

# National Conference on Street and Highway Safety

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*Report of the*

## COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

*Appointed by*

The Secretary of Commerce

This report is one of eight issued for consideration in advance of the National Conference on Street and Highway Safety. The reports are: I Statistics; II Traffic Control; III Construction and Engineering; IV City Planning and Zoning; V Insurance; VI Education; VII The Motor Vehicle; VIII Public Relations

Washington, D. C.

November 18, 1924

**National Associations cooperating with the Department of  
Commerce in organizing and financing the Conference  
on Street and Highway Safety**

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AMERICAN ELECTRIC RAILWAY ASSOCIATION  
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CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF THE UNITED STATES  
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NATIONAL SAFETY COUNCIL

## Conference on Street and Highway Safety

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# Conference on Street and Highway Safety

## Committee on Education

*The Honorable Herbert Hoover, Chairman,  
Conference on Street and Highway Safety,  
Washington, D C*

SIR: In presenting the following report on safety education for the consideration of the Conference on Street and Highway Safety the Committee on Education invites attention to the fact that safety has the characteristics of all fundamental movements in that its success is dependent on education. Accidents are primarily the result of ignorance. This may be ignorance with regard to matters of fact, or may be ignorance of proper values. Any National program having for its purpose a reduction of the traffic accident rate presents therefore a fundamental problem of education.

It is with these facts in mind that your committee presents the following recommendations for consideration:

### Summary of Conclusions

1 That education in safety and accident prevention be incorporated in the curricula of elementary schools, both public and private, parochial schools, night schools, vocational schools, and Americanization schools by the following means:

(a) As part of a general course in citizenship in which due regard is paid to the responsibilities and obligations involved in human relations. For this purpose it is further recommended that through some agency of research there be gathered together materials and accounts of practices in the teaching of safety for use in the preparation of such a program.

(b) As subject matter of other courses in such fundamentals as arithmetic, geography, history, reading, nature studies and art.

(c) Through educational contests.

(d) Through organized school boy patrols and junior safety councils.

(e) Through the use of motion pictures and dramatization.

(f) Through talks by local traffic police officers in uniform.

2 That safety education be carried on into the secondary schools but in a more advanced form.

3 That preparation for the teaching of safety in the schools be developed in normal schools, teachers colleges, and universities.

4 That adequate playgrounds throughout the community be provided, and particularly a playground available for every school, both

as a safety measure and as a means for safety instruction, and citizenship building; and that special training in safety measures be provided for playground supervisors

5 That engineering schools undertake the training of traffic experts either by offering special courses or, if more practicable at the present time, by including such instruction in courses such as civil engineering

6 That standardized plans be developed for the selection and training of traffic control officers, and that such plans be put into operation by all communities. It is further recommended that for the benefit of small communities such training be either organized on a state basis or arrangements made by which the opportunities of the larger cities can be made available to the smaller communities

7 That standardized plans be developed and put into operation wherever practicable for the education in safety, safe driving, and accident prevention of the employees of steam and electric railways, employees of taxicab and motor bus companies, and the drivers employed by operators of fleets of commercial vehicles

8 That plans be developed and put into operation for the education in safety of the general public through the following media:

- (a) Newspaper and magazine publicity
- (b) Posters in public places
- (c) Motion pictures and lantern slides
- (d) Radio talks
- (e) Schools for motorists including both men and women
- (f) Safe drivers clubs
- (g) Safety programs or addresses at meetings of various organizations
- (h) The churches
- (i) Mass meetings
- (j) Plans for reaching parents through school children
- (k) Special campaigns

9 That safety education and accident prevention be included in the programs of women's organizations, and that these organizations undertake among their special activities the reaching of women in their homes

10 That the agencies for community safety organizations set forth and described in the report of the Committee on Public Relations of the Conference on Street and Highway Safety, be adopted by the Conference as those most immediately available through which to conduct a campaign of education of the general public

Washington, D C,  
November 18, 1924

By the Committee,  
A W WHITNEY, *Chairman*

*(The full text of the report follows)*



## The Teaching of Safety in the Schools

During the World War, the use of the public schools as a means of influencing public opinion was first carried on in a systematic way. An emergency existed and the schools did their full share in helping to meet it. Since that time Boards of Education have been so besieged by requests for help from promoters of every sort of activity, philanthropic, social, and even commercial, that they have in self-defense been obliged to protect themselves by drastic rules against the use of the schools for any purpose not educational. On the other hand, the more progressive and far-sighted educators have discovered that some of those movements actually have educational value and as such could claim a permanent place in the school curriculum. Health, thrift, and humane education, to cite a few of the most familiar examples, have won a place because of the educational content of the material which they present.

