

# Streetcar Smarts: Safety is Savvy

Dear Educator,

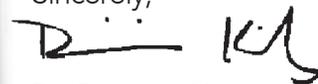
Streetcars will soon run from Benning Road to H Street NE as part of the first line in a system that will eventually serve all eight wards of the city. Although streetcars are not new to the District of Columbia—they were in operation for nearly 100 years, until the last cars were removed from service in 1962—they are probably new to your students. And because most students have had no exposure to the cars and the tracks on which they run, it's important for them to learn about streetcar safety.

This guide, created by curriculum specialists Young Minds Inspired (YMI) and brought to you by the District Department of Transportation (DDOT) and Operation Lifesaver, Inc. (OLI), will provide you with the information and resources you need to ensure that your students are streetcar smart.

We encourage you to share this valuable resource with other teachers at your school. Although these materials are copyrighted, you have permission to reproduce all program components for educational purposes.

Please let us know your opinion of this program by commenting online at [ymiclassroom.com/dcstreetcar](http://ymiclassroom.com/dcstreetcar). We depend on your feedback to continue providing free educational programs that make a real difference in students' lives.

Sincerely,



Dr. Dominic Kinsley  
Editor in Chief  
Young Minds Inspired



Operation Lifesaver's mission is to end collisions, deaths and injuries at highway-rail grade crossings and along railroad rights of way. A national network of trained volunteers provides free presentations on rail safety. Learn more at [www.oli.org](http://www.oli.org).



is the only company developing free, creative and innovative classroom materials that is owned and directed by award-winning former teachers. View our website at [www.ymiclassroom.com](http://www.ymiclassroom.com) to send feedback and download more free programs. For questions, contact us toll-free at 1-800-859-8005 or by email at [feedback@ymiclassroom.com](mailto:feedback@ymiclassroom.com).



District Department of Transportation

## Program Objectives

- Provide educators along the H Street/Benning Road NE corridor with an educational toolkit to inform students and parents about the new service
- Provide safety information for students and parents in the vicinity of the new streetcar line to enable them to use the line safely
- Communicate to the public that DDOT cares about the safety of everyone who will come into contact with the new streetcar system

## Target Audience

This program is designed for use with students in grades K-12. One activity master is included for each of three grade groups. Use the one suitable for your students.



## Top 10 Streetcar Safety Rules

1. LOOK both ways and LISTEN for the streetcar before you step into the crosswalk. Streetcars can come from either direction and they can be very quiet.
2. Never walk in front of a moving streetcar.
3. Only cross the streetcar tracks at a crosswalk when the WALK signal is on.
4. Never walk, run, or play along the streetcar tracks.
5. Never try to climb the poles or touch the wires around the streetcar tracks. The wires are electrified.
6. Don't ride your bike or skateboard across the streetcar tracks; walk or carry it across. Use the two-way bike lanes on G and I streets as a safe alternative route.
7. Never grab the back of a streetcar to be pulled along on your bike or skateboard.
8. Never run to catch a streetcar or try to board if it is moving. Streetcars will only pick up or let off passengers at designated stops.
9. Watch your step getting on and off the streetcar.
10. Tell the operator if there is an emergency.

## For Teens Who Drive

Never text and drive. Do not make or take phone calls while driving.

1. Always look both ways before driving across a streetcar track.
2. Look for a streetcar on your left before you turn left across a streetcar track.
3. Do not make abrupt turns or lane changes in front of a streetcar.
4. Keep music in your car low enough so you can hear what is happening around you.
5. Never park on the streetcar tracks. Streetcars cannot move around your car, and you'll be towed.

## Program Components

(all available at [ymiclassroom.com/dcstreetcar](http://ymiclassroom.com/dcstreetcar))

- One two-page teacher's guide
- Three reproducible activity masters—one each for grades K-2, 3-6, and 7-12
- A parent letter for students to take home
- A classroom wall poster that can be printed at various sizes
- An online feedback form for your comments

## How to Use This Program

Download, review, and make copies of all the components to share with fellow teachers and students. Be sure students take the parent letter home. Regardless of grade level, introduce the program by explaining to your students that streetcars are coming back to DC, and that the first line will run near their school along the H/Benning corridor. Tell them that to prepare for its arrival, it's important to learn how to stay safe around the streetcars and their tracks.

