CHAPTER 2: Personal Appearance and Attitude

**OVERVIEW:**

This chapter deals with appropriate personal appearance, positive image building, and how drugs and alcohol can affect one’s deci­sion to drive or not to drive.

**THIS CHAPTER INCLUDES:**

* Lesson plan
* Evaluation
* Check list for trainer
* Handouts and transparencies
* Reference material

**CHAPTER ELEMENTS:**

* Personal appearance
* Image building
* Alcohol and drugs

**EQUIPMENT LIST:**

* Overhead projector
* Screen
* Handouts
* Transparencies

**CHAPTER CHECKLIST**

As a trainer, you are responsible to:

* Make sure school bus drivers explain the need for appropriate personal appearance;
* Make sure school bus drivers can tell how to maintain a positive outlook;
* Make sure school bus drivers explain when alcohol, drugs, or prescription drugs affect one’s decision to drive or not to drive; and
* Provide copy of district policy for attire.

**TITLE OF LESSON: FATIGUE – SECOND JOBS**

**Objectives of Lesson:** At the end of this lesson, the school bus driver will be able to:

* Describe the district policy involving upper wear and lower wear and a safe driving shoe.
* Name three illegal drugs that affect the driving task.
* State what an antihistamine does to reduce the driver’s skill behind the wheel.
* Name four driver characteristics that are obstacles to safe driving.
* Name three behaviors that other motorists exhibit that are traffic frustrations.
* Name three things that maintain good public relations.
* Explain what the best shoe for a bus driver is to wear.

**Introduction**

How drivers deal with the areas of personal appearance and emo­tional control is a reflection of their attitude. A poor attitude is shown by taking advantage in any of these areas. When a driver’s attitude is professional, he/she can work with these guidelines with skill. It is up to you, as the instructor, to start bus drivers on their careers with a good attitude and to help them maintain this attitude.

Drivers will learn the safety and personal effect of proper clothing and appearance. Positive self-image building can be done by following six rules. Alcohol and drugs have no place in the driving profession.

**Presentation**

**Appearance**

I. Appearance is a geographic thing. What is acceptable in a farming or logging community may be completely unacceptable in a subur­ban or urban area. However, there are some guidelines that apply.

Whether or not school bus drivers think so, the way they dress and look affects many parts of their job.

A. As a school bus driver, it is necessary to identify oneself as an adult, not a student. In order to accomplish this, the driver must dress in a manner designed to instill a degree of respect. If one dresses in a careless way: i.e., blue jeans with patches or holes, tight blouses and no bra, jackets with risque sayings on them, or any clothing that is more related to school kids than adults, the driv­er cannot expect to receive the amount of respect from the students on the bus that is needed to maintain good discipline.

B. Some type of dress code is necessary in most work situations. Most school districts have dress codes which encourage an acceptable degree of modesty for drivers.

Immodest shorts or halter tops should not be worn by school bus drivers.

Skirts have generally been unacceptable, although the individual district may decide. It is directed that if skirts are allowed, they be no shorter than knee length, because they tend to become shorter in the sitting position. If an emergency occurs, the driver must, of necessity, disregard any modesty and think only of the students and their safety. This can cause embarrassment after the emergency is over. It is safer and more modest for women bus drivers to wear slacks or culottes. There are many job related duties, that will or could cause injuries to them, that might not occur or could be less­ened if proper clothing is worn.

C. Types of shoes should comply with safety standards. This elimi­nates wearing open-toed shoes, sandals, clogs, wooden soled shoes of any type, or heels of more than two inch height. The bestdriving shoe is one that covers the entire foot, encloses the toe and heel area, and has a flat sole.

All drivers clothing should be clean and in good repair. School bus drivers could wear a type of uniform such as caps, jackets or shirts of the same color.

**Uniforms help:**

1. Create additional respect from students.
2. Administrators and teachers have no difficulty identifying the driver of the bus.
3. Drivers feel more a part of their group.
4. Drivers feel and look more professional.
5. Give the driver something on which to display his/her safety award patches and school district patches. This creates respect.

Many districts hire school bus drivers who appear young. Through no fault of their own, these drivers look more like one of the stu­dents than a figure of authority. A standard jacket or uniform will help them in all aspects of their position.

**Dress code samples:**

Following are some examples taken from various school districts as to the dress codes their drivers are required to adhere to:

School District #1

Appearance and apparel — The professional driver wears clothing that is modest, functional and contributes to safety, public relations and student control.

Good judgment and taste, including neatness and cleanliness, are factors in the positive image you convey for yourself, your employ­er, and your profession.