The Committee on Education, in adopting its conclusions and recommendations with regard to the introduction of safety in the public schools, has done so only after full discussion and with appreciation of these facts, being convinced first, that a situation exists which is so serious as to establish the right of safety to a place in school activities, and second, that the subject has genuine educational value.

The Report of the Committee on Statistics paints a dark picture of the seriousness of the situation. Twenty-two thousand six hundred deaths, six hundred seventy-eight thousand non-fatal personal injury accidents, and \$600,000,000 economic loss, make up the toll in suffering and financial loss exacted on streets and highways. This represents an increase of 80 per cent in the past seven years. Automobile traffic is responsible for about 85 per cent of the total number of traffic fatalities.

Thirty per cent of all fatal automobile accidents happen to children of school age and under, or in other words, nearly six thousand children were killed last year in motor accidents alone. This is a situation that no one can ignore.

The argument has been advanced that this is one of the duties of the home and the parents, and that the public school has a sufficiently difficult problem in the performance of its function as an educational institution; that it cannot stop to educate the child in the various phases of human relations. This may have been true 50 or even 25 years ago, but the complexity of social life has increased so rapidly that a large proportion of the parents of children of school age have been unable to keep pace with it. The fact is that conservation of the lives and limbs of the children—for whom society assumes a certain measure

of responsibility when it demands that they attend school—it is quite as essential as training for the future. The teaching of safety in the schools requires no further justification.

Fortunately, safety, entirely apart from its humanitarian and economic aspects, has an educational value and can be introduced into the schools, not as an added activity or subject in the curriculum, but as a part of the rapidly broadening objectives which are now commonly recognized as the real purpose of elementary education. Modern education recognizes the fact that the school can no longer be considered as an institution established primarily for the acquisition of knowledge but that it must teach the pupil how to become a useful and worthwhile citizen. The modern educator is discarding those methods which teach the child only to compete and is adopting those which teach him also how to cooperate. In such a program of training the school must be an institution for the purpose of preparing the child for life, an institution where, as one writer has expressed it, the child comes in contact with modern life in the miniature.

John Dewey says: "A curriculum which acknowledges the social responsibility of education must present situations where problems are relevant to the problems of living together, and where observation and information are calculated to develop social insight and interest." There can be no doubt that safety belongs in such a curriculum. A reasonable physical safety is one of the first requisites of a well-ordered life. We must teach the child both safe personal habits and those social attitudes and actions that are necessary to the safety of all.

The field of safety presents exactly such situations as are suggested by Professor Dewey. Safety education has already been adopted in many school systems by introducing its various aspects into the subject matter of existing courses in the curriculum, thereby enriching them with material related to the child's experience and observation. The result of this has been fresh, keen interest on the part of the children in their school work and a consequent lightening of the teacher's burden and a carrying back into the home of the principles learned in the classroom. In several cities the work is under supervision of someone giving his entire time to it.

The problem of safety is closely linked with health, thrift and the many other elements which taken together make up the great problem of developing a finer citizenship. Educational leaders of the country are now endeavoring to weld together the essential elements of a more fundamental and far-reaching course in citizenship for the public schools than any that exists at the present time.

The development of safety education in the public schools is well past its initial stages. It has a definite place in the curriculum, and the school which does not give such instruction is not making complete use of its opportunities. The Committee on Education feels, however, that there is great need at this time for a comprehensive review of the progress being made in this field by the school systems in which it has been installed, partly as a basis for improving the general method of presentation, and partly as a basis for inserting the subject into the larger and broader courses in good citizenship. It is for this reason that your committee has recommended not only the installation of safety education in the schools as part of a general course in citizenship, but has also urged that some agency of research be induced to gather together materials and accounts of practices in safety education for use in the preparation of such a program.

