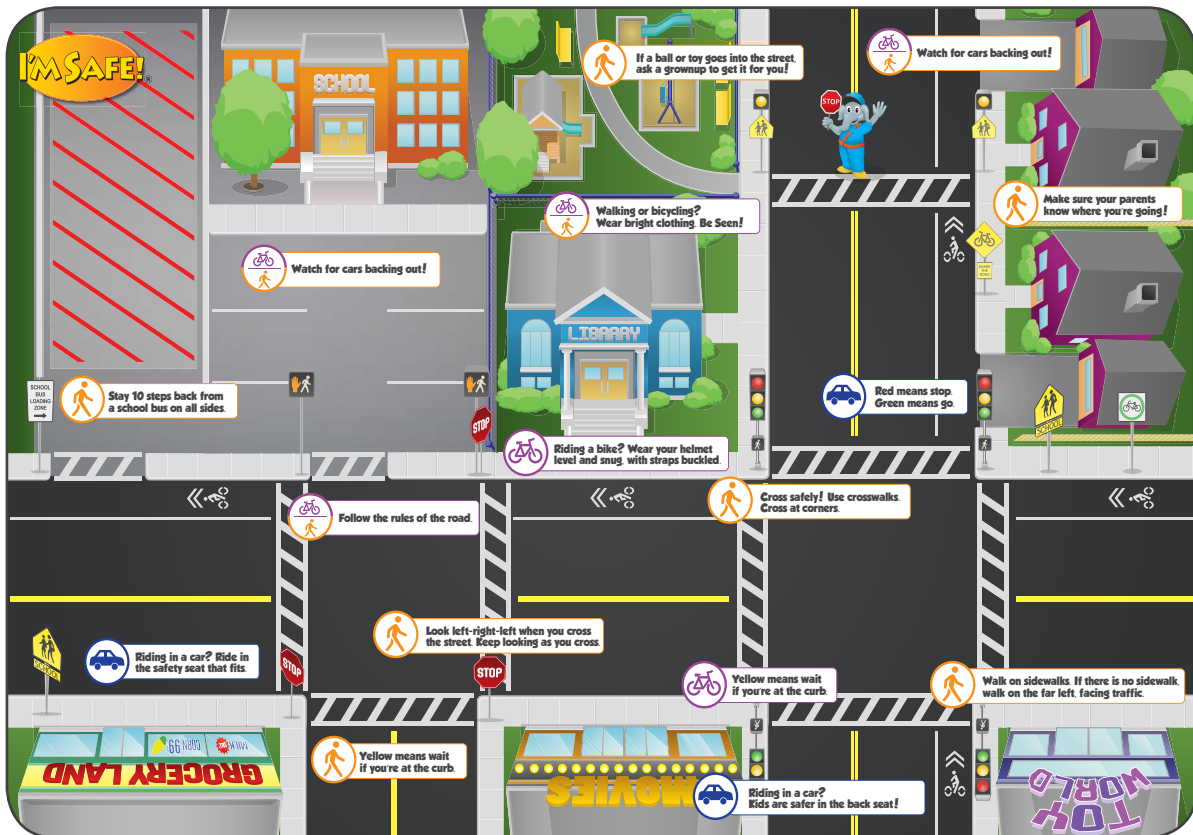




The I'm Safe! Activity Play Mat

Talking Points & Activities



Congratulations on the purchase of your new I'm Safe! Activity Play Mat! Prepare yourself for hours of fun as you guide children to learn about safe walking, bike riding, and car travel. This Safety Activity Play Mat is designed to be used interactively, with parents and teachers reading the safety tips, guiding children to understand what they mean, and then demonstrating the rules of the road with toy vehicles and pretend pedestrians. (Please note that children can use their first two fingers as legs and draw a face on the back of their hands to make terrific pedestrians for practice using sidewalks, crosswalks, traffic signals, and learning the rules of the road.)

If you teach in a classroom, we invite you to consider using your Safety Activity Play Mat with the *I'm Safe! Walk with Me* and *Transportation Safety Kits* available by calling **1-877-669-7233**, ext. 205 or 206, or visiting www.imsafe.com.

Talking Points & Activities



Talking Points

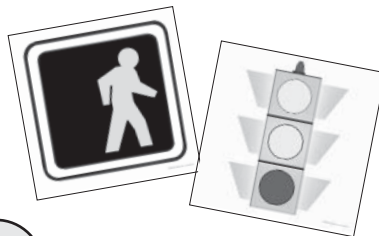
- **What do you see on this play mat?** (Possible answers: cars, crosswalks, houses, stop signs, signals, a crossing guard, a school, etc.) Explain that the play mat shows streets and houses and places like the ones we have in our town. "We can use the play mat to practice being safe walkers and riders."

• **Show the children the icons and explain why they are there.** (Each circle with a car is next to words about how we can ride safely in a car. How many cars in circles do you see? Three. Each circle with a bicycle is next to ways we can stay safer on bikes and riding toys. And each circle with a "walker" is next to ways we can stay safer when we walk.)

