



AAA SCHOOL SAFETY PATROL  
**OPERATIONS  
MANUAL**

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### **Proud AAA tradition**

AAA School Safety Patrols play an important role in helping young pedestrians learn and fulfill responsibilities regarding traffic safety.

Millions of U.S. boys and girls have honorably served their classmates since the AAA School Safety Patrol program was started in the early 1920s. Interest in the program has spread around the world. At least 30 other countries, including New Zealand, the Netherlands, England, Germany and France, have emulated the AAA School Safety Patrol program. The experience is the same — a reduction in traffic death rates.

Boys and girls who contribute their time as AAA School Safety Patrols deserve special thanks for their efforts. AAA recognizes the AAA School Safety Patrol program as an outstanding school safety activity. We commend school personnel who administer the programs and law enforcement officials who contribute to the success of programs in their communities.

For more than 75 years, AAA clubs have proudly sponsored, promoted and aided AAA School Safety Patrol programs as a community service in the interest of safety for all schoolchildren. AAA clubs have been the leading non-school civic agencies active in patrol work in most communities. During its long and distinguished history, the AAA School Safety Patrol program has provided a safer pedestrian environment and a wide spectrum of educational opportunities for millions of children. AAA has provided the means for the patrol to succeed.

This manual will serve as a resource to community organizations, school administrators and supervisors who are coordinating AAA School Safety Patrol programs. The policies and practices presented in this manual are the result of the combined efforts of several national educational, law enforcement and safety organizations. It represents the cumulative experience of AAA School Safety Patrol operations in every corner of the United States.

Consistent, uniform operating procedures across the country are essential for the motorist and pedestrian to know what to expect. For this reason, uniform AAA School Safety Patrol identification and operating procedures are highly recommended.

Robert L. Darbelnet,  
AAA President and CEO



### **Role of the School Safety Patrol**

AAA School Safety Patrols are school-sponsored student volunteers from upper elementary, middle, and junior high schools.

Patrols direct children, not traffic. As school-age leaders in traffic safety, patrol members teach other students about traffic safety on a peer-to-peer basis. They also serve as role models for younger children who look up to them.

School Safety Patrol members:

- Complete training in traffic safety
- Protect students from the hazards of crossing roads and highways on their way to and from school
- Assist bus drivers in safely transporting students to and from school
- Teach fellow students about traffic safety.
- Serve other leadership functions under the direction of school officials

Typically, teachers and principals appoint Patrol members, who participate with parental approval. A teacher usually serves as patrol supervisor.



## History

As members of AAA School Safety Patrols, students have protected their classmates since 1916.

In the 1930s, three national organizations: the American Automobile Association, the National Congress of Parents and Teachers, and the National Safety Council — collaborated on Standard Rules for the Operation of School Boy Patrols. These guidelines have been updated over the years to become the operating standards for AAA School Safety Patrols.

Today, more than 50,000 schools sponsor patrols, protecting pedestrians and school bus riders in all 50 states.

School safety patrol members have grown up to be U.S. presidents, governors, members of Congress, Supreme Court justices, astronauts, and Olympic medalists, as well as educators, executives, and community leaders throughout the country.

As the value of the program has gained recognition, two national awards have been introduced. Lifesaving Awards debuted in 1945. The Patroller of the Year award was first bestowed in 2002. *For more information, please refer to pages 30-31.*



### Benefits

AAA School Safety Patrols benefit students, schools, and communities.

Students gain:

- Safety awareness
- Leadership
- Teamwork
- Pride
- Citizenship
- Respect for law enforcement

Schools benefit from opportunities to promote:

- Traffic safety awareness
- Peer-to-peer education
- Character-building opportunities
- A constructive outlet for students' energy
- A positive relationship with parents, law enforcement, and the overall community

Communities benefit from:

- Safer environments for pedestrians and motorists
- A spirit of volunteerism and civic-mindedness
- A positive collaboration between students, parents, schools, and law enforcement



## **Partnerships**

The most effective patrol programs come from a strong partnership between AAA, schools, Parent Teacher Associations, law enforcement, and the community.