The committee has referred in its conclusions and recommendations and in the above discussion to an introduction of safety in the schools by methods which interpret present subjects in the curriculum in terms of safety. To indicate how this is accomplished the committee wishes to cite the following examples, drawn from the experience of the Education Section of the National Safety Council and the Highway Education Board.

Drawing is a subject now in the curriculum of all public schools and much valuable instruction may be given through the medium of drawings, posters and models illustrating facts and situations related to safety and accident prevention. Attractive blackboard friezes may be made showing street incidents. The special badges and insignia of traffic officers may be drawn and their meaning discussed as well as such familiar objects as stop and go signs, silent policemen and safety zones. Familiar signs such as Railroad Crossing, School—Slow Down, Hospital Street, Wait Until the Car Stops, and Keep to the Right, may be lettered and the reasons back of them discussed. Older classes may make diagrams of the city showing the location of possible hazards and scrap books illustrating the development of certain inventions such as the motor vehicle may be built up and prove a valuable means for acquiring general information.

Conversation, story-telling, reading, oral and written compositions, debates, and the writing of slogans, rules, letters, verses and plays are all excellently adapted to safety instruction. There is a splendid opportunity here for the child to learn to read newspapers, magazines, and government reports from which selections can be made expressing the fundamental reasons for safety. Nature study occupies an important

place in the curriculum of the average public school and a study of the safety devices in nature, as for example, protective coloring, can be made most fascinating

Educational contests, which have proved to be a popular method of introducing the subject of safety education into the schools, include safety essay contests among elementary school pupils and the safety lesson contests among elementary school teachers. In the last three years approximately 1,250,000 pupils and teachers have written essays and prepared lessons on some phase of street and highway safety. These contests are accepted by the schools as educational, since they lend themselves admirably to the project method of presentation and offer no interference with regular school duties. The activities induced by the preparation of the essays and lessons are not the least valuable of this method of approach. References are examined, safety clubs are organized, patrols formed, libraries on safety established, and virtually every civic body in a community is drawn into the campaign. The competition provokes wide discussion in the classroom, the home and the press. Aside from the wide participation, the contests afford a cross section of what the schools are doing in safety education, while the essays, but more particularly the lessons, provide a rich source of material regarding the best methods of practice to be found in the schools. The lessons are eminently practical and the best ones are used as references and textbooks throughout the nation.

Reference has been made to the use of organized schoolboy patrols and junior safety councils. One of the most important features of safety education is that it affords a practical outlet for the pupil's activity. Through these patrols and junior safety councils is given the opportunity for effective cooperation in carrying out the principles they have learned in class work. The schoolboy patrols are particularly effective in that they provide for the assignment of older boys to the work of actually assisting traffic policemen at certain periods of the day in caring for the safety of younger children approaching or leaving the school building. This is of very great value not only to those who do the work but in arousing the interest of their companions who are observing them. Junior safety councils organized along the lines of a community safety council and under the administration of the pupils themselves, are also practical in that they provide for the working out of the theories which the children have been taught by their teachers.

The use of motion pictures and dramatization is just as effective in safety education as it has been in all other forms of education.

Talks by local traffic police officers in uniform are recommended by the committee for the reason that an officer in uniform describing his duties as a traffic officer and emphasizing the conditions which result in accidents, commands the instant attention of the child and places before him vividly the necessity of being alert and careful on the streets. The officers doing this work should be carefully selected and the instruction thus given should be followed up systematically by the teacher. Experience has shown that these talks should be repeated at intervals.

### **The Teaching of Safety in the High School**

While the elementary school is the place where safety education is most needed, such teaching should by all means be carried on into the high school. Upon the foundation which has been laid in the elementary school of safe personal habits and of social responsibility in the simpler relationships of life can be built a structure in which the same attitude toward life is extended into higher and more complex fields. The duty of a community to provide a pure water supply, good sewerage facilities, playgrounds by which the children may be kept off the streets, good traffic control, new city developments that insure the best traffic conditions, are all subjects of high social importance and yet full of sufficient difficulties to make them well worthy of study in the high school. There would, however, be a distinct loss if the opportunity were neglected of broadening the conception of safety from physical accident so as cover not only physical health but moral health, since exactly the same principles apply, and the conception of safety may similarly be extended from mere personal safety to safety in the broadest sense, for not only the individual but the community, the nation and the world.

