

Dept. of Military Affairs: Head back to school safely with tips from ReadyWisconsin

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MADISON, Wis. – Students across the state will be heading back to class in the coming weeks, and ReadyWisconsin is encouraging parents to make sure safety is part of their back-to-school planning.

“Kids spend a lot of time away from home during the school year, so it’s important that they know what to do if there’s an emergency during the day,” said Wisconsin Emergency Management Administrator Greg Engle. “Parents should spend some time going over how to respond to those situations, so kids can start the year safely.”

ReadyWisconsin encourages families to take the following steps with their students to help give them the tools needed for the new school year:

- Create an emergency communications plan, which lists the phone numbers of parents, along with members of a student’s extended family or close friends to serve as backup contacts. Make sure a copy of that plan is available at school and in your student’s backpack. You can find a sample emergency communications plan on the ReadyWisconsin website at <https://readywisconsin.wi.gov/make-a-plan/>.
- If cell phones are allowed at school, program them with emergency contact numbers.
- Review safety information shared by your school, including school bus safety, evacuation procedures, and how students will be reunited with families if there were to be an emergency or other incident during the school day.
- Talk to your student’s teacher about participating in ReadyWisconsin’s Student

Tools for Emergency Planning (STEP) program. This free curriculum for fourth and fifth grade classrooms helps teach students about being ready for disasters. Educators can find enrollment information at <https://readywisconsin.wi.gov/step/>.

If you have a student heading off to college, considering picking up an emergency kit for their vehicle and dorm room or apartment. Vehicle kits should include items like a cell phone charger, snacks, blankets and jumper cables. For home kits, add items like non-perishable foods, a flashlight, portable radio and extra batteries.

Find additional tips for talking about safety with your kids at <https://readywisconsin.wi.gov/>. Receive daily safety tips by following ReadyWisconsin on [Facebook](#), [X](#), and [Instagram](#).