On duty drivers shall wear shoes that cover and protect their feet, but platform shoes, sandals, house slippers and shoes with exag­gerated heels are prohibited for safety reasons.

Wearing of jewelry, scarves and long hair that cause vision interfer­ence or distraction should not be worn. Hair curlers, long dresses and shorts are also discouraged. ­

Your School District:

Use your own district policy here or use School District #1 through #3 to develop a policy if you do not have a policy.

**II. Alcohol And Drugs**

**Alcohol and drugs can cause changes in attitude!**

It is illegal to operate a commercial vehicle with any alcohol in your system.

Any medications, oral or otherwise, that affect the central ner­vous system is prohibited. These include, but are not limited to, amphetamines, barbiturates, narcotics, or other dangerous drugs. School bus drivers must not operate a school bus while under the influence of any substance, whether prescribed by a physician or not.

Any drugs or substances which may be purchased “over the counter” may be considered unsafe for the bus driver as they may reduce alertness, bring on drowsiness, or slow reactions. These substances include, among others, some antihista­mines, pain relievers, remedies for colds, and hay fever. If the medication is required, check with a physician or pharmacist as to the possible side effects before taking the medication and decide when to medicate and still drive safely. Be sure to let your physician or pharmacist know that you transport school children.

**Any driver found to be intoxicated, or affected by any sub­stance which impairs normal body performance or judgment should be relieved of any driving assignment.**

1. 2. 3.

School District #2

WOMEN: Be neat and clean. No skirts for the ladies — slacks only! Women may not wear hair curlers, except in cases of emergency. (The office will define emergency.) A full shoe is required for all driv­ers while operating a school bus. All neck openings will be limited to a modest appearance.

MEN: Be neat and clean. Wear everyday normal attire. Hair must be neat and not extreme down the back of the neck. Sideburns must be squared and blocked. Mustaches must be short and neat. No shorts allowed. A full shoe is required for all drivers while oper­ating a school bus.

MEN AND WOMEN: Management will decide what will be con­sidered extreme or normal attire. If you feel you have a justifiable exception, please obtain permission of the management.

School District #3

Approved Driver Attire:

School bus drivers are expected to dress in a manner that will instill confidence and respect in the minds of the students being transport­ed. On each bus you represent authority to your passengers. In order to maintain this image, it is necessary for you to dress accordingly:

Blouses or shirts - long, medium or sleeveless according to the weather.

Slacks or jeans - no dresses, skirts, or shorts.

Shoes - preferably tie oxford. (Remember: “Safety is our prime concern.”) Not suitable for driving: slip-on sandals, high heels, open-toes or wooden soled shoes or clogs.

If school bus drivers are sloppy in their dress habits, it can be as­sumed they will be sloppy in other areas of their bus driving respon­­­

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**Section 1: driver requirements** 4 **43** Sec1: Chapter 2: Personal Appearance and Attitude NOTES:

**Narcotics at a glance**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Drug Used** | **Physical Symptoms** | **Look For** | **Dangers** |
| Glue sniffing | Violence, drunk appearance, dreamy or blank expression | Tubes of glue, glue smears, paper bags, or handkerchiefs | Lung/brain damage, death through suffocation, anemia |
| Heroin, Morphine or Codeine | Stupor/drowsiness, needle marks, watery eyes, blood stain on shirt sleeve, runny nose | Needle or hypodermic syringe, cotton tourniquet, string, rope, belt, burnt bottle caps or spoons | Death from over dose, mental deterioration, destruction of brain and liver |
| Cough medicine containing codeine and opium | Drunk appearance, lack of coordination, confusion, excessive itching | Empty bottles of cough medicine | Causes addiction |
| Marijuana pot, grass | Sleepiness, wandering mind, enlarged pupils, lack of coordination, craving for sweets, increased appetite | Strong odor of burnt leaves, small seed in pocket lining, cigarette paper, discolored fingers | Inducement to take stronger narcotics |
| Cocaine “Coke” | Runny or bloody nose, diarrhea, dry mouth, aggressive behavior, rapid speech | Fine white powder | Causes addiction |
| LSD, DMT STP | Severe hallucinations, feelings of detachment, incoherent speech, cold hands and feet, vomiting, laughing and crying | Discolored sugar cubes, strong body order, small tube of liquid, capsules and pills | Suicidal tendencies unpredictable behavior, chronic exposure causes brain damage |
| Pep pills Uppers Amphetamines | Aggressive behavior giggling, silliness, rapid speech, hallucinations fused thinking, no appetite, extreme fatigue, dry mouth, shakiness | Jars of pills of varying colors, chain smoking | Death from overdose |
| Goofballs Downs Barbiturates | Drowsiness, stupor, dullness, slurred speech, drunk, unconsciousness appearance, vomiting | Pills of varying colors | Death from overdose, and possible addiction |

**Personal pre-trip**

Every driver should ask, “Am I mentally and physically ready to operate my bus in the safest manner possible? If the answer is no, don’t drive.