These matters are far beyond the scope of this committee except in the sense that in considering the introduction of safety into the schools the school authorities should be awake to the possibilities in the whole field. Physical safety may well turn out to be the most available approach for an effective study of the whole problem of leading a purposeful, well-ordered life in all its various relationships.

### **Preparation for the Teaching of Safety**

If it is true, as is stated by the Committee, that safety education belongs in the curriculum of public schools, then it is obvious that provision must be made for the training of teachers in the best methods

of teaching safety. It therefore is a subject which should find a place wherever pedagogical methods are being studied and it presents a problem which carries the matter quite beyond the mere field of safety itself. It is for this reason that the Committee has recommended the installation of courses in the teaching of safety in normal schools, teachers' colleges, and universities.

### Playgrounds

The necessity of adequate playground space in connection with the public schools as an accident prevention measure requires no argument. Playgrounds not only keep the children off the streets during recreation periods but frequently serve to keep them from playing in the streets both before and after school hours, particularly if the playgrounds are equipped with proper facilities for play. It is on the streets that accidents occur and anything which will serve to keep even a portion of the children of a community off the streets a portion of the time is an accident prevention measure.

Playgrounds serve, however, another and equally important purpose, which is that they are peculiarly adapted to the teaching of safety. It is comparatively easy to impress the child with ideas of safety by beginning with the thought that the playground itself is a safe and desirable place to play, while the street is a dangerous and undesirable place. Furthermore, the child can be impressed with the idea that the playground itself must be as safe as possible, consistent with the nature of the playing and the children themselves can be made responsible for seeing to it that all apparatus and facilities are in proper condition.

As in the case of teaching safety in the class room the teaching of safety on the playground requires that special training in safety measures be provided for playground supervisors. Modern and approved school administration requires that all playgrounds be supervised and if these supervisors are to use their facilities for the purpose of teaching, then they must themselves be equipped to do that teaching.

There is, however, a deeper reason for this. Safety does not cut the adventure out of life. It increases it by making it possible to have good adventures instead of bad adventures. But if we are to cut out the bad adventures the way must be opened to the good adventures. This is what the playground and recreation movement aims to do. The playground director must understand safety in the same way that the safety man must understand recreation, for the two things are parts of the same whole.

### **Training of Traffic Experts by Engineering Schools**

The traffic problem of the country as set forth by the reports of the various committees of your Conference demonstrates conclusively that it already requires the highest grade of technically trained men to deal with it, not only in the handling of the immediate problem but in planning for traffic control, highway construction and even in planning the cities themselves of the future. Many large cities are now employing city planners who no longer look upon the problem as simply one of beautifying a city but look upon it as an engineering problem of obtaining the utmost use of its street facilities. Engineering and police departments feel the need of traffic experts and in many instances are employing them to study street conditions and make suggestions whereby the streets can be made more safe for both motorist and pedestrian without unduly hampering and slowing up traffic itself.

It is highly desirable that engineering schools offer special courses dealing with the various phases of the traffic problem. This is even now being done in many of these schools and the Committee is of the opinion that the time is not far distant when engineering schools will find it not only desirable but necessary to plan an entire curriculum to meet the needs of those who wish to follow this career.

It has been argued that at the present time there is not a sufficiently rich body of principles and experience to make such a course possible and that there are not enough subordinate positions from which a graduate in a course of this kind can work to positions of greater emolument and distinction. For this reason it has been said that at the present time engineering courses can go no further than to offer optional courses in connection with courses for such professions as civil engineering. The Committee feels that there is much merit in these arguments but wishes to remind the Conference that a crisis in traffic conditions has come upon the American public unawares and that there is already present a larger field for such a highly specialized profession than is generally realized. It is to be hoped that the engineering schools will be fully awake to the situation.

### **Selection and Training of Traffic Control Officers**

There is a distinct and difficult problem in the selection and training of those who shall handle the actual direction of traffic on the streets and highways. Not every policeman has the personal qualities necessary to succeed as a traffic control officer and even though he may

have these qualities a certain amount of training should be required before he is charged with the serious responsibility of controlling traffic at street intersections in the cities or even on the rural highways. While the training of these traffic officers may be said to be peculiarly a function of police departments the Committee believes that any cooperation which may be given these departments by either this Conference or the general public will be both welcome and beneficial. Much pioneer work has been done in this regard by the police departments of the larger cities and it has been considered a subject of first importance by the police associations.

