave.

Lebanon, IN 46052

Sheriff Michael T. Nielsen



April 4, 2022

The Boone County Traffic Safety Partnership Stepping Up Patrols to Enhance School Bus Safety

Boone County, Indiana — The Boone County Traffic Safety Partnership (BCTSP) will be out in full force this spring to ensure that students remain safe when traveling to and from school. Over the next couple of weeks, officers will be positioned along bus routes and in school zones where they will be on high alert for stop-arm violations, speeding, and other forms of reckless driving.

The overtime patrols are part of the state's Stop Arm Violation Enforcement (SAVE) program and are funded with National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) grants administered by the Indiana Criminal Justice Institute (ICJI).

"Every time you see a bus, slow down, be ready to stop, and watch for children," said Boone County Sheriff, Michael Nielsen. "If the overhead lights flash red and the stop arm extends, you are required by law to stop. Under no circumstances, should you speed up in an attempt to beat the bus. That's beyond reckless and puts every child boarding or exiting the bus in danger."

The department joins more than 200 police agencies for the spring enforcement campaign, as part of an ongoing effort to prevent reckless driving in school zones and around buses. Last year alone, more than 2,700 drivers were cited for stop-arm violations by Indiana law enforcement, according to ICJI.

To address this, officers will be conducting high-visibility patrols in the morning and afternoon hours along routes identified in cooperation with local bus drivers and school transportation officials.

"School buses have several highly visible indicators to let drivers know when to stop," said Devon McDonald, ICJI Executive Director. "The only way you're going to miss those—the activated stop arm and flashing lights—is if you're on your phone or not paying attention to the road. That choice can be deadly."

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As part of the campaign, the department is urging motorists to slow down, pay attention to the road and never pass a bus that has its red lights flashing and stop arm extended. This applies to all roads with one exception. On highways divided by a physical barrier, such as a concrete wall or grassy median, only vehicles traveling in the same direction as the school bus are required to stop.

It's also important when approaching a school bus to be prepared to stop. Plan ahead and factor in extra time during each commute for school bus stops.

"You'll never regret playing it safe, but you will regret driving past a stopped bus and injuring someone's child," said Robert Duckworth, ICJI Traffic Safety Director. "These are people who have their whole lives ahead of them. No hurry is worth the possibility of robbing someone of their future or a family of their child."

Disregarding a school bus stop arm is a Class A Infraction and a serious offense. Violators could pay a fine of up to \$10,000, and have their license suspended for up to 90 days (for the first offense) or up to 1 year (for the second).

To learn more about The Boone County Sheriff's Office please visit:
<http://boonecountyindianasheriff.com/>.

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