**Introduction:**​

Hi everyone! Today, we’re going to work together to learn about a very important topic: pedestrian safety. There will be times during the presentation when I’m going to ask you questions, and I want you to chat with the person next to you about your ideas. After you’ve had a chance to talk, I’d love for you to raise your hand if you want to share what you talked about. That way, we can all hear your awesome thoughts and ideas.

Our presentation today is called ***Best Foot Forward***. Hands up if you sometimes walk in your community, could be to school, to a friend’s house, to the park, or take your family’s dog for a walk. Great! When you are walking, you are what we call a **pedestrian**. Today our presentation is focused on making safe decisions while walking.

**[next slide – go to Slide 3]**

As you know, we’re located in \**insert where you live\** and are part of the Region of Peel, which includes Brampton, Mississauga, and Caledon. In 2022, within Peel, 472 people were hit by cars or other motor vehicles. Sometimes it’s the drivers that are making the mistakes and that’s why pedestrians are getting hit by cars. And then sometimes it’s the pedestrians making the mistakes. Since none of you can drive yet, it is important that you know how to keep yourself aware and out of harm way when walking.

**[next slide – go to Slide 4]**

Who is most at risk of being hit by a car?  With the person sitting beside you, discuss which age group you think is most at risk to the group least at risk.​ Raise your hand if you think it’s children up to age 9? [pause] Who thinks its youth aged 10 to 24? [pause] What about adults aged 25 to 34? [pause] Finally, adults over the age of 35?

(Teacher can give students a minute to discuss who they think is most at risk, then call on people to get their thoughts)

**[next slide – go to Slide 5]**

The correct answer is youth aged 10 to 24. Why do you think this range is the most at risk? As you can see from the graph, ages 16-19 is the most at risk within that age range. For all of you, your risk increases as you get older, which can be scary, but we can reduce our risk by making smarter decisions.

Getting hit by a car is not only scary, but it could change the rest of your life. So, a quick decision to cross against the light might end up being something a person regrets for the rest of their life.

**[next slide – go to Slide 6]**

**Intersection light game**

Let’s chat about when it’s safe to cross at an intersection…. A signal will appear, and I want you to raise your hand if you would cross when the pedestrian hand signal looks like the one on the screen.​

**[next slide – go to Slide 7]**

Would you cross now?

Great, you are right! When the DON’T WALK pedestrian signal is displayed you wait for your turn.

**[next slide – go to Slide 8]**

How about now?

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The driver of the car has a green light, and therefore it is the driver’s turn to go. When it is your turn to go, you have what is called the RIGHT OF WAY. Many people think that pedestrians ALWAYS have the right of way, but in Ontario, that is not the case. The pedestrian is breaking the law by crossing against the light. If a pedestrian was to walk and get hit by a car, the pedestrian would be at fault. Do you think drivers are expecting someone to be crossing at this time? (No.) That’s right, they are not expecting someone to be crossing.

**[next slide – go to Slide 9]**

How about now?

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What does the flashing DON’T WALK signal mean? It means that you should not start crossing. If you have already started crossing, you can finish crossing, but don’t start crossing because you think you can cross the road in 3 seconds. ​

**[next slide – go to Slide 10]**

What about this last one?

Yes, this is actually the only one where it is your turn to cross. However, even if it is your RIGHT OF WAY, to be safe, you should look all ways before crossing. Push the pedestrian pushbutton before walking, since this will activate the walking signal and give you longer to walk. Great job, everyone!

**[next slide – go to Slide 11]**

​**Walk wise activity**

Let’s think about what each of you can do to reduce your risk by playing Walk Wise. A picture will appear on the screen. When looking at the picture, I want you to decide if anyone in the photo is doing something UNSAFE. Then, think about what they should do differently. I encourage you to chat with the person next to you about your ideas. Once some time has passed, I will give you the chance to share your ideas on the unsafe behaviour and how to fix it.

(*You can break them into table group if you deem fit. Give the students about a minute (or however long they need) to let them discuss and figure out an answer)*

**[next slide – go to Slide 12]**

**Answer:** This pedestrian is being UNSAFE because they are crossing when the DON’T WALK pedestrian signal is displayed. ​

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**Messaging:** ​

Do you think drivers are expecting someone to be crossing at this time? (No.) That’s right, they are not expecting someone to be crossing.

The driver of the silver car has a green light, and therefore it is the driver’s turn to go. When it is your turn to go, you have what is called the RIGHT OF WAY. Does the person crossing have the RIGHT OF WAY? (No.) The driver of the silver car has a green light, and therefore it is the driver’s turn to go. When it is your turn to go, you have what is called the RIGHT OF WAY. The pedestrian in this case does not have the right of way. Many people think that pedestrians ALWAYS have the right of way, but in Ontario, that is not the case. According to the law, in this photo the driver has the right of way. ​

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To make a safe choice, they should push the pedestrian pushbutton and wait until the pedestrian signal shows the WALK signal. Then it will be the pedestrian’s turn to cross i.e. They will have the RIGHT OF WAY when the WALK signal is shown.

**[next slide – go to Slide 13]**

*Narrate video for students as the video plays:* ​

“In the video, you’re going to see what the driver sees. ​

She wants to turn left so she pulls into the left turn lane. She waits for the light to turn green. When the light turns green, she can’t turn left until there are no oncoming vehicles. When it’s clear to go she can turn. [pause] Oh no! She didn’t notice the man starting to cross the crosswalk! She was only focusing on the cars and forgot to look for pedestrians.”

