Written by Ryan Gray
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The School Bus Safety Company released three new volumes of training DVDs and accompanying teaching guides that focus on age-appropriate safety programs for school bus riders.

The box set is part of the company's "Twelve to Zero" campaign, which attempts to reduce the average number of student fatalities that are recorded each year around the so-called "Danger Zone" that extends 10 to 12 feet around the school bus. In this area, students are susceptible to serious injury or death as a result of motorists who illegally pass stopped school buses or the school bus driver not seeing the students and running them over.

School Bus Safety Company (SBSC) cited statistics from the National School Bus Loading and Unloading Survey that 42 of the 83 students killed, or 51 percent, in the past seven years were pre-K through second-grade students. Jeff Cassell, president of SBSC, said the youngest students are three times more likely to be killed because they are more carefree, not reckless, than their older counterparts. He added that the older students are also at risk because the can sometimes take the school bus for granted. The national survey also reports that 28 students in sixth grade through high school have also died in the past seven years (33 percent), and 13 students in third through fifth grade also died in the loading and unloading zone.

The training, which was reviewed by the Child Safety Network (CSN) and awarded the "Safe Family Seal of Approval," individually targets school bus safety for pre-kindergarten through second grade, third through fifth grade and sixth through 12th grade. The course for the youngest students includes several short videos and a cartoon, group activities, contests and parent information to engage their children in learning the safest practices to use around school buses. Third- through fifth-grade students are also trained through a 14-minute interactive story while sixth through 12 graders are also presented with a nine-minute video on "School Bus Safety: Just the Facts." Both older groups also receive an 18-minute presentation on preventing bullying and teasing on the bus.

"School busing is by far the safest form of land transportation, but even one death is unacceptable," added Cassell. "If it is your child, the statistics mean nothing. We need to do everything we can to reduce these fatalities from 'Twelve to Zero,' and it begins with teaching these important safety practices to children."

Ward Leber, found and leader of CSN, called the new programs "outstanding" and "best in class for their extraordinarily effective school bus safety curriculum."