The role of AAA:

- Sponsorship
- Traffic Safety Education and awareness presentations
- Public outreach and recognition
- Source for resources, such as equipment
- Source of patrol guidelines

The role of the school:

- Supervisors are responsible for implementation of school safety patrols in elementary schools within their school system.
- Principals appoint teachers to serve as patrol supervisors
- Area patrol supervisors meet to exchange best practices

The role of the Parent Teacher Association (where applicable):

- Support of the school's patrol program, including recognition programs
- Sponsors equipment and training
- Liaison between the school and the community

The role of law enforcement:

- Advisor to the program
- Advocate on behalf of the patrol to motorists and the community
- Contribute to training and development of patrols

The role of the community:

- Civic organizations may provide recognition and community awareness programs
- These organizations could include
  - Police auxiliary
  - Women's clubs
  - School booster clubs
  - American Legion posts
  - Other safety or civic groups



## **Concerns**

### **Safety of Patrols**

The safety of Patrols should be achieved through training on traffic safety, operation, and the responsibilities of each post; dedicated adult supervision; and regular inspections help protect safety patrols.

To remain safe on duty, patrol members must remain at their assigned posts and always properly display their belts and badges.

Patrollers are trained to seek adult help in the following examples of specific traffic situations:

- Parked cars blocking the view of an intersection
- Parked cars blocking school bus stop or student loading or unloading zone
- Failure of motorists to obey traffic control device
- Suspicious activity by adult or older students
- Vehicles turning at T-intersections
- Wrong-way traffic on one-way streets
- Emergencies and injuries
- Electrical wires down near the patrol post
- Domestic or wild animal threats
- Student fights
- Emergency vehicle response near the post.
- Any situation beyond the realm of the daily operation of duties at a patrol post





**Concerns (continued)**

**“Stranger Danger”**

Patrol members are trained to report problems with strangers to the patrol supervisor, teachers, parents, and/or law enforcement. These “Stranger Danger” precautions are part of patrol training:

Patrol members should be trained to never:

- Approach cars or allow other students to approach unknown motorists
- Accept candy or presents from strangers
- Help strangers with directions or search for a lost pet
- Allow their photos to be taken
- Divulge their name, address, phone number, or other family information

Patrol members are trained to seek immediate help if:

- They encounter someone who appears to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- They become suspicious of the behavior of older students or adults
- They are followed

Patrol members learn that if they are grabbed by a stranger, they should make as much noise as possible.



## **Securing Official School Authorization**

Before school principals institute the AAA School Safety Patrol program, they must obtain approval from the school superintendent or school board.

The approval process will vary according to community and school system requirements. In some cases, principals may seek support for the program from community organizations.

Although most superintendents are familiar with patrols in general, they may not understand the details of operation.

To gain support in the community and in the school system, a principal introducing a patrol should be prepared to:

- Identify community needs
- Present the patrol's objectives
- Explain operational requirements
- Outline available resources that will support the program

## **Limiting Liability**

- Create a statement of purpose that outlines the objectives of a school safety patrol program
- Grant authority to principals or supervisors of safety education or transportation to maintain safety patrols and establish rules and regulations for their supervision
- Limit the age group from which patrols may be selected and determine any exclusions from participation, such as health concerns
- Extend the same protection to the school safety patrol, supervisors, and those involved in the program that applies to other student volunteer programs
- Provide guidelines to ensure consistency between patrol programs so students benefit equally from participation
- Each school should develop a policy regarding times when school safety patrollers should not be on post due to inclement weather



### **Determining Patrol Size**

Schools should work with the traffic engineering agency in their area to make the proper determinations regarding the number of patrols that should be assigned at various intersections. A traffic specialist can provide traffic data, conduct traffic studies, evaluate information about the school and help to implement safety procedures for students walking to and from school. The analysis can be used to plan school safety patrol posts where they can operate satisfactorily, keeping in mind the age and developmental nature of Patrol membership. Busy crossings require more than one Patrol member. Occasionally it will be found best NOT to use the same crossing place to-school pupil traffic as is used for from-school traffic, because of changes in traffic volumes and direction at different times of day.

