

Walk this Way

Activity Overview: Students will learn how to cross the road safely, from the basics of pedestrian signals to the importance of using pedestrian push buttons, avoiding distractions, and being visible at night.

Objectives:

- To teach students how to use and understand pedestrian crossing signals
- To teach students why it is important to use pedestrian push buttons
- To teach students how to stay safe when crossing intersections by avoiding distractions and being bright at night

Materials:

- Model intersection (Large illustration of an intersection on landscape cloth, secured to ground with landscape staples)
- Challenge 1: Challenge # 1 flip-board illustrating pedestrian light cycle
- Challenge 2: Mystery box with challenge question, leash, 1 reflective armband, water bottle, yo-yo, pet waste bags, envelope (holding answer key and 8 reflective arm bands)
- Challenge 3: Mystery box with challenge question, 15 laminated images of cell phones, Challenge #3 flip-board, image of 'WALK' signal on sign

Set-Up:

- **Model intersection:** The faux streets will already be set up when you arrive at the festival.
- **Challenge 1.** Place the Challenge #1 flip-board on the table in the tent.
- **Challenge 2:** Place the clear bin holding the Challenge # 2 Mystery Box across the faux 'street' from the tent.
- **Challenge 3:** Place the clear bin holding the Challenge # 3 Mystery Box and Challenge # 3 flip-board near Challenge 2.
 - If it is not already there, place the sign of the 'WALK' signal across the faux 'street' so it is facing Challenge # 3. See diagram on last page for location details.

Take Down: Ensure all mystery boxes contain all required materials, including the challenge question and answer key. Put all of the materials back into the clear bins and turn off the pedestrian crossing signal.

Safety:

- Remind students not to run.
- If it is raining hard and the 'street' becomes slippery, the activities can be done inside the tent.

What Will I Be Doing? (Procedure)

Before you start the activity, check with the teacher or chaperone that the entire group is present and ready to start.

*Remember that kids have more fun when they are **doing** a challenge and **discovering** the answer, rather than watching and listening.*

We recommend that one activity leader facilitate the pre-activity question, the intro and Challenge #1, and the other activity leader facilitate Challenges # 2 & 3 and the post-activity question. This way, once the group moves to Station #2, the next group can start at Station #1.

Part 1: Intro

Say: “Walking is a great way to get around – It helps you stay active and healthy, reduces stress, and helps the environment. Does anyone know what a pedestrian is? (*Wait for answers*). We call anybody travelling by walking or running a pedestrian. Everyone has a role to play in making our roads safer, whether you are a driver, a pedestrian, or a cyclist. So today we are going to focus on how to make safe decisions when we walk to school, or a friend’s house.

Say: “There are three challenges for your team to solve at this activity.”

Part 2: Activity

Challenge # 1:

Open the flip-board to the first page, showing the image of the amber traffic light and ‘DON’T WALK’ pedestrian signal.

Ask: “Hands up if you walk outside and have seen lights like this before? When you arrive at an intersection with traffic lights and want to cross the street, what is the first thing you should do?”

Take some suggestions from the students, then flip to the next page showing the pedestrian push buttons: “Always look for a pedestrian push button. Here are some different pedestrian push buttons you might find on poles at intersections in Peel.”

Ask: “Does anyone know why it is important to push the pedestrian push button?”

Take some suggestions from the students, then explain the answer: “Pushing the pedestrian push button does two important things:

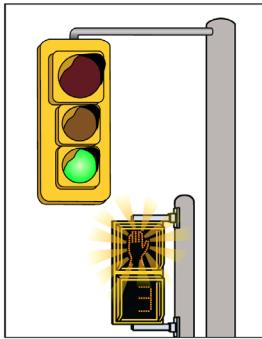
- Pushing the button brings up the ‘WALK’ signal with the green light.
- At many intersections, pushing the button changes the light cycle so that you have more time to cross. (The light stays green longer, so that you will have enough time to get across the road).

“If there is no pedestrian button, the ‘WALK’ signal will come up automatically.”

Bring the group outside so that they are standing on the corner across the ‘street’ from Challenge #2.

Say: “We’re going to practice crossing the street. I will show you different traffic lights and pedestrian lights. When the light changes, if you think it is your turn to cross, then you can cross the street.” *Point where they will cross over to Challenge #2.*

Hold up the Challenge #1 flipboard and flip to the drawing of the light signals with the green light and flashing ‘DON’T WALK’ signal.



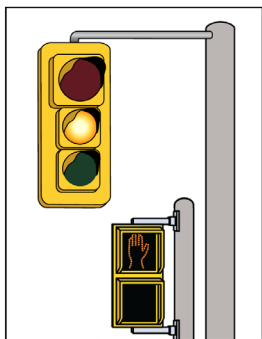
Say: “Hands up if you think it is your turn to cross now. What does the flashing hand signal mean?”

Answer: “The flashing hand signal means that you should not start crossing. If you have already started crossing, you may finish crossing. If we arrive at an intersection and the hand signal is flashing, to be safe we need to wait on the curb through the light cycle, until we are allowed to cross.”

Remember:

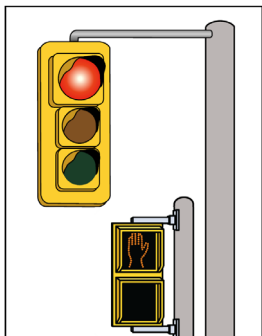
- It is against the law to start crossing when the hand signal is flashing.
- Once the DON'T WALK signal starts to flash, this means that you will NOT have time to safely cross, if you are walking at a typical speed. Rushing or running across the intersection may make you more likely to trip and fall, or less likely to see a car that may be turning left or right across your path.
- Once the hand starts flashing, if you start crossing you are preventing cars that need to turn left or right from having a chance to leave the intersection before the light changes.

