Schoolbus Safety – Proper Seat Belt Use and Driver Posture Stats and Facts



FACTS

Improper Seat Belt Use:

- **Increased Injury Risk:** Without seat belts, students are more susceptible to injuries during sudden stops or collisions.
- **Driver Distraction:** Unrestrained students may move around, causing distractions for the driver.
- **Behavioral Issues:** Lack of seat belt use can lead to misbehavior, further diverting the driver's attention.

Poor Driver Posture:

- **Musculoskeletal Disorders:** Prolonged improper posture can lead to chronic pain and injuries.
- **Reduced Reaction Time:** Slouched or strained positions may impair the driver's ability to respond swiftly.
- **Fatigue:** Incorrect posture contributes to driver fatigue, increasing the risk of accidents.

STATS

- An Alabama pilot study observed an average seat belt use rate of 61.5% among students, with usage heavily influenced by drivers who consistently encouraged seat belt use.
- A study of 1,233 bus drivers in San Francisco showed a direct correlation between lower back injuries and weekly driving hours, with severe injuries increasing by 39% for every ten hours added to weekly driving time.
- According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, school bus drivers spend approximately 85.5% of their workday sitting, highlighting the importance of proper seating posture to prevent musculoskeletal issues.
- Transport Canada recognizes that seat belts on school buses can offer added protection for school-age children if they're used and installed properly. However, ensuring all children are properly secured in seat belts is more challenging in a 70-passenger school bus than in a 5-passenger car or 7-passenger minivan.
- From 2002 to 2023, there have been six fatalities involving school-aged children riding school buses, alongside 3,441 injuries reported in collisions involving

school buses. This highlights the importance of enhancing safety measures, including potential seat belt use.

- School buses are recognized as the safest mode of transportation for children. Statistics indicate that children traveling by school bus are 72 times safer than those traveling by car and 45 times safer than those walking or cycling to school.