### **Selecting the Patrol Supervisor**

The School Safety Patrol Supervisor is a responsible adult, typically a teacher, appointed by the school principal to oversee the patrol. More than any other individual, the School Safety Patrol Supervisor determines the success of the program.

The ideal supervisor demonstrates:

- A strong belief in the value of the program
- Knowledge of traffic safety
- Leadership
- Organizational skills
- People skills, including the ability to share praise and constructive criticism
- Ability to inspire confidence and respect
- Dependability
- Ability to establish rapport with students, school leaders, the community, and law enforcement

Supervisor duties include:

- Serving as the source of information on all aspects of the program
- Selecting patrol members and assigning duties
- Training all patrol members, including officers
- Supervising all patrol operations
- Conducting training sessions, reviews, and administrative meetings
- Advising all adult sponsoring committees on the patrol's activities



### **Selecting Patrol Members**

AAA encourages the formation of a patrol force that is just large enough to fulfill the needs of the school. Coordination is much easier with a smaller group. After determining the optimum size of the patrol a school needs, choose members based on demonstrated:

- Leadership
- Maturity
- Reliability
- Ability to follow rules
- Punctuality
- Health (or ability to perform duties)
- Interest in traffic safety
- Sound judgment
- Good attendance record
- Courtesy
- Respect for classmates and others
- Desire to help others

Select reserve patrol members to ensure trained patrol members are available at all times.



### **Selection of Intersections**

In selecting intersections for posts, gather recommendations from:

- School personnel
- Law enforcement
- Bus drivers
- Area businesses
- PTA officials

Review coverage annually. New roads or subdivisions and changes in bus or walking patterns may change patrol needs.

Assign patrol posts based on:

- Intersections near the school
- The side of the street from which students approach
- Traffic direction and density
- Nearness of the post to patrol member's home

### **Parental Permission**

Students must have permission from parents or guardians to participate in the patrol program.

When they understand the educational value, service, and character-building aspects of the program, most parents are proud to give their permission for participation.

AAA can provide a special consent form which explains the aims, objectives, and operation of the AAA School Safety Patrol. This standard form also contains the membership application and pledge taken by patrol members.



## **Training**

Thorough training is an absolute requirement. Training may take place in school or special summer camps.

Trainers can be the Patrol Supervisor, a AAA representative, or a law enforcement officer.

When possible, train new patrol members for the upcoming year before the end of the prior year. Schedule refresher training for both new and veteran members should be provided before the school year begins.

Information to cover in your training:

- Fundamentals of traffic safety
- Duties of each patrol post
- Identifying sufficient gaps in traffic to allow safe crossing
- Special hazards
- Dealing with pedestrians
- School bus safety procedures
- Safety procedures on school grounds
- Maintaining records (for officers)

School training may be conducted as:

- Classes
- On-the-job personal direction
- Written guidelines and oral or written quizzes
- Joint clinics held in cooperation with other schools and involving new and veteran members
- Viewing of training videos from the local AAA club or AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety followed by discussion
- Diagramming a duty corner and highlighting hazards and a patrol plan for the specific crossing
- School bus drills

Training methods can be used individually or in combination.

Because officers take on more responsibility and have more complex duties, most schools provide additional training for incoming officers.

Some communities schedule a Patrol Member Training Camp over summer vacation. This camp may be open to all patrol members or officers.



### **Training (continued)**

Camps are ideally scheduled just before school reopens so the training is fresh in the minds of patrol members on the first day of school.

Camps combine traffic safety education with fun activities. Classes may be taught by law enforcement, safety experts, and representatives from your local AAA club. Veteran patrol members also may lead discussion sessions or conduct role-playing exercises.

Most camps end with an exam and “graduation” ceremony in which successful trainees receive certificates, pins, and a training camp T-shirt.

Civic organizations and PTAs may cover fees for training camps.



## **Installation**

A formal installation ceremony instills pride and reinforces the importance of your patrol's service to the school and community.

Many schools make the installation part of a school assembly or PTA meeting. Some schools broadcast their installation ceremony on educational or public Television. Your school district's information officer may help you promote your ceremony.

