

WHAT'S *New*

IN THE METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT

A weekly update for residents, visitors, and workers in the District of Columbia



Friday, August 26, 2016

DC SCHOOLS NOW IN SESSION: PLEASE DRIVE SAFELY AND BE ALERT!

The 2016-2017 school year began for most DC public schools on Monday, August 22. Motorists are reminded to drive safely and pay close attention to pedestrian traffic in school zones. Children will be walking to and from school and crossing the streets—sometimes at busy intersections—at different times of the day. Please be particularly vigilant during rush hour. The MPD is asking that everyone stay alert and watchful so that the travels of DC's students to and from school are safe. Parents and community members are also encouraged to take the time to help monitor the passageways that the children use in your neighborhood. Finally, don't hesitate to report any suspicious behavior or activity to the police immediately by calling 911.



Children should also learn how to protect themselves when crossing the street, riding the school bus, riding a bicycle, or playing on the playground. Young children—especially those who are just starting school—should be provided additional attention and given extra help in the first few weeks of school to ensure they are familiar with common safeguards when crossing the street and dealing with strangers. Following are some suggestions for helping to protect your children:

- Look both ways before crossing the street.
- Never run into the street. When you come to the curb, STOP, then look both ways.
- Never run between cars into the street.
- Be sure to cross the street at a crosswalk or where the crossing guard is. Only walk when the signal flashes the walk sign or when a crossing guard says it's okay.
- Walk on the sidewalk, not in the street.
- Wear clothing that allows drivers and people to see you. That means no dark clothes after dark or early in the morning. If you have to be out in the dark, be sure to put reflective tape on your coat.
- Don't talk to strangers, take anything from them, or go anywhere with them.

The Metropolitan Police Department is looking forward to a safe and successful school year. Please join School Safety Division in creating a positive learning environment for all DC students, teachers and staff!

» For more Back to School safety tips for you and your children, go to:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/backtoschool>

» A variety of other safety tips are provided by the Metropolitan Police Department. For a complete list, go to
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/safety>

» Regardless of your mode of transportation—car, bicycle, or feet—it's important to know the rules of the road. Get some tips on the MPD's website at:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/sharetheroad>

AS STUDENTS RETURN TO COLLEGE, THE MPD STRESSES CAMPUS SAFETY

In the past few weeks, DC's colleges and universities have been welcoming tens of thousands of students for the 2015-2016 academic year. While college campuses in general are among the safest communities, no campus is immune from crime. That is why the MPD has offers a comprehensive "Campus Safety" guide containing safety tips and other important resources. Promoting safety on campus is the responsibility of students, faculty, staff, campus and MPD officers, and other members of the campus community. An important part of everyone's education is learning how to be alert, use common sense, and prevent unnecessary threats to the safety of themselves and others. Most campus crimes occur when criminals are given the opportunity to commit them. By taking away the opportunity, students and others can help prevent crime before it happens. This is especially true in the case of property crimes such as burglary and theft, especially theft of laptop computers, electronic devices and bicycles. These are among the most common of campus crimes. However, students also need to know how to protect themselves from violent crimes such as robbery, assault and sexual assault. And they need to know and understand the role that alcohol and drug abuse often plays in campus crime.

» For a detailed list of campus safety tips and resources, go to:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/campusafety>

MPD OFFERS INFORMATION FOR PARENTS AND YOUTH ON UNDERSTANDING AND AVOIDING GANGS

Joining a gang or crew can give you a sense of belonging and acceptance, but often being associated with one can lead to dangerous consequences. The MPD has developed a brochure that offers some ways to explore alternatives to gang membership and how to safely "leave" a gang if you're already involved. Some of these steps take time, but with dedication and the support of your family, you can change your life.

A gang is a group of individuals that band together for a common cause and are involved in criminal activity. Many gangs are highly organized and operate across state lines. A crew is a more loosely-knit group, often based on a neighborhood. These are usually individuals who grew up in or who have family roots in that neighborhood. Regardless of gang or crew affiliation, both groups are often associated with a variety of crimes, including narcotics trafficking, gun violations, assaults, and even homicides. Female gangs or crews are growing in DC as well. Gang violence is a community problem.

The MPD's webpage on gangs helps explain who joins these groups and why and provides signs of possible gang involvement. It also offers suggestions for what parents can do to protect their children and how young people can avoid getting involved.

» For more information and to download a printable version of the brochure, go to:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/gangs>

NEWS & NOTES

Also Noteworthy

Tell Us How We're Doing. MPD is now part of Grade DC. We invite you to share your thoughts on our service – positive or negative – through MPD's email groups, our social media, or by visiting the Grade DC website. Get more information at <http://grade.dc.gov>.

Join the MPD Reserve Corps. The MPD

Reserve Corps, a volunteer policing program is seeking new members. Applications are now being accepted at <http://dcpolicejobs.dc.gov>.

Report Crimes Against Children through the CyberTipline. The CyberTipline is a Congressionally-mandated means for reporting crimes against children. Report crimes 24-hours a day, 7 days a week by calling 1-800-843-5678 or reporting crimes online at <http://www.cybertipline.com>.

Preventing terrorism is everybody's business. If you SEE something, SAY something. Call the MPD at (202) 727-9099 to report suspicious activity that has already occurred. Call 911 to report in-progress threats or emergencies. Learn how you can help fight terrorism at <http://mpdc.dc.gov/operationTIPP>.

Information, ideas, or comments about this service?

Send an e-mail to **KAYLIN CASTELLI**, Manager of Internet Communications, at kaylin.castelli@dc.gov

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