This is a fairly small intersection. The more lanes of traffic there are, the further away the crosswalk is from the driver’s focus. Because the pedestrian had the right of way, this driver should have let the pedestrian cross and would have been at fault if she hit the pedestrian, according to the law. Unfortunately, lots of people are hit this way – However, you can protect yourself from drivers who aren’t paying enough attention. Even when you have the right of way, look both ways before starting to cross the street, and continue to look around you as you cross. ​

**[next slide – go to Slide 14]**

**Answer:** These two pedestrians are being UNSAFE because they are crossing while texting and talking on the phone. ​

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**Messaging:** Texting or even talking on the phone can be very distracting when crossing the street. 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.

**[next slide – go to Slide 15]**

Play video. **\****Read reiterate key points after video\**

**Reiterate key point:** It’s interesting to see why texting and walking is dangerous, even on the sidewalk. We might assume that because our phones are fairly small, we are still seeing what is around us. It turns out however that the parts of our brain (neurons) that would normally help us see what is around us (our peripheral vision) are busy with what we are doing on our phone, and that’s why we can’t pay attention to what is going on outside of our phone’s screen. We are virtually blinded to what is happening around us. ​

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**Safer choice:** To make a safer choice, it’s as easy as avoiding texting or talking on the phone while crossing the street and walking so you're aware of your surroundings at all times.

**[next slide – go to Slide 16]** ​

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**Answer:** This pedestrian is being UNSAFE because they are crossing in the middle of the block, rather than crossing where there is a crosswalk. ​

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**Messaging:** ​

Do you think drivers are expecting pedestrians to be crossing in at this point? (No.) That’s right!​ Drivers know to slow down for a red light or a stop sign, but in many cases, drivers are travelling at higher speeds between blocks. ​Pedestrians DO NOT have the right of way if they are crossing in the middle of a block – the drivers have the right of way.​

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**Safer choice:** Take the time to walk to the intersection / traffic lights, and cross at the crosswalk when the WALK signal is displayed. ​In this case, they should cross at the stop sign.

**[next slide – go to Slide 17]**

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**Answer:** These pedestrians are being UNSAFE because they are crossing when the red hand is flashing, rather than waiting for the nextpedestriansignal. ​

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**Messaging:**Stepping onto the crosswalk when the hand is flashing may not provide enough time to reach the other side safely before traffic resumes. Drivers might not expect pedestrians to enter the crosswalk during this phase, potentially leading to dangerous conflicts for the cars turning or stopped for the light.​

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**Safer choice:** To make a safer choice they should push the pedestrian pushbutton and waituntil the pedestrian signal shows the WALK signal, before advancing.​

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**[next slide – go to Slide 18]**

**Answer:** The pedestrian is not easy to see, because they are wearing dark clothes at night. ​

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**Messaging:** When we end up walking home from a friend’s house or from the bus stop in the evening, or taking the dog for a walk, we may not realise how invisible we are to drivers in the dark. This picture shows that even though this is a well-lit intersection with lots of streetlights, this pedestrian still blends into the darkness. ​

**[next slide – go to Slide 19]**

Play video

**[next slide – go to Slide 20]**

**Answer:** These pedestrians are being UNSAFE because they are walking on the wrong side of the road. ​

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**Messaging:** When you are walking where there is no sidewalk on either side of the road, it is important to walk FACING traffic in the lane closest to you, as the 2nd photo shows. If you are walking alongside traffic in the lane closest to you, like in this picture, you can’t see the traffic that is coming up from behind in the lane closest to you. ​

**Safe choice:** Walk on the side of the road facing cards coming towards you.

**[next slide – go to Slide 21]**

**Answer:**The cyclist is being UNSAFE and breaking the law because they are riding their bike while crossing the crosswalk.​

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**Messaging:**When approaching a crosswalk, slow down and be ready to dismount from your bike. Walking your bike across the crosswalk improves visibility to drivers, minimizing the risk of surprising them. It also allows drivers to gauge your speed and gives you more control to avoid collisions with pedestrians or other cyclists.​

**[next slide – go to Slide 22]**

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**Answer:** These cyclists are unsafe because they are missing helmets and not wearing close toe shoes. ​

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**Messaging:** When biking with your friends or family, you should always be wearing a proper fitting bicycle helmet. It is also important to wear close toe shoes to help protect your feet in the case of a collision or fall. Other access that keeps you safe while biking are bells or horns. Using your bell or horn while passing driveways where cars could be backing out from. Or while on a trail to let people know they need to move to the side while you are biking past is a great practice to keep everyone safe. ​

**[next slide – go to Slide 23]**

**Kahoot activity:** Now its time to test your pedestrian safety knowledge with this Kahoot activity!

(*click the link to take you to the game)*

**[next slide – go to Slide 24]**

**Conclusion:**

Today you’ve demonstrated that you have lots of great ideas regarding how to stay safe when you are walking. I hope you succeed in putting them all into practice. Remember, if we aren’t careful, our lives could change in a blink of an eye. ​

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Walking is an important way to get exercise, and an environmentally safe way to get around. We want all of you to continue walking around your neighbourhoods. ​

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We hope today’s presentation has shared some new information and reminded you why taking a moment to be safe is a great investment. Your safety is in your hands. Next time a friend jaywalks, or you’re rushing to catch a bus, or your phone rings as you’re crossing the street, please remember this and make a safe choice for your own benefit. Walk smart and stay safe!

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