Consider inviting the mayor, city official, school officer, a representative from law enforcement or AAA. Your visiting dignitary may be invited to lead the pledge and present badges.

Reciting the AAA School Safety Patrol Pledge (see appendix), or creating your own school-specific pledge, is an easy but powerful way to create a spirit of shared responsibility and teamwork.

AAA can provide a safety patrol ID card (see appendix) that includes the standard pledge. These cards can be presented at installation, along with badges, belts and other equipment.





## **Officer Selection**

The Patrol Supervisor selects officers. The supervisor may do this individually or by supervising an election by patrol members. Officers generally serve for one semester.

Typically, a patrol has a captain, lieutenant, and a sergeant. The size of the patrol unit determines the number of officers needed. Patrol officers take on additional responsibility and help lead activities. Officers also must be trained to substitute for any post. One of the lieutenants becomes acting captain when the captain is not available for duty.

Encourage officers to rely upon respect and cooperation, rather than authority. Specific officer duties are outlined later in the manual.

## **Officer Duties**

Captains are responsible for:

- Preparing reports for the Patrol Supervisor
- Proposing the agenda for patrol meetings
- Assigning posts
- Monitoring patrol performance
- Presenting safety talks to younger classes
- Enforcing all patrol rules
- Ensuring patrol members maintain and wear belts and badges
- Arranging for substitutes as needed
- Maintaining the Captain's Record Book

Lieutenants are responsible for:

- Acting for the captain, as assigned
- Assisting the captain in checking posts and buses
- Contributing to operational reports
- Filling in for absent patrol members

The Sergeant is responsible for:

- Acting as unit secretary
- Maintaining the patrol bulletin board
- Inventorying equipment and recommending repairs, replacements, and acquisitions



### **Length of Service**

AAA recommends that schools appoint a set number of patrols to serve all year with a selection of alternates to fill in when regular members are absent. Assign only the necessary number of patrols to a single post.

Being a school safety patrol should be considered “special”. Do not make everyone in the class a patrol. This dilutes the special feeling of being selected a patrol and seriously limits resources.



## Equipment

The two identifying pieces of equipment for safety patrol members are:

- Official patrol belts
- Badges pinned to the shoulder strap of the belt at chest level

Schools also may provide additional equipment, such as ponchos, caps, and flags.

Assigned equipment should be documented. Officers must maintain a roster with each patrol member's name and a notation of equipment provided to them.

***Please contact your local AAA club for specific ordering information.***

### Equipment: Care

Each patrol member must wear a belt and badge when on duty. Assign a sergeant to see that patrol members are accountable for the care of equipment assigned to them. It is the sergeant's responsibility to keep a daily record of the condition of this school property.

Equipment includes:

- Belts
- Badges
- Flags
- Caps
- Ponchos

The sergeant responsible for equipment works with the captain and patrol sponsor to order replacement equipment. Equipment which is lost or misplaced must be replaced. Worn out equipment should be destroyed.

Encourage students to refer to the Patrol Member Handbook for proper wear and care of Patrol equipment.

Note: AAA has studied roadside visibility issues and is researching ways to improve existing equipment to increase the visibility of AAA School Safety Patrols to approaching motorists.



## **Daily Operations**

Schools should distribute the list of patrollers to staff and train patrol members to leave their classes quietly and report to an assigned patrol assembly point.

The patrol captain or lieutenant:

- Takes attendance
- Ensures that all members are wearing their belts and badges
- Verifies that all posts are covered.
- Reminds patrol members to walk quietly and carefully to their posts

## **Mechanics of the Street Patrol**

“Mechanics” are defined as the process, moves, and maneuvers of a patroller on duty. The basic mechanics are:

- Arrive at your post early
- Determine how to judge a safe gap for your posted position
- Take a position at least one step back from the curb (or edge of the street), arms down at a 45 degree angle, palms facing back
- Check all directions for traffic
- Keep students a safe distance from traffic
- Keep arms and palms positioned to hold all students from traffic until there is a safe gap
- Never allow students to walk in front of a car that stops to allow them to cross
- Step aside and motion students across the street
- Continue to monitor traffic, when the safe gap ends, cut the flow of students

A patrol member should only step into the street far enough to see around an obstruction.



