



**For Immediate Release**

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## **Operation Best Foot Forward: Back to School Promotes Pedestrian Safety at Crosswalks as Students Prepare for New School Year**

**ORLANDO, FLA. – July 22, 2024** – As students throughout Central Florida prepare for a return to the classroom, the Best Foot Forward for Pedestrian Safety program is gearing up for its quarterly pedestrian safety enforcement effort, dubbed *Operation Best Foot Forward*, to bring awareness and education to drivers to keep our youngest pedestrians safe as they walk to and from school.

During Operation Best Foot Forward, plainclothes officers and deputies will cross streets at marked crosswalks, giving drivers enough time to slow down and stop safely. Drivers who do not stop as Florida law requires will be pulled over and face a minimum \$164 citation and three (3) points on their driver's license. Most crosswalks chosen for enforcement are within one mile of a school where students walk.

Law enforcement agencies across Brevard, Marion, Orange, Osceola, Seminole, and Volusia Counties will be conducting this two-week high-visibility crosswalk enforcement operation starting Tuesday, July 23 and concluding Friday, August 2, 2024. These efforts align with students returning to school in August.

According to data collected by the Best Foot Forward program this year, drivers in Central Florida are only yielding to pedestrians at school crossings 45% of the time. Additionally, the [American Academy of Pediatrics released a report](#) last year that stated how “child pedestrian mortality rates have shown an increase of 11% since 2013, driven by increases among 10- to 14-year-olds and 15- to 19-year-olds,” demonstrating the need for driver yield law enforcement near schools to protect students that will be walking and biking to their classes in August.

Operation Best Foot Forward is part of the Best Foot Forward coalition's larger effort to improve road safety. Studies show that driver behavior changes when you combine these enforcement strategies, education, and engineering over a sustained period. Crosswalk locations include:

<b><u>Crosswalk Location</u></b>	<b><u>Enforcement Agency</u></b>	<b><u>Nearby School</u></b>	<b><u>2024 Driver Yield Rate</u></b>
S. Beach St. & Cedar St.	Daytona Beach Police Department	Turie T. Small Elementary School	<b>40%</b>
NE 8th Ave. & NE 4th St.	Ocala Police Department	Wyomina Park Elementary School	<b>14%</b>
Marion Oaks Course & 149th St.	Marion County Sheriff's Office	Sunrise Elementary School	<b>34%</b>
Stadium Pkwy Midblock S. of Judge Fran Jamieson Way	Brevard County Sheriff's Office	Viera Charter & Viera High School	<b>53%</b>
S. Atlantic Ave. & Bellemead Dr.	Daytona Beach Shores Dept. of Public Safety	RJ Longstreet Elementary School	<b>48%</b>

Oakland Ave. at Oakland Charter School	Oakland Police Department	Oakland Charter School	<b>58%</b>
Jason Dwelley & Brush Dr.	Apopka Police Department	Wolf Lake Middle School	<b>39%</b>
Millenia Blvd. & Timarron Dr.	Orlando Police Department	Millennia Gardens Elementary School	<b>11%</b>
Beggs Rd. & Armstrong Rd.	Orange County Sheriff's Office	Lockhart Elementary School	<b>44%</b>
Bear Lake Rd. & McNeil Rd	Seminole County Sheriff's Office	Teague Middle School	<b>26%</b>
E. Airport Blvd. & S. Park Ave.	Seminole County Sheriff's Office	Pinecrest Elementary School	<b>23%</b>
10 <sup>th</sup> St. & Mississippi Ave.	St. Cloud Police Department	St. Cloud Middle School & Michigan Ave. Elementary	<b>33%</b>

For a complete schedule of the intersection locations including time and day as well as an interactive map, visit: <https://www.iyield4peds.org/operationbff/>

### **About the Best Foot Forward for Pedestrian Safety Program**

The Best Foot Forward for Pedestrian Safety (BFF) program is administered by the local non-profit Bike/Walk Central Florida (BWCF). BFF was created to minimize 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 countermeasures at marked crosswalks. Best Foot Forward operates in six Central Florida counties and is the largest pedestrian-focused grassroots coalition in the nation, working with more than 40 local and regional partners. Since launching in 2012, the percentage of drivers yielding to people in marked crosswalks has increased from 17% to more than 50% on roads with a speed limit of 35 mph and lower and 2% to 45% on roads 40 mph and higher. To learn more, visit [iyield4peds.org](http://iyield4peds.org).

### **About Bike/Walk Central Florida:**

Bike Walk Central Florida (BWCF) is a regional advocacy organization for bicyclists and pedestrians. Since 2010, the organization has worked on behalf of local pedestrians and bicyclists to advocate for safe and convenient places for people to bike and walk, regardless of where they live or where they need to go. Focusing on their four pillars of policy, perception, practice and sustainability, BWCF works tirelessly to advocate for policies, programs and infrastructure that is fair and accessible to all.

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