Standardized methods for the selection and training of traffic control officers should be developed as far as possible. Large cities are able with little difficulty to set up the necessary machinery for training their own traffic control officers and it seems highly desirable that arrangements be made so that these facilities will be available to smaller communities. If this should be found to be not practicable, then it becomes the duty of the state to organize some state-wide system for this purpose.

### **Selection and Training of Drivers of Taxicabs, Busses, Commercial Automobiles and Electric Street Cars**

The selection of drivers of vehicles used as public conveyances, of drivers of commercial trucks and street car motor men is of the utmost importance to the public, and care in this selection is of itself an accident prevention measure. Responsibility for accidents depends very largely upon these drivers and for this reason the Committee feels that standardized plans both for selection and for training should be developed as far as practicable.

The Committee has not attempted to set up any standardized plan for the selection of this class of drivers. It believes, however, that certain fundamental principles as being matters of primary importance can be enunciated. These are: (a) The elimination as far as possible of what is termed "casual labor," or the man out of work who is looking for a temporary job; (b) a minimum age requirement; (c) the preferential employment of married men; (d) satisfactory references from other employers; (e) sound physical condition with particular reference to sight, hearing, and reaction to surprise; (f) a knowledge of the geography of the locality; (g) general intelligence, attitude, and bearing.

The education of this class of driver after he has been selected



falls under three main headings: (a) instruction in the mechanism of the car with particular emphasis on the importance of the inspection and care of such parts as brakes, steering gear, and lights, which are directly related to safety; (b) instruction in the details of safe driving, and (c) maintaining the interest and enthusiasm of the driver in safe driving

Instruction with regard to the mechanism of a car is a relatively simple matter and requires no detailed explanation in this report either as to method or merit. Means for the giving of such instruction will be found in all well-organized establishments, for it has for its purpose not only conservation of life and limb, but of the property of the establishment itself. No driver can be charged with the responsibility of driving safely if his employer has not assumed the responsibility of equipping him with a vehicle in good order or making an imperative rule with drastic penalties for the breach, if the employee takes out a car that is not in good order. Instruction in the elements of safe driving with continued emphasis upon what have proved to be important points and a clear statement of the company's policy toward unsafe driving with regard to the responsibility of the driver are also of the utmost importance.

Drivers of this class should be thoroughly instructed in all the details of city and state traffic regulations and should also be impressed with the fact that they will receive no support from their employers in cases of deliberate violations of any of them. The responsibility of making very certain that the driver is thoroughly familiar with such laws and regulations is upon the employer, and the responsibility for obeying them should be placed squarely upon the driver.

After having received this course of instruction (or having demonstrated by references that they are not necessary), the driver's ability and habits of driving should be thoroughly examined and tested. He should be observed not only in congested but in uncongested districts. An accurate record and checkup of his accident experience should be kept at all times.

Deliberate departure from the principles of safe and careful driving or evidence of incompetency should be followed up immediately and should presumably be the occasion for dismissal.

On the other hand, the Committee believes that there should be prompt and adequate recognition of a competent and a careful driver. The method for doing this which seems to be in greatest favor is either by financial reward for a non-accident record or a financial penalty for accidents. Both have been found to be effective. In con-

nection with the problem of sustaining the driver's interest in safe driving and accident prevention, regular drivers' meetings have been found to be beneficial. These can be used as occasions for talks by officers of the organization and by men who are outside the organization in order to give the driver the point of view of the community with regard to his responsibilities. It has not been found difficult to inspire a driver with the idea of his financial value to the company, the community and himself if he is a careful driver, and that this thought may be kept uppermost he should be urged to attend regular safety meetings and the safe drivers' schools of the community safety council and to participate in discussions of accidents. The use of safety posters and safety literature also has a beneficial effect in keeping before the driver at all times the need of care.

