



Transportation Services · 1253 Bauer Road Jenison, MI 49428 · Telephone 616.457.3740

April 10, 2019

To Parents/Guardians of Student Riders,

As always, the top priority in Transportation Services is the safe transport of your children to and from school. This involves more than just the mode of driving and condition of equipment. Safeguarding the children we transport also requires vigilance and proactivity in protecting young students from hazards that they do not recognize or understand. The fact that so many of our students are now in possession of smart phones with unlimited access to the internet creates situations where young eyes are exposed to things they should never see or hear. Please review the attached infographic as there are eye opening statistics to which our children in today's tech age are possibly being exposed.

1 in 10 adolescents/teens have had embarrassing or damaging pictures taken of themselves without their permission, often by cell phones.



About half of young people have experienced some form of cyber bullying, and 10 to 20 percent experience it regularly.



Children under the age of 10 now account for 22% of online adult content consumption of those under the age of 18.



Over 80% of teens use a cell phone regularly, making it a common medium for cyber bullying.



The average age of a person's first exposure to online adult content is 11 years old.

Only 12% of parents know if their teen is accessing online adult content.

Sources:

Hartford County Examiner, The Huffington Post (2016), TruResearch (2012), British Journal of School Nursing

With all of this in mind, Transportation Services is asking for your support in helping us address this potentially unhealthy environment. One of the steps we are taking that also supports our district-wide push for literacy; our buses will now be equipped with books for all grade levels (K-6th) that students can access during their bus rides. This will not only occupy their time while on the bus, but also support their educational growth. In addition, beginning April 15, 2019, Transportation Services will be implementing a new rule on our **elementary buses**. Students will no longer be allowed to use electronic devices during bus rides. Students must keep them secured in their backpacks at all times while on the bus. Those who fail to comply with this rule will be held accountable through our standard bus disciplinary process.

Here are a few reasons why we are implementing this rule:

1. Buses are an extension of the classroom and as such, expected classroom behaviors are to be the same while on the bus.
2. Our buses average a little over 50 students per route. Bus drivers do not have the ability to monitor the content being accessed on devices during bus rides.
3. Electronic devices cause distractions. Students have missed their bus stops due to not paying attention to where the bus is at, which in turn causes a delay for all the other riders. Other students display unsafe bus behaviors such as standing on their seats, moving seats and hanging out in the aisle in order to see what is on another student's device.
4. Children with data packages on their electronics have unrestricted access to inappropriate content during bus rides as our buses do not have Wi-Fi filters. "Adult Content" producers create fake URLs that are similar to highly used innocent websites by children and teens. This helps them evade the filters that parents may already have set on their children's devices.
5. Our district has a very strict policy on student privacy rights. If a student is taking pictures of other students on their electronics and posting them on social media without their consent, they are essentially committing a crime. This can turn into a legal issue quickly. Also, many students have become victims of cyber bullying and with this rule we are hopeful that we can help curb some of this behavior.
6. The problem of electronics being forgotten, lost or stolen on the bus will be eliminated.

We appreciate your help in looking out for the safety and well-being of all of our students, from our littles to teens.

Please feel free to contact Transportation Services at 616.457.3740 or email Transportation@jpsonline.org with any questions or concerns.

Kind Regards,

Transportation Services