

Talking Traffic with Kids



It is easy to forget just what a complex set of skills and judgements adults use to cross roads safely. We constantly check and recheck what's happening around us.

All of this goes on inside our mind – invisible to children unless we talk with them about all the things we do to keep safe.

It takes many years for young children to be able to make safe decisions independently around traffic. To keep them safe and help them learn, hold their hands and 'talk traffic' with them whenever you're out and about.

Talking Traffic with Kids – also known as commentary walking – is when adults talk with children about all the things they're doing together to keep safe while they are in the traffic environment.

The traffic environment is any place where there are – or could be – vehicles of any kind, such as roads, footpaths, car parks, driveways, bicycle tracks, unfenced yards, parks and farms.

Important things to talk about with children while you're out walking together:

- Why it's important to keep holding a grown-up's hand
- Why you're stopping at the edge of the driveway, road, kerb or crossing
- When it is safe to cross
- What you're looking and listening for while crossing the driveway, road or car park
- Why you have to keep checking until you are safely across the driveway, road or car park.



REMEMBER:

Children may use the same words as adults, but their understanding of what the words mean can be very different. A crucial part of *Talking Traffic with Kids* is to listen carefully to what they mean.