EXAMPLES:

Personal Illness. How ill am I? Would it interfere with driving?

Mental stress or anguish. Does my personal problem interfere with driving?

Prescribed medication. Can I medicate at other times and drive safely?

Effects of alcohol or drugs. (Recreational)

Mental or physical fatigue. Have problems or illnesses caused me to be too tired to drive?

Emotional stress may be temporary or a permanent condition. In either case, the performance of the bus driver, the other driver, or a pedestrian is adversely affected. In collision analysis, generally one or both drivers involved behaved badly, or violated one or more traf­fic regulations.

A PROFESSIONAL DRIVER WOULD NOT TAKE ADVANTAGE OF AN IMAGINED ILLNESS OR INJURY JUST TO GET A DAY OFF!

**Driver traits that are obstacles to safe driving:**

A tendency to project the blame for collisions on something other than ones self (road conditions, vehicle, laws, other drivers, weather, etc.) An attitude that collisions are for other people is a failure to identify with the problem.

An ignorant sense of social responsibility about driving behavviro. “I can take driving risks, but others should never do that.”

Permanent or temporary, physical, mental, or emotional strain or conflict (anxiety, anger, frustration, and guilt), results in hu­man failings like haste, preoccupation, inattention, faulty judg­ment and aggression.

Inadequate knowledge and skill for coping with modern day driving.

Authorities estimate that 80 to 90 percent of vehicle collisions occur beyond chance and are caused by the interplay between the per­sonality of the driver and his/her driving environment. Generally, a collision is the result of a group of factors which include the whole range of elements in the driver’s personality, the vehicle, and exter­nal circumstances. Because it is hard to get all those circumstances to jell at one time, drivers may “get away with” violations for years and tend to develop an illogical feeling of immunity to violations.

**Collisions result from these driving violations:**

Speed too fast for conditions

Failure to yield right of way

Disregarding traffic sign or signal

Following too closely

Under the influence of alcohol or other drugs

**Reasons that cause drivers to commit violations:**

Lack of knowledge. Some drivers do not know traffic laws or personal limitations. They find out the hard way. Ex. Someone may dart into a traffic circle rather than wait for other traffic before entering.

Constant aggressive attitude toward driving and toward other life situations...”me first.” Ex. Cutting people off, showing off and fast acceleration.

Lack of alertness; thinking of other things; attention off the road. Ex. Wandering in the traffic lane, nearly missing a stop sign, following too close.

Hostility toward everyone because of personal anxieties. Ex. Expressing disdain for the driving abilities of others.

Showing-off as a means of gaining attention of others. Ex. Braking too hard, aggressive passing after being passed.

**Drivers that cause traffic frustrations:**

The slow driver who holds up other drivers. Being angry/frus­trated won’t change their behavior.

The inconsiderate driver who drives too fast for conditions. Speeding on glare ice, racing over potholes or speed bumps.

The erratic driver who cuts back and forth in traffic trying to gain a few feet.

The driver who passes on hills and curves.

The driver who double-parks, causing other drivers to cut out around him/her.

The driver who follows too closely, making other drivers un­easy.

The driver who toots his horn the instant the light turns green to hurry other drivers.

The driver who speeds past one vehicle and then slows down.

The driver who will not be courtesy and yield when he/she should at intersections.

The driver who passes on the shoulder to the right of other traffic.

The driver who will not dim his/her lights for approaching cars, or for the car he/she is following. The driver who does not signal his/her turns or changes of position.

The driver who straddles traffic lanes.

The driver who comes up fast on a cross street, then slams on his brakes at the last minute.

**Blockades to solving emotional problems:**

The person has not clearly identified the problem. “All pupils are lazy and irresponsible. I’m angry with them.”

The individual will not face the problem or try to solve it. “Actu­ally, pupils are not as perfect as I want them to be.”

He/she does not know where to get help (counselors, social agencies, ministers, doctors and employee assistance pro­grams)

The attitude of other persons acts as a limitation to solving emotional problems.

**Improving weaknesses in our emotional driving behavior**

Our behavior can improve as we get a better understanding of our emotional reactions and better ways to satisfy them. We may still get mad, but we will play it safe. We may get recogni­tion from other means than risking ourselves in traffic or being furious with our fellow drivers.