Then flip to the next card (drawing of the amber traffic light).



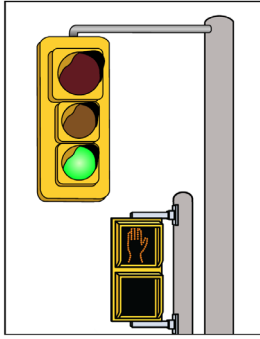
Say: “Hands up if you think it is your turn to cross now. That’s correct; it is not our turn to cross yet.”

Then flip to the next card (drawing of the red traffic light).



Say: “Hands up if you think it is your turn to cross now. That’s correct; it is not our turn to cross yet.”

Then flip to the next card (drawing of the green light with the DON'T WALK signal).

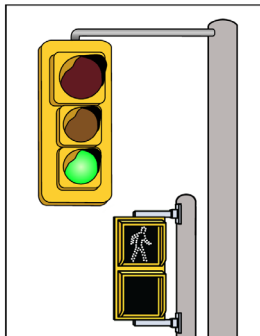


Say: “Hands up if you think it is your turn to cross now. That is correct; it is not our turn to cross yet. Even though the light for cars is green, the ‘DON’T WALK’ signal is still showing. As pedestrians, we need to look at the pedestrian signals, and remember that the traffic lights are for drivers, not for pedestrians.”

Remember friends:

- Sometimes there is a green light for cars, but the DON’T WALK signal is up, this happens because no one pushed the pedestrian push button, so the WALK signal was not triggered.
- It could be an advance green light for cars turning left. The traffic light would show a green arrow pointing left, or a flashing green light. This means that cars who want to turn left have the right of way.
- When the DON’T WALK signal is shown, pedestrians do NOT have the RIGHT OF WAY.

Then flip to the next card (drawing of the green light with the ‘Walk’ signal).



Say: “Hands up if you think it is your turn to cross now. That is correct, now it is our turn to cross. How do we know when it is our turn to cross the street?”

Answer: “It is our turn to cross when we see the WALK signal – the picture of a person walking. By law, we are not allowed to start crossing the street unless the pedestrian signal shows the WALK signal. A green light does NOT mean it is our turn to cross. As pedestrians, we need to look at the pedestrian signals, and remember that the traffic lights are for drivers, not for pedestrians.”

Ask: “If it is now our turn to cross the street, what do we do before we leave the curb?”

Answer: “Stop and look all ways to make sure it is safe to cross.”

Tell students that since the WALK signal is now up, they can look both ways and cross the ‘street’ (to Challenges 2 & 3).

Challenge 2:

Let the students open Mystery Box #2. Read the Challenge Station #2 card aloud to the students: "You are going to take your dog for a walk in the evening. What three things should you bring along?"

*Once they have decided as a group on which three items they should bring along, open the Answer Key envelope and reveal the answer. **Answer:** The leash, the pet waste bags, and most importantly, the **REFLECTIVE ARM BAND.***

Explain: "When we go for a walk in the evening, we may not realise how invisible we are to drivers in the dark. If drivers can't see us, then they won't be able to stop for us. Don't forget to always be bright at night – Wear a reflective arm band, reflective ankle band, or reflective vest when walking at night – or buy jackets or clothing with reflective stripes built in." (*Show students the reflective arm band.*)

Challenge 3:

*Hand out a pretend phone to each student. **Do not ask students to do anything with the phone; simply hand it to them. Once every student has a phone, pick up the Challenge #3 flip-board and walk to the middle of the 'street' a little down the 'road'. (See diagram on last page.)***

Point to the sign of the green light and 'WALK' signal and say: "According to the lights, is it your turn to cross? If you think it is your turn to cross the street, you may cross the street."

Count how many students looked at the phone as they crossed the street.

Ask: "Hands up if you think you looked at the phone while crossing the street?" **Reveal how many students looked at the phone while crossing the street.**

Explain: "Texting or even talking on the phone can be very distracting when crossing the street. These types of distractions can take our attention away when we need to be aware of our surroundings and be able to react to avoid being hit by a car. Remember to put away any electronic devices when crossing the street and look around you the entire time you are crossing."

Ask: "Does anyone know why it is also important to avoid wearing headphones when walking?"

Answer: "If we have headphones in, we can't hear if a car is coming. We also can't hear someone yelling 'Watch out' or perhaps someone honking a horn."

Part 3: Review

Review each of the key messages with students.

Ask: "What is the first thing we should do when we get to an intersection with traffic lights?" **Answer:** "Look for the pedestrian push button and push it."

Ask: "At intersections with traffic lights, how do we know when it is our turn to cross? When we see the...?"

Answer: "It is our turn to cross when we see the WALK signal (or the walking person signal)."

Ask: "Why is it important to put away electronic devices like phones, tablets, or games when crossing the street?" **Answer:** "These types of distractions can take our attention away at the crucial moment when we would need to react to avoid being hit by a car."

Ask: “What should we always wear when walking at night?” **Answer:** “Reflective arm bands, reflective ankle bands, or reflective clothing are best to help drivers see us. Flashing lights will also help drivers see us. Remember, if drivers can’t see us, they won’t be able to stop for us.”

Say: “Thanks so much for participating in Walk This Way and enjoy the rest of your day at the Festival!”

Walk This Way – Intersection diagram

