**Introduction**

Hey everyone! Today, we’re going to work together to learn about a really important topic: pedestrian safety. Pedestrian is a big word to describe someone who is walking along a road, usually on a sidewalk. 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? This could be to school, to a friend’s house, to the park, or taking your family’s dog for a walk. Great! That means, when you were walking, you were a pedestrian. Today our presentation is focused on making safe choices while walking.

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Let’s chat about when it’s safe to cross at an intersection where there is a stop light for cars. A picture will appear on the screen, and I want you to raise your hand if you would cross when the signal looks like the one of the screen.

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Would you cross now? [PAUSE] If the signal looked like this, you would not cross. When the DON’T WALK pedestrian signal is displayed you wait for your turn.

**[next slide – go to Slide 5]**

How about now? [PAUSE]

The driver of the car has a green light, so it is the driver’s turn to go. When it is the pedestrians turn to go, they will 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.

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How about now? [PAUSE]

What does the flashing DON’T WALK signal mean? [PAUSE] It means that you should not start crossing. If you have already started crossing, you can finish crossing.

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How about now? [PAUSE]

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 always look all ways before crossing. As well, make sure you push the pedestrian pushbutton before crossing since it will give you the signal and longer to cross. Great Job, everyone!

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Play video.

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Let’s think about what each of you can do to reduce your risk by playing this Walk Wise game. 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 how the pedestrians who are being unsafe could make a safer choice. Once some time has passed, I will give you the chance to share your ideas.

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**Answer:** The pedestrians are being unsafe because they are running across the crosswalk.

**Messaging:** Do you think that running across the crosswalk is safe? (No.) That’s right, it’s not safe. If the pedestrian running across the crosswalk was to fall, do you think the car could see them on the ground? No. Always pay attention to your surroundings when crossing. To stay safe, stop before the crosswalk, check you have the right of way and a WALK signal, look and listen for cars and bikes, and then cross carefully.

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**Answer**: This pedestrian is being UNSAFE because they are running after their ball on the street.

**Messaging**: Do you think if someone is chasing after their ball, they are paying attention to the road and their surroundings? That’s right, they are not paying attention to anything around them if they are focused on the ball. When playing with your toys near roads it is not safe to run onto the road, because it can be hard for drivers to see you.

Do you think drivers are expecting someone to run on the road? No, they aren’t. If you chase your ball onto the road and you are not paying attention to your surroundings, and the driver does not expect to see you there, it is very dangerous.

To make a safe choice, the pedestrian should not run onto the road, instead they should call for a parent or adult to come help them retrieve their toy.

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

**Messaging:** Do you think drivers are expecting to see someone crossing here? That’s right, they are not expecting someone to be crossing here. Do you think drivers will likely be travelling faster in the middle of a long block? Unlike at intersections with signals or signs, drivers don't expect to stop for pedestrians in these areas, so they are normally traveling faster. Therefore, mid-block crossings are riskier as drivers have the right of way.

For safety, always walk to the nearest intersection or traffic light and cross at the crosswalk when the WALK signal is on.

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**Answer:** These pedestrians are being UNSAFE because they are not paying attention to the car reversing out of the driveway.

**Messaging**: Cars are large, making it difficult for drivers to see pedestrians behind them when reversing. When passing a driveway, always stop and check for reversing vehicles. If a car is backing up, stay well back on the sidewalk, make eye contact with the driver, and wait until they are fully on the road before continuing.

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**Answer:** These pedestrians are being UNSAFE because they are biking without a helmet on.

**Messaging:** When riding a bike, always use the sidewalk and wear a helmet. Helmets reduce head injuries from falls and protect your head.

Children under 18 are legally required to wear helmets, and failure to do so can result in a ticket with your parents' names on it. To avoid tickets and stay safe, always wear a properly fitting helmet before riding.

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**Conclusion:**

Today you’ve demonstrated that you have lots of great ideas regarding how to stay safe when you’re walking. The next step is to go out and practice! Next time you are walking, teach your family or friends some of the safe walking tips you learned today.

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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. ​

I hope today’s presentation has shared some new information and reminded you why taking a moment to be safe is important. Your safety is in your hands. Next time a friend jaywalks, or you’re rushing to catch your ball, please remember this and make a safe choice for yourself. Walk smart and stay safe!