



## Hernando County Sheriff's Office

P.O. BOX 10070 – BROOKSVILLE, FL 34603-0070 FAX 352 796-0493 PHONE 352 754-6830

### Media Release

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From: Denise M. Moloney  
Public Relations Manager, 352-797-3609

Re: Back to School Traffic Safety – 2023

Date: August 9, 2023

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A new school year is an exciting time for students and educators, but can be somewhat stressful for drivers. The first week or so of school consistently produces increased bicycle and pedestrian traffic, as well as vehicular traffic, on our roadways.

In an effort to keep our most vulnerable citizens safe, Sheriff Al Nienhuis asks that drivers remain mindful of some important safety information.

- Students will be walking and/or riding bicycles, along sidewalks and/or county roadways, to get to school.
- If your child/children ride bicycles to school, be sure they are properly outfitted with a bicycle helmet.
- Parents who drive children to school should drop them off ONLY in the designated drop off area. Do not drop off children "around the corner" and allow them to walk the remainder of the way, as this practice is not only hazardous, it creates unnecessary traffic congestion.
- Allow a little extra time and expect traffic congestion in school zones.
- When bus routes are available, parents should have children ride the bus, as this alleviates unnecessary traffic in school zones.
- If possible, drivers should avoid school zones.
- Be patient, put the phone down, reduce or eliminate distractions, and drive carefully.
- Be mindful of school busses. When a school bus stops to pick up or drop off children (and the red lights are flashing), traffic approaching from either direction is required to stop.
- If you experience an emergency or are involved in a crash, call 9-1-1 immediately –
  - o Tell the operator your exact location

- Answer all of the operator's questions (this does not delay the response from law enforcement and/or a fire rescue).
- Drivers should pay attention to the speed limit, this includes in school zones.

### *The Office of Sheriff:*

*The Office of the Sheriff is established by the Florida Constitution. As a constitutional officer, the Sheriff has the exclusive authority to administer his or her agency and is responsible for preserving the peace throughout the entire county, carrying out the laws of the state, the orders of Florida courts, and the ordinances of the Board of County Commissioners. The Sheriff is the chief law enforcement and correctional officer of the county.*

*Sheriff Al Nienhuis was initially appointed as the Sheriff of Hernando County by the Governor in January of 2011. He was then elected by the people of Hernando County in 2012, ran unopposed in 2016, and was re-elected in 2020. Sheriff Nienhuis remains accountable to the people of Hernando County.*