



## MEDIA ADVISORY

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## Law Enforcement Target Unsafe Drivers to Protect Children, Seniors

*Multi-county 'Crosswalk Crackdown' aims to educate drivers about Florida law*

ORLANDO, Fla. – Summer is here, the days are longer, and people are more active throughout the day. That is why the Osceola County Sheriff's Office will be conducting a crosswalk enforcement operation at three specific locations on June 26.

Included are:

- A crosswalk used by local kids to get to a nearby community center and park (Old Dixie Highway and Sawdust Trail)
- Two crosswalks in Poinciana where, on average, fewer than 50 percent of drivers stop for people crossing

This enforcement operation comes just one week after a June 19 crackdown in Orlando, Kissimmee and Orange County. Deputies from the Orange County Sheriff's Office and police from Orlando, Kissimmee and St. Cloud were out in full force and issued more than 20 warnings and 85 citations to drivers for not stopping for pedestrians in a marked crosswalk.

Dubbed **Operation Best Foot Forward**, crosswalk enforcement is part of a more comprehensive effort to educate drivers about Florida's right-of-way laws and curb the pattern of aggressive behavior towards pedestrians. During the operation, plainclothes deputies and officers cross the street at marked crosswalks, giving drivers ample time to yield as [Florida law requires](#). Drivers who fail to stop may be issued a warning or a citation of at least \$164 and three points on their license. To date, more than 4,715 warnings and 3,526 citations have been issued to drivers in Orange and Osceola counties at 418 crosswalk enforcements.

So far this year, 35 pedestrians have died crossing the street in Orange and Osceola counties, according to state reports. That's a trend Best Foot Forward and local law enforcement are working to reverse. Studies show that consistent crosswalk enforcement, combined with grassroots education and low-cost engineering, result in increased driver yielding behavior. In 2012, approximately 15 percent of drivers stopped for people when crossing the street at targeted crosswalks in Orange County and City of Orlando. Today, that number hovers closer to 65 percent at those locations.

NOTE TO EDITORS AND PRODUCERS: Media is invited to *Operation Best Foot Forward* and will have the opportunity to speak to drivers, police officers and pedestrians. Contact Shelby Villatoro at 321-261-4182 (cell). Times and locations below:

## June 26 Operation Best Foot Forward Crosswalk Enforcement Schedule

Crosswalk	Time	Percent of drivers yielding in initial data collection	Schools & Neighborhoods Nearby
<b>Osceola County Sheriff's Office</b>			
<a href="#">N. Doverplum Ave. &amp; San Remo Rd.</a>	9:00-9:45 AM	26% <i>Oct 2017</i>	New Dimensions HS
<a href="#">Koa St. &amp; Laurel Ave.</a>	10:00-10:45 AM	22% <i>Oct 2017</i>	Koa ES
<a href="#">Old Dixie Hwy. &amp; Sawdust Trail</a>	11:45 AM-12:30 PM	27% <i>Mar 2019</i>	Avant Garde Academy of Osceola, Osceola Science Stem Charter School, Osceola County School for the Arts, North Kissimmee Christian School

### **Making Progress: Best Foot Forward Program Outcomes in Orange and Osceola Counties from 2012-2019**

- More than 8,000 citations and warnings issued since 2012
- 81 crosswalks enforced by law enforcement
- 40 percent increase – average yielding behavior change at those crosswalks being tracked by Best Foot Forward

### **About [Best Foot Forward](#) for Pedestrian Safety Program**

The Best Foot Forward for pedestrian safety program is administered by the local non-profit Bike/Walk Central Florida and first launched in Orange County and the City of Orlando in 2012. It expanded to Osceola County, Kissimmee and St. Cloud in 2017 and will be launching in Seminole County in 2019.

Best Foot Forward was created to reverse the conflict between pedestrians and drivers by focusing on one specific behavior change - getting more drivers to yield for pedestrians at marked crosswalks as [Florida law](#) requires. More than a campaign, Best Foot Forward is a behavior change-based program designed to improve road safety through consistent and persistent education, high-visibility crosswalk enforcement and low-cost engineering at marked crosswalks in close proximity to elementary schools and LYNX bus stops, in urban areas and cross-sections of low and high-speed roads.

### **Best Foot Forward Coalition**

Initiated and administered by Bike/Walk Central Florida, the Best Foot Forward coalition includes: MetroPlan Orlando, City of Orlando and Orlando Police Department, City of Kissimmee and Kissimmee Police Department, City of St. Cloud and St. Cloud Police Department, Orange County Government, Orange County Sheriff's Office, Orange County Public Schools, Osceola County Government, Osceola County Sheriff's Office, Osceola County Public Schools, Lynx, Orlando Health, the Florida Department of Health, the Florida Department of Transportation, the University of Miami's WalkSafe program and Winter Park Health Foundation. To learn more, visit [www.iyield4peds.org](http://www.iyield4peds.org).