## **Determining the Gap**

The first important duty of patrol members is to determine a safe gap in traffic. The patrol captain or supervisor will assist patrol members in determining when there is a break in traffic that will allow students to safely cross the street.

To determine a safe gap, patrol members judge:

- Speed of vehicles
- Traffic volume
- Road and weather conditions
- Number of lanes of traffic
- Time required for small children to cross the street

To establish a safe gap:

- Walk across the street at normal speed when there is no traffic
- Count the seconds to cross safely and add five seconds to allow for students who start across later than the lead student
- Pick a fixed point - such as a mailbox or signpost - about 1000 feet from the student crossing point
- When a vehicle passes this point, count the seconds until the vehicle reaches the crossing

Patrol members must pay attention to parked cars that may enter traffic, and vehicles that may come from driveways or alleys.

To determine gaps at intersections with signals:

- On average, it takes 10 seconds for a child to cross
- If the signal remains green for 30 seconds, count 20 seconds, then stop students from crossing until the next green light

## **Record Keeping**

AAA provides two resources that help captains standardize recordkeeping: the Captain's Record Book and the Monthly Patrol Record Form.

The Captain maintains the Captain's Record Book. Patrol records should cover:

- Daily attendance
- Number of times a patrol member is late
- Number of times a patrol member fails to wear proper equipment



## Organization, Training and Operation

### Meetings

#### Procedures

Schedule meetings twice a month. At least once a month, the school safety officer should attend. It also may be appropriate to invite the principal, police, adult crossing guards and bus drivers.

When conducting a meeting, follow parliamentary procedure, which is a set of widely accepted rules that give meetings structure and order. Procedure books such as the popular, *Robert's Rules of Order* can be found in local public libraries.

The Patrol Captain presides at all meetings. The Lieutenant presides in the Captain's absence.

Patrol members wear belts and badges to meetings.

### Agenda

Patrol officers should plan an agenda focused on both old and new patrol business.

Below is a sample agenda, incorporating parliamentary procedure:

- Call to order
- Pledge of Allegiance
- Roll call and inspection
- Secretary reads minutes of previous meeting
- Captain corrects or approves minutes
- Old business from previous meeting completed
- New business discussed
- Contributions from guests
- Training
- Captain requests motion to adjourn
- Captain asks for motion to be seconded
- Captain states the motion and asks for "ayes" and "nays"
- Captain officially adjourns the meeting (and may announce time and date of next meeting)



## **Meetings (continued)**

### **Minutes**

The secretary records meetings in a consistent format. A completed set of minutes is signed by the secretary and becomes part of the official record of the patrol.

Elements which must be in the minutes:

- School name
- Date and time of meeting
- Attendance
- Results of inspection
- Summary of old business
- Summary of new business
- Additional comments/contributions from guests  
(such as police officers, principals)
- Additional information (for example, training or recognition)
- Time meeting was dismissed

The secretary signs meeting minutes before turning them in to the captain.

### **Supervision**

Overall responsibility for the patrol rests with the Patrol Supervisor.

On a daily basis, the Captain assigns posts, enforces rules, arranges for substitutes, and maintains discipline.

The Captain is assisted by Lieutenants and a Sergeant.



## Role of Patrol at Signalized Intersections

**Only police officers or adult crossing guards can stop vehicles.** Patrol members have specific duties based on their posts.

Duties of patrol members:

- Stand on the sidewalk, at least one step back from the curb and midway between crosswalk lines
- Watch traffic flow and children approaching
- At red lights, signal students not to enter the intersection by holding arms down at 45-degree angle to the body
- At green lights, determine all approaching traffic has stopped before allowing students to cross
- Check traffic in all directions for a suitable gap and then permit children to cross
- Before the light changes back to red, return to the outstretched arms position to prevent children from being caught in the middle of the intersection

## Bus Loading and Unloading

Bus stop patrol is an important duty. Students often arrive at bus stops early and may not pay attention to traffic while waiting.

School officials should encourage students to arrive no earlier than 10 minutes before the bus is scheduled to arrive. The school also should designate a waiting area away from the road.

