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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Keep Kids Safe To and From School

The Professional Insurance Agents of Wisconsin offer the following school safety tips.

MADISON, Wisconsin (August 23, 2004) – Wisconsin parents and children are preparing for a new school year from stocking up on school supplies to buying new school clothes. The following school safety tips should also be a part of school year preparations.

Walking and Biking to School

Walking or biking to school is usually fun and an experience in independence for young pedestrians. These tips can help make the trip safer.

- A parent should select the best route, whether walking or biking (these may be different routes). This route should be practiced with your child prior to the start of school.
- Obey all traffic signals, signs and crossing guards.
- If biking, walk bikes through intersections.
- Walk to school with a friend.

Riding the Bus

According to the National Safety Council (www.nsc.org), buses are safer than cars, however, most school bus injuries occur as children are entering or exiting the bus.

- Have a safe place to wait for the school bus that is away from traffic and the street.
- Practice with children how to safely board the bus. Use the handrail to enter and exit the bus.
- When the bus arrives, stay in the waiting spot until the driver signals that it's safe to board.

- When exiting the bus, take ten giant steps away from the bus. This is a safe distance and bus drivers can see students best when they are back away from the bus.
- Always be aware of surrounding traffic when getting on and off the bus.

These safety tips may seem obvious to adults and even to most children, but in this busy time it's a good opportunity to review these basic principles with your children.

- Don't talk to, or get in a car with a stranger.
- Go directly to and from school (or to and from the school bus), unless something else has been previously arranged.
- If a parent or caretaker is not at home after school, call them when you arrive home each day so they know you are safe.

The Professional Insurance Agents of Wisconsin represents over 600 independent insurance agencies across the state. Independent insurance agents offer "Choices" in insurance coverage, delivering better coverage at a better price than agents representing single insurance companies. For more information about back to school safety or to locate a PIA member near you, look for the PIA logo or go to www.PIAW.org.

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