## ACTIVITY MASTERS

### Streetcar Safety: It's All About You! Grades K-2

**Part 1.** Review the map with your students. Point out the different stops. Have students circle the stop nearest their school. Talk about how they would walk from the streetcar stop to the school—what streets they would cross, if there are traffic signals at the intersections, etc. Consider walking the route with your students.

**Part 2.** Have students complete Part 2 of the activity as an introduction to a discussion of the Top 10 Streetcar Safety Rules (left). Talk about what each picture shows, then have students circle the pictures that show safe behavior near streetcar tracks or put an X over the pictures that show unsafe behavior. Ask them to explain their choices. For situation #2, ask students what the child in the illustration is doing correctly. (Answer: Wearing a bicycle helmet.) As you discuss the rules, ask students to explain why each item is important. What might happen if they ignored that rule? Can they suggest other safety rules they might add to the list?

**Answers:** 1. Circle 2. X. You should walk your bike across tracks, and only at the crosswalk. 3. Circle 4. X. It's never okay to play along the streetcar tracks; you should not walk, run, or play on the tracks. 5. X. Never run to catch the streetcar. You can trip and hurt yourself, and there will be another streetcar coming very soon.

### Grades 3-6

**Part 1.** Review the map with your students. Point out the different stops. Talk about the best route for students to use when walking from the streetcar stop to the school—ask what streets they would cross, etc. Consider walking the route with your students.

**Part 2.** Have students complete Part 2 of the activity as an introduction to a discussion of the Top 10 Streetcar Safety Rules on the poster. After students make their corrections to each incorrect

## A Message to DDOT Presenters

Although the material in this guide is addressed to teachers, it can also be used for school-wide presentations. Just select the activity master geared toward the age group you will address and adapt it to meet your needs. Consider beginning your presentation with some details about the history of streetcars in DC, including historical photos as well as photos of the streetcars that will be in operation soon. Be sure to show a map of the H Street/Benning Road line and the stops it will include, with the location of the school you are visiting highlighted, and keep your focus on the Top 10 Safety Rules. Engage students in your presentation by asking questions and discussing their responses.

statement, ask them to share what they wrote and explain their reason. Ask students to explain why each item on the safety rules list is important. What might happen if they ignored a rule? Can students suggest other safety rules they might add to the list?

**Answers:** 1. Replace *for urban wildlife* with *both ways*. 2. Replace *a surfboard* with *your bike*. 3. Replace *do jumping jacks* with *walk*. 4. Replace *fold laundry* with *walk, run, or play*. 5. Replace *throw your homework at* with *run to catch*.

### Grades 7-12

Review the map with your students. Point out the different stops. Talk about how the new line will make it easier for some kids to get to school. Before discussing the Top 10 Streetcar Safety Rules (left), have students check their knowledge by explaining how they would respond in each of the five scenarios on the activity sheet. Help students with suggested responses as follows:

1. Get the little kids' attention and suggest that they wait and cross safely with you, after first looking both ways to see what's coming (rule 1).
2. Stop, get off your bike, and walk it across the tracks (rule 6).
3. Don't take dangerous chances. Wait for the streetcar to pass, then cross (rule 2).
4. Wait until you've boarded and are seated before looking at your phone. It's important to pay attention and watch your step when getting on and off the streetcar (rule 9).
5. Don't even think about chasing behind a moving streetcar. If you trip or slip, you could be seriously injured (rule 8).

### Resources

- DC Streetcar — [www.dcstreetcar.com](http://www.dcstreetcar.com)
- District Department of Transportation — [www.ddot.dc.gov](http://www.ddot.dc.gov)
- Operation Lifesaver, Inc. — [www.oli.org](http://www.oli.org)
- Young Minds Inspired — [www.ymiclassroom.com/dcstreetcar](http://www.ymiclassroom.com/dcstreetcar)