The bus stop patrol:

- Keeps students out of the street and away from traffic
- Lines students up for boarding when the bus arrives
- Assists small students in boarding the bus
- Checks the bus stop to ensure no belongings are left behind
- If a school bus must be evacuated, safety patrols may assist bus drivers. If a bus driver is incapacitated, the patrol may direct the evacuation.





## On the Bus

Assign one to three patrol members to a bus. They remain seated when the bus is moving.

Front patrol members sit in the right front seat of the bus and:

- Disembark at all regular stops to assist students entering and leaving the bus
- Assist the driver in keeping objects out of the aisles
- Remind students to keep heads and arms inside the bus
- Reaffirm the track is clear at railroad crossings

Middle patrol members sit in the middle of the bus and:

- Monitor student noise and behavior
- Keep students seated and aisles clear
- Remind students to keep arms and heads inside the bus
- Assist loading and unloading

Rear patrol members sit near the back emergency door and:

- Check the bus for articles left behind by students
- Operate the rear emergency door in case of emergency

*Note: Bus Patrol members are typically students from the first bus stops in the morning and the last bus stops in the evening that provide assistance to the bus driver for the entire route.*

## Carpools

Some schools place patrols at pick-up and drop-off spots in front of the school to protect carpoolers.

Patrol members assigned to these positions:

- Help students enter and exit vehicles safely
- Assist small children and students whose arms are full
- Monitor students and keep them on the sidewalk until traffic has stopped
- Direct students to proceed in an orderly fashion from the parking lot to the school



## Reporting Dangerous Practices

Part of the pledge school patrollers take is a promise to “report dangerous student practices.” Just what are those practices? A dangerous practice endangers students.

When a patrol member observes a dangerous practice they should:

- Politely explain the risk to the offender (if it is another student)
- Seek an adult if the behavior continues
- Only touch another student in an emergency
- Report dangerous situations to a patrol officer or Patrol Supervisor for follow-up

If another patrol member is involved in a dangerous practice, this should be reported to the Patrol Supervisor. Individual school system guidelines should be in place to handle such disciplinary actions, including probation, suspension and dismissal.

## Role of Police

In many communities, law enforcement officers work directly with patrols. They serve as safety patrol coordinators who contribute to operations, training, and development.

Law enforcement can make an important contribution to the success of your patrol program, including:

- Promoting motorist awareness of patrols
- Promoting community respect for patrols
- Contributing to patrol training

Only police officers and adult crossing guards can stop vehicles.



## Role of Adult Crossing Guards

Adult crossing guards may be assigned to high-traffic areas. They can help create safe gaps in traffic, control turning traffic, and assist large groups of children crossing busy intersections. They are typically community employees supervised by law enforcement.

Adult crossing guards are typically assigned to:

- High-traffic streets with safe gaps more than a minute apart
- Signalized intersections where turning automobiles are a hazard
- Crossings near schools with a high volume of walking students
- Locations where 85 percent of the traffic speed exceeds the speed limit
- Areas of reduced visibility
- School districts with inadequate school route plans
- Locations beyond the capability of student patrols

Patrols can be deployed to assist an Adult Crossing Guard. This is particularly useful at wide crossings or locations with heavy pedestrian volumes. The adult crossing guard and the police will establish procedures consistent with guidelines for patrol deployment described in this manual.



## Supporting Your Patrol Program

### School Support

The more importance and visibility the school gives to the AAA School Safety Patrol, the more the potential benefit. The program deserves recognition as:

- A safety measure
- A character-building program
- As a leadership development program
- Citizenship and volunteerism in action
- A real-world “lab” that teaches life skills such as teamwork, responsibility, problem-solving, and effective communication
- Means to enhance rapport between students and authority figures (school officers, law enforcement)
- A program that creates positive role models for younger students
- An opportunity for students to learn about traffic safety and the rules of interfacing with traffic

Schools should encourage teachers to participate, involve the PTA and community groups, and make the recognition of the contribution made by the AAA School Safety Patrol a priority.