Our behavior will improve as we learn to cooperate with other people. Courtesy, a helping hand, and a smile, can earn more friends than skidding tires or angry outbursts of negative behavior.

Our self-concept is important in deciding behavior. What kind of a person am I?

(List on blackboard descriptive words the class furnishes in telling the sort of person they want people to think they are. How does this sort of person drive?) who know their weaknesses can compensate for them most of the time and still be safe drivers.

**Public relations**

“Public relations” is the responsibility of the individual school bus driver. It is an implied part of the school bus driver’s necessary skills.

The school bus driver must realize he/she is a representative of the school district. The careful, courteous driver makes good impres­sions. The careless, thoughtless driver creates harmful impres­sions. The school bus which weaves in and out of traffic attracts more attention and more comment than the one which observes proper lane usage and obeys speed limits. One discourteous, ir­responsible act reflects an unfavorable example on all members of the transportation team. Courtesy, tolerance and fair play must be used by the school bus driver as he/she deals with students, par­ents, other drivers, and staff members.

Proven techniques for building good public opinion include:

Exhibiting lady-like or gentlemanly behavior.

Performing the daily job cheerfully and well.

Maintaining good order (pupil management).

Being fair in decision and actions.

Dealing honestly and respectfully with students, parents, and school personnel.

Keeping the bus clean and in safe repair.

Combining courtesy with skillful driving.

Being proud of your good record as a school bus driver.

Having professional tools, equipment and supplies:

Reliable watch.

Pens or pencils and paper.

Flashlight.

Cleaning rags.

Special clothing for bad weather or other situations.

**Developing and maintaining a better professional attitude**

There is no magic formula for development of good attitudes. It is a matter of understanding the job and its responsibilities and doing consistently the best possible job.

Establish contact with all school principals. Alert them about routes, bus numbers and drivers. Establish good relationships.

Present a courteous attitude toward motoring public.

Be on time on routes to establish good driver - parent relation­ships. Punctuality is one of the keys to a smooth operating bus and transportation department. It is absolutely necessary to be at the stop and school at the assigned time, barring un­foreseen problems, example: breakdowns, foul weather, etc.

Show courtesy, pleasantness in handling bad situations.

Show consistency - fairness in handling of discipline problems.

Be courteous toward parents.

Don’t be seen visiting taverns in local districts, particularly in bus uniforms.

Be pleasant and helpful toward fellow drivers.

**Summary**

Review the following subjects briefly and answer all student questions.

Personal Appearance

Alcohol and Drugs

Emotional Stress and School Bus Driving

Attitude and Public Relations

**Evaluation**

Ask the driver candidates questions regarding the information ex­plained in this lesson.

Describe the district policy involving upper wear and lower wear, and a safe driving shoe.(Upper wear should be shirts and blouses and lower wear should be trousers, or slacks.)

Name three illegal drugs that affect the driving task.(Codeine, morphine, opium, marijuana, LSD, amphetamines [pep pills], barbiturates [downers].)

State what an antihistamine does to reduce the driver’s skill behind the wheel.(Antihistamines usually cause drowsiness and a lack of atten­tion to the driving task.)

Name four driver characteristics that are obstacles to safe driving.(These include: 1. Blaming others for accidents. 2. Using ir­responsible behavior. 3. Allowing stress to interfere with the driving task. 4. Not having the knowledge or skill to cope with modern day driving.)

Name three behaviors that other motorists exhibit that are traf­fic frustrations.(These would include: 1. Driving too fast for conditions. 2. Cutting back and forth quickly in traffic. 3. Driving too slow for traffic. 4. Passing on hills or curves. 5. Double parking in the way of other motorists. 6. Following too closely. 7. Honking a horn the second that a traffic light turns green. 8. Speeding to pass and then slowing down. 9. Not showing courtesy at intersections. 10. Passing on the right. 11. Using high beam headlight without courtesy. 12. Uses no turn signals for a turn. 13. Driving on traffic lines. 14. Braking at the last minute.) Name three things that maintain good public relations.(1. Courteous adult behavior. 2. Keeping a cheerful attitude. 3. Maintaining good pupil behavior. 4. Using fair decisions. 5. Being honest and respectful with parents, pupils and staff members. 6. Keeping the bus clean and in safe repair. 7. Driving with professional skill. 8. Showing pride in ones good driving record. 9. Having the professional tools, equipment and supplies to perform the driving task.)

What is the best shoe for a school bus driver to wear?(The best driving shoe is one that covers the entire foot, en­closes the toe and heel area, and has a flat sole.)