### **Education of the General Public**

Education properly carried out in the public schools results indirectly in education in safety methods of a certain portion of the adult population of a community. Educational measures adopted by employers operating large fleets of motor vehicles of any kind are effective in so far as the drivers of these vehicles are concerned. There still remains, however, the vast majority of the people of the United States generally classified as individual owners of motor vehicles and pedestrians who must be reached with a systematic campaign of safety publicity through every conceivable medium. Occasional so-called safety weeks, sporadic newspaper publicity or periodical safety drives are not sufficient. If the problem is to be solved in its entirety and a national program having for its purpose a reduction of the accident rate is to be adopted and made permanently effective, then every and all media must be utilized and utilized continuously. For this purpose the committee recommends newspapers, magazines, posters, motion pictures, lantern slides, radio talks, schools for motorists, safe drivers' clubs, safety programs and addresses at meetings of various organizations, the churches, mass meetings, the reaching of parents through school children and special campaigns.

One of the most effective methods of reaching the public is through the daily newspapers. It has been found that newspapers throughout the country will take and publish almost any amount of material dealing with the accident and safety problem, particularly if it has a background of statistics, and when it has a local application. Two hundred and seventeen newspapers throughout the United States are today cooperating with the National Automobile Chamber of Commerce not only in the

publication of accident prevention material but in actual reporting to the Chamber an analysis of accidents in their communities with regard to causes, nature and severity

Posters prominently displayed on streets and highways in public buildings, at gasoline stations, on and in street cars and at other conspicuous points, are, if sufficiently striking and if frequently renewed, most effective in keeping before the general public the need for care in the use of the streets. Wind-shield stickers are not advised. The Committee on the Motor Vehicle of this Conference has called attention to the danger of anything on the wind shield which obstructs the vision of the driver as a possible cause of accident. The Committee on Education concurs in the judgment of that committee in this matter.

The use of motion pictures for publicity purposes has been so well demonstrated that any extended discussion of it in this report would only be reiteration. Proprietors of motion-picture houses have given every evidence of their willingness to cooperate in an organized effort to educate the public in habits of safety. This interest in the welfare of the public on the part of these owners should be capitalized, and the work of supplying safety films to them regularly and continuously organized. These same films as well as lantern slides can be used at all kinds of safety meetings.

The radio probably has one of the largest audiences of any single publicity medium in the world today. Safety talks by radio are listened to by millions. Companies engaged in broadcasting should be urged to include in their programs talks of this kind, while on the other hand their right to demand that these talks be interesting and not technical should be recognized. The program of the broadcaster must always be interesting if the broadcasting station is to retain its audience, and it is not sufficient to preach safety without regard to the sustained interest of this audience.

Schools for motorists will be found in many cities in a number of forms. Some of these are conducted primarily for the drivers of taxi-cabs and other commercial vehicles, and some of them are conducted by local safety councils for the benefit of the general public. The increasing importance of the traffic hazard and the increasingly close surveillance of the state over the driver make the establishment of these motorists' schools where the private driver can be taught the elements of safe driving not only practicable but highly desirable. Where they have been tried they have been found to be both popular and valuable.

A Safe Drivers' Club is a method for getting as many individual motorists as possible to take an active personal interest in public safety. The act of joining a so-called Safe Drivers' Club usually consists of signing a pledge card, and the paying of \$1.00 or other small sum as membership dues. The moneys realized from these dues go to the community safety organization and usually are no more than sufficient to pay the expenses of conducting the educational campaign for membership in the club.

In any comprehensive community safety campaign the effort should always be made to interest as many of the civic, fraternal, commercial, professional and similar organizations or societies as possible. One of the obvious things for any such organization to do is to make safety the subject of one or more of its regular meetings. Such a meeting may include safety motion pictures, lantern slides, or other exhibits, as well as one or more addresses. The value depends naturally on the ability of the speaker to present an address that will be interesting and will also offer a constructive program of action for his audience either as individuals or as an organization. The effort should always be made to have the president or chairman appoint a permanent committee on safety, the duties of which shall be to keep alive the interests of the organization in the matter and to devise ways and means by which it can cooperate in safety efforts.

Safety programs properly presented are of very great value in parent-teachers' and citizens' associations, bringing out the responsibility of the citizens to the community and the responsibility of parents and teachers in the training of children to avoid street and other hazards.

The influence of the churches should be one of the most effective factors in accident prevention. The problem of safety is a problem in good citizenship, and it is generally recognized that the church of today has obligations more complex than those of a generation ago. The spiritual life finds its expression in the form of good citizenship quite as much as in other less immediate ways.