### Fundraising

Schools across the country have raised funds for their school safety patrols by:

- Hosting a movie for students and selling popcorn
- Holding a bake sale
- Contacting fundraising companies that provide sale items
- Creating buttons or stickers for a small cost
- Offering a gift-wrapping service at the holidays
- Car washes
- Collecting recyclables
- Setting up a compost heap “fed” by classrooms and the cafeteria each day. Sell bags of fertilizer in the spring
- Obtaining plants or seedlings from the parks department and selling them to the community
- Setting up a booth at a town street fair or similar community celebration and providing face-painting or simple goods or services
- Holding a safety fair and inviting AAA, the Red Cross and other safety organizations to participate
- Challenging students to a walk-a-thon, bike-a-thon (with helmets!) or bowl-a-thon and asking sponsors to pledge contributions



## **Discipline**

Patrol members must understand there are serious consequences for breaking rules. Most patrols maintain discipline with a merit/demerit system. Parents should be advised prior to any disciplinary action.

Merit points are awarded for:

- Work in addition to regular duty
- Conducting safety talks to classes
- Making constructive suggestions
- Additional contributions to teamwork

Demerit points are awarded for:

- Attempting to direct traffic
- Leaving the sidewalk
- Allowing children to cross without ensuring the way is clear
- Leaving their post without permission
- Being tardy or absent without an acceptable reason
- Behavior unbecoming a patroller
- Arriving for duty without badge or belt
- Breaking safety rules
- Disobedience

By accumulating merit points, a patrol member may earn more important assignments. Accumulating demerits may result in suspension or dismissal from the patrol.



## **Morale Building**

A key duty of the Patrol Supervisor is to maintain enthusiasm and commitment to the program. Attention by the school and ownership by students keep morale high.

It is important for schools to recognize the educational value and service of the entire school patrol.

Many schools recognize this service with certificates of appreciation, merit pins, and thank-yous to the school patrol in school newsletters and Web sites.

Schools also may ask area businesses for small contributions, such as gift certificates or coupons for patrol members. Examples of gifts may include inexpensive raincoats or watches, or catering for a recognition luncheon or dinner.

Activities that may be introduced to build Safety Patrol pride and morale include:

- Reserving a section of the school newsletter or school web site for safety patrol news
- Assigning a display or bulletin board to the patrol
- Writing personalized notes of appreciation to parents
- Introducing and thanking the patrol at assembly
- Involving the student council in recognition activities
- Creating a safety patrol honor guard
- Hosting an annual patrol luncheon or dinner
- Proclaiming AAA School Safety Patrol Day or Patrol Appreciation Day at a local attraction
- Promoting a friendly sporting competition between neighboring patrols
- Establishing a special weekly play period for patrol members
- Offering refreshments such as hot chocolate or ice cream to patrol members
- Hosting special events such as pizza parties, movie outings, sporting events, or end-of-year picnics



## Recognition Programs

AAA makes available award certificates and a pin that can be presented at school assemblies or celebrations. Contact your local AAA Club for details.

**Certificates of Merit** are available for students who satisfactorily complete service as a patrol member.

**Service Pin** in silver is available for outstanding service while a patrol member.

There are two national awards programs to recognize the efforts of AAA School Safety Patrollers: The Lifesaving Award Medal and the National Patroller of the Year.

### Lifesaving Award Medal

In 1949, AAA held the first Lifesaving Medal Awards to recognize those Safety Patrollers who while on duty saved a life or prevented the injury of a fellow student. As we approach 2005, over 380 students have been presented with prestigious honor.

The Lifesaving Medal is awarded by an independent review board to a member of any authorized School Safety Patrol when there is conclusive proof that:

1. The life of the person saved was in imminent danger;
2. The act was performed while the patrol member was on duty, going to or from a duty post, or while on duty as a bus patrol member;
3. No negligence on the part of the patrol member caused or contributed to the person rescued being in danger.

The AAA Lifesaving Medal has been presented by U.S. Presidents Ford, Johnson, Kennedy and Eisenhower; Vice Presidents Mondale, Humphrey, Nixon and Barkley; First Lady Mamie Eisenhower; justices of the U.S. Supreme Court; cabinet officials; and other dignitaries.



