

SHARING THE ROAD: MARCH BREAK PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

Traffic Injury Research Foundation & Toronto Police Service

March 2018



In Toronto:

- > There were 182 pedestrians killed in Toronto in road collisions between 2011 and 2015.
- > Three school children were killed and 70 were seriously injured in a collision with a motor vehicle between 2005 and 2016.
- > There were 2,172 pedestrians killed or seriously injured in a collision with a motor vehicle from 2005 to 2016.

Source: TIRF Fatality Database & City of Toronto, 2005-2016 <https://www.toronto.ca/services-payments/streets-parking-transportation/road-safety/vision-zero/emphasis-areas/>

In Ontario:

According to the Ministry of Transportation of Ontario, pedestrian fatalities represented approximately 1 in 5 fatal collisions between 2015 and 2016.

A 2010 review of pedestrian deaths in Ontario by the Office of the Chief Coroner (2012) revealed that just five pedestrian circumstances accounted for 70% of deaths:



1. pedestrian hit at a mid-block location while crossing;
2. pedestrian hit on the sidewalk and/or shoulder of the road;
3. vehicle going straight through intersection while pedestrian crossed without right-of-way;
4. vehicle turning left while pedestrian crossed with the right-of-way at the intersection; and,
5. vehicle turning right while the pedestrian crossed with the right-of-way at the intersection.



In Canada:

- > More than half (61%) of pedestrians aged 4 years and younger in Canada that were killed in road crashes were struck by a passenger vehicle on private property.
- > Almost 1 in 3 (or 31%) pedestrians aged 15 years and under in Canada who were killed when struck by a passenger vehicle were struck between 3 pm and 6 pm.
- > It has been estimated that pedestrians are 284 times more likely to be killed or injured in a collision than motorists (CCMTA 2013) because they lack the hard, protective exterior of a vehicle or safety features to protect them.
- > According to Transport Canada, national data show that 33% of fatally injured pedestrians were struck by a driver who had committed a traffic infraction prior to the crash.
- > Research also shows that 33% of fatally injured pedestrians were at-fault for the crash. In other words, both drivers and pedestrians are sometimes at fault in pedestrian collisions.

Following the rules of the road is essential for driver and pedestrian safety. This allows other road users to anticipate their behaviour and reduce risks. Drivers also have greater responsibility to drive defensively and cautiously in pedestrian areas due to the much greater vulnerability of pedestrians.

Source: TIRF Fatality Database, Transport Canada 2011 & Transport Canada 2015

Strategies to share the road

According to the Vulnerable Road Users Expert Working Group on Pedestrians of the Canadian Council of Motor Transport Administrators (2013), Canada lags behind top performing countries when it comes to pedestrian safety. The implementation of proven measures could reduce the current level of pedestrian fatalities by more than 60% (CCMTA 2013).

*Source: *Fatal and serious injuries related to vulnerable road users in Canada*, Journal of Safety Research 58 (2016) 67-77

Road safety and safe travels through school zones is a daily priority for all road users. During March break, pedestrians, including students & families, should be expected at all times of the day due to the break from classes. These tips can help keep you and others safe:

Pedestrians can make roads safer by:

- > crossing only at marked crosswalks/traffic lights, avoiding jay-walking, and avoiding parked cars, hedges and other obstacles;
- > being alert to all traffic, especially turning vehicles, and watching out for each other;
- > wearing lighter coloured or reflective clothing when walking at night; and,
- > resisting the temptation to use/view electronic devices while walking or crossing streets.

Drivers can make roads safer by:

- > always looking for pedestrians and being prepared to stop, especially on residential streets and near schools and bus stops;
- > being patient and vigilant when travelling through school zones as children's behaviour can be unpredictable;
- > avoiding distractions when driving to increase awareness of nearby pedestrians; and,
- > driving the speed limit.

Source: *Road Safety Issues, Pedestrians: What Do We Know?*, 2015, Traffic Injury Research Foundation

Traffic Injury Research Foundation

TIRF is a national, independent, charitable road safety research institute that studies road user behaviours. Visit www.tirf.ca or call (877) 238-5235

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