• **Can you find three circles that have both a walker and a bicycle in them?** Explain that these circles are next to safety steps we follow when we walk AND when we ride a riding toy or a bicycle.

- **Show the children the red lines next to the school.** You can explain that the red lines mark the "Danger Zone" around a school bus. Does anyone know what the danger zone is? (That's where the bus driver can't

see you. Buses are so BIG that it's hard for the driver to see all around the bus. We need to stay 10 steps away from a school bus on all sides so the bus driver can see us.)



Signs & Signals

Note: You can use the Play Mat with Lesson 3: Traffic Signs & Signals in the Head Start or Preschool "Walk with Me" and "Walk & Ride with Me" Kits or the oversized Traffic Sign Teaching Cards. Please call 1-877-669-7233, ext. 205 or 206, or visit www.imsafe.com for more information.

- **Show children one of the stop signs, or a picture of a stop sign.** Ask, "If you see a stop sign, what should you do?" Ask what bicycle riders and car drivers should do at a stop sign. You can also point out that drivers do not always stop at stop signs, even though it is the law, so we have to keep watching all around us when we cross a street in case there is a driver or bike rider who forgets. How many stop signs can the children find on the play mat? (There are four, including the one the crossing guard is holding.)

- **Talk about the pedestrian "stop" and "walk" signals.** Both are colored in on the play mat in front of the school so you can cover one or the other with a finger and ask the children what it means if they see that signal. Is there any other place on the play mat where children see the "walk signal?" (There are four, underneath the traffic signals on each corner to the right.)

- **Traffic signals also can be explained using the play mat.** You can cover two of the lights with your fingers or a piece of paper and ask children what the different lights mean. Have them practice coming up to pretend red traffic light with one of the toy vehicles and stopping, or a green light and then going carefully through the intersection.
- **You may also want to point out the bicycle signs** on the pavement and next to the houses on the right, along with the school crossing signs (there are four).
- **Let the children practice, using their first two fingers as "legs" to walk** (or glide) along the sidewalk on the play mat. If you have time, you can turn their hands into pedestrians by using washable markers to draw a face on the back of their hands and shoes on the nails of their first two fingers.



Road Markings

- **One of the most important road markings is the crosswalk.** Invite the children to look at the play mat with you. Explain what a crosswalk is and what it tells us. (Crosswalks let drivers know to watch for pedestrians, people who are walking. Crosswalks and corners are the safest places to cross the street.) How many crosswalks do the children see on the play mat? (There are ten.)
- **Talk with the children about always using crosswalks,** if they are available. Explain however, that sometimes drivers don't pay attention to crosswalks, so we have to be very careful and watch all around us when we are crossing a street. Children under age 10 should always cross with a grown-up. Show them the safety tip on the play mat that says to "Use crosswalks. Cross at corners."
- **Using their fingers as legs, let children practice** using the crosswalks and sidewalks on the play mat. Explain that if there is no sidewalk, we walk with a grown-up facing the traffic.
- **You may also want to point out the bicycle lanes** on the play mat and the double yellow lines and explain what they mean.



Pedestrian Safety

- **There are 10 pedestrian safety tips on the activity play mat.** You can read one or two each day with a child and then let them practice that safety tip on the play mat, in the classroom, or as you walk with them outside (except for the one that would involve letting a ball roll into the street).
- **Be sure to compliment the children** when they do something correctly and let them know how proud you are of them.



Bicycle Safety

- **Although most young children are not riding bicycles yet,** and certainly not in the street, it is never too early for them to learn bicycle safety. There are six bicycle safety tips on this play mat.
- **The most important tip is the one in front of the library about always wearing a helmet.** You can talk with the children about other times they should wear a helmet, for instance, on a

tricycle, riding toy, or on a skateboard. You can invite someone from a local Safe Kids or Bicycle Coalition to show the children how to wear their helmets correctly. Make sure every child in your program who is using riding toys has a helmet. If not, contact your local Safe Kids coalition or hospital to see if there is a helmet distribution program in your area, or simply let the parents know where they can buy helmets.



Car Safety

- **There are three motor vehicle safety tips on the play mat.** It is very important that every child in your program has a safety seat and that the parents know how to install the seat correctly. Many communities have car seat checkups on a periodic basis or permanent fitting stations. Visit www.safekids.org to find out about local car seat checkups in your area.

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Car Safety, Continued

- **Talk with the children about where they should ride in a car** (the back seat, in a safety seat that fits). You can use the toy cars and make believe there are children in safety seats riding in the back. Have the children close their eyes and imagine what the safety seats look like – perhaps a purple infant seat that is facing the rear and has a tiny baby in it, or a booster seat that looks like a race car seat that an older child is riding in.
- **Ask the children what their car seats look like** and invite them to draw a picture of themselves riding in their car seats.
- **You can also invite a Child Passenger Safety Technician to talk with the children and their parents** about car safety. To find a tech in your area, visit <http://cert.safekids.org/find-tech-0>