There are, however, further reasons for this interest. While the safety movement at its inception appeared largely negative and its implications were not clearly seen it is now increasingly evident that its roots go deep down into the realm of fundamental spiritual values. The saving of life cannot fail to raise the question of what life is to be saved for. Safety is the condition that makes a purposeful life possible. The church cannot afford to neglect this subject, particularly as the experience of the schools shows that it not only has high emotional value, but that physical safety can be made the approach to purposeful living in general.

Special safety meetings for the general public are sometimes held, as a part of a comprehensive community safety movement and particularly in connection with a "safety education week" Motion pictures are effective at such meetings. Mass meetings with motion pictures may be held in the public parks during the summer.

Much of the instruction that children get at school, particularly when it is of such a practical social nature as safety education, is talked over with the family at home and it has been found that in this way and through the distribution by the children to parents of printed matter the school forms a valuable means of approach to the parents themselves.

One of the most popular forms of general safety education has been the safety week. This may or may not have lasting and real value according as it does or does not form part of a permanent organized community safety effort. The details of how best to conduct such an undertaking are too involved to present here but they have been thoroughly developed and are available to any community that desires to put on such a campaign. Such special campaigns if followed up have a certain value in focusing attention upon the problem and may form a good starting point for permanent work.

The attention of the Committee has been called to the fact that in a considerable number of cities so-called Vigilance or Highway Safety Committees have been organized to assist the Police Department by a variety of methods in reporting or discouraging violations of the traffic laws and ordinances. The Committee has made no recommendation with regard to this type of organization for the reason that while they seem to have been a success in some communities they have been an admitted failure in others, and their advantages and disadvantages are debatable. The Committee believes, however, that a discussion of this method has a proper place in its report.

Primarily the objectives of such organizations are not punitive or retaliatory, but are rather to inculcate respect for the law, and a proper regard for the safety of all users of the highway. Therefore, if this sort of work is to be conducted under any plan it is absolutely necessary that the committee members be men of unquestioned integrity and of good standing in the community. The scope of activity offered and methods to be employed by such a committee as an auxiliary to any general plan for promoting highway safety can only be determined by the experience gained in other cities.

In some communities they have proven an effective medium for impressing upon reckless drivers the fact that they have duties to fulfill

as well as rights to enjoy in their common use of the public highways. In others they have been a distinct failure owing to mismanagement and public distrust or a combination of both. Frequently they serve only to create a feeling of deep resentment on the part of the general public who look upon the members as volunteer spies for the police department. Whenever this feeling becomes general this particular method in the safety program not only becomes a distinct failure itself but endangers the success of the whole program.

### **Safety Education and Women's Organizations**

Organizations of women such as the National Federation of Women's Clubs and the National Congress of Parents and Teachers, with their tens of thousands of local organizations and their expert knowledge and close contact with matters which pertain peculiarly to the home, are of inestimable value in any educational campaign having to do with safety. It is these local organizations first of all which reach the mothers of children and perhaps no form of organization is equal to them for presentation of the subject to parents. It is true that some of these women's organizations have been giving a great deal of time to the consideration of a national program of safety education. Some of them have spent large sums of money in this work. The Committee on Education feels that they should not only be encouraged and urged to make safety education a major activity but that their attention should be called to the fact that the very nature of their organizations places upon them the responsibility of so doing.

### **Report of the Committee on Public Relations**

The Committee on Education in calling attention to the report of the Committee on Public Relations of the Conference on Street and Highway Safety does so solely for the purpose of adding emphasis to that report. The results of this conference and the enormous amount of preliminary work which has been done by the various committees will be of no value if like a certain class of safety campaigns it becomes an end unto itself. The information which has been gathered together preparatory to the Conference must be given to the public in the most comprehensive and emphatic way possible if it has been worth the gathering. The measures which are advised by the committees as being in their judgment the best expedients for a reduction of the accident total must be placed before the authorities of

the communities of the United States who are charged with the safety of the citizens. The citizens themselves must be taught as far as possible the importance of cooperating with those authorities both for their own safety and because of their obligations and privileges as citizens. The committee feels that the plans submitted by the Committee on Public Relations for the doing of this work are both adequate and practicable. It also feels that an endorsement of them is clearly within the scope of its work because they involve much that is educational and point the way for the carrying out of the recommendations of this committee.