## **Recognition Programs (continued)**

### **National Patroller of the Year**

In 2002, AAA introduced the National Patroller of the Year Award to recognize the patroller that best exemplifies leadership qualities and performs their duties effectively and responsibly, without incident. The National Patroller of the Year is selected from the field of Club Patrollers of the Year that are nominated by local AAA clubs.

School Safety Patrol advisers may nominate one current-year patrol member with the following qualifications. The candidate must:

- Be enrolled in the highest participating grade level of the School Safety Patrol
- Demonstrate leadership qualities, safety skills, school involvement, and citizenship/volunteerism
- Value the patrol experience

Contact your local AAA Club for details





## Resources

### School's Open Drive Safely

For more than 50 years, AAA has sponsored the School's Open – Drive Safely campaign.

The goal of this awareness campaign is to reduce the number of traffic crashes involving school-age pedestrians and school bus riders by reminding drivers to be extra-cautious.

Participating schools may obtain colorful posters for display and other "School's Open" items. Contact your local AAA Club for details.

### Best Route to School

Safety experts at AAA have developed 10 rules that help parents and children determine the Best Route to School. Use the following tips to aid AAA School Safety Patrols in the promotion of safe walking practices to fellow students:

- *Walk on sidewalks:* Watch out for cars pulling into, and backing out of driveways
- *Walk on the left facing traffic if there are no sidewalks:* Staying to the left allows you to watch oncoming traffic and get out of the way if necessary
- *Cross only at corners:* Avoid the dangerous practice of "jaywalking." Cross at an intersection controlled by a traffic light wherever possible
- *Stop and look all ways before crossing:* If there's no traffic light, wait until oncoming cars are at least a block away before crossing
- *Watch For Turning Cars:* Children sometimes forget to look and unintentionally walk into the side of a turning vehicle
- *Continue to look left, right and left again as you cross:* It's easy to miss an oncoming car
- *Never cross between parked cars:* It's almost impossible for drivers to see youngsters who enter the roadway from between parked cars
- *Play away from traffic:* Playgrounds, schoolyards and your own backyard are the safest places to play
- *Be especially alert in bad weather:* Rain, snow, fog and even umbrellas can obstruct vision. Also, drivers may be unable to stop quickly. Children should wear brightly colored and retro-reflective clothing
- *Obey police officers, adult crossing guards, AAA Safety Patrol members, and traffic signals:* These "safety guardians" can greatly enhance a child's safety when going to and from school



## Related Programs and Resources

### Resources (continued)

Check with your local AAA club for safety patrol equipment, materials, and awards to support your AAA School Safety Patrol Program. Available materials may include:

#### Printed Materials, Guides and Forms

- Handbooks
- Brochures
- Manuals
- Captain's Record Book
- Policies and Practices

#### Recognition Awards

- Certificates
- Patches
- Pins

#### Patrol Equipment

- Belts
- Badges
- Patrol Hats
- Ponchos
- Flags



### **Top Tips**

- Solicit contributions and expertise from Parent Teacher Associations or Parent Teacher Organizations, bus drivers, teachers, traffic and safety experts, and law enforcement
- Dedicate a section of the school newsletter or Web site to school safety patrol news and highlight a patrol member each month
- Encourage communication between patrols by arranging get-togethers, such as shared training or recognition events
- Reward patrol members with ice cream, hot chocolate, or a meal hosted by Parent Teacher Associations or Parent Teacher Organizations
- Dedicate an exhibit case or bulletin board to school safety patrol information; including a map with posts identified. Add a photo of the patrol member assigned to each post
- Write a thank-you note to the members of your school safety patrol and their parents



### **Quick Reference Checklist**

- Contact your local AAA Club
- Develop partnerships with the School, AAA, PTA, Law enforcement, and the community
- Secure official school authorization
- Establish policies and procedures
- Select Patrol Supervisor
- Select Patrol Members and obtain parental permission
- Select posts and intersections for duty
- Train Patrol Members on equipment care, procedures and standards
- Select officers
- Assign duties and posts
- School announcements
- Installation of Patrol



Traffic Safety Programs