



Celebrating 100 Years of Student Safety

The AAA School Safety Patrol program is celebrating its centennial in 2021! The program was created 100 years ago to make school children safer while walking to and from school. The belt color may have changed quite dramatically over the years—from white to neon orange to today's fluorescent green called 'Lectric Lime—but the mission remains the same: To provide a safer environment and leadership opportunities for millions of schoolchildren.

Today, the AAA School Safety Patrol program continues to build on its legacy of safety and leadership with 679,000 Patrollers in 35,000 schools in the United States. The legacy doesn't stop here, however. Over the last 100 years, interest and excitement for the program have spread to at least 30 other countries, including England, France, Germany, the Netherlands, and New Zealand.

During its long and distinguished history, the AAA School Safety Patrol program has provided a safer pedestrian environment and a broad spectrum of educational opportunities for millions of children. AAA has successfully helped Patrols to thrive and expand, ensuring safer streets for all school children.

To learn more, visit schoolsafetypatrol.aaa.com.

History

- The idea of school boy patrols began in 1920 with Charles M. Hayes, then president of the Chicago Motor Club, who is credited for building the infrastructure and providing the resources so other AAA clubs across the U.S. could protect school-aged children walking to and from school.
- Hayes witnessed several children at a school crossing get killed by a speeding car. After the horrific incident, Hayes pledged to help prevent such a tragedy from happening again.
- In the 1930s, three national organizations—the American Automobile Association (AAA), 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 revised to become the operating standards for AAA School Safety Patrols. The program has evolved over the years to instill safety sense beyond street crossing, to include bus and car drop-offs, monitoring hallway congestion, and teaching Patrollers invaluable leadership skills.



Patrollers Remain Steadfast to Safety

- Patrollers direct children, not traffic. The role of the AAA School Safety Patrol is to teach students to direct their peers in safely interacting with school traffic. This includes street crossing, bus and car drop-offs, and safety monitoring.
- Patrollers are issued a belt or vest and badge to wear while on duty. The badge indicates the level of office: Patroller, captain, lieutenant or sergeant.
- The highest recognition bestowed on Patrollers is the Lifesaving Award Medal, which was established in 1949. More than 440 Patrollers have received this award for saving the life of a person who was in imminent danger while on duty.



A Century of Service

- The School Safety Patrol Program has contributed to the steady decline of student pedestrian (ages 5–14) U.S. deaths—a 24% decrease since 2010.
- The 2020–21 school year boasts 679,000 Patrollers in 35,000 schools in the United States.

AAA School Safety Patrol members have grown up to be U.S. presidents, including President Joe Biden, astronauts, governors, members of Congress, Supreme Court justices (William Brennan, Stephen Breyer, Warren Burger, Anthony Kennedy and Clarence Thomas) and Olympic medalists (Eric Heiden, Caitlyn Jenner and Edwin Moses).