

# Your Personal Coach

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The Beach Road is a nightmare waiting to happen. Many drivers ignore the 35 MPH speed limit, and too many cars and trucks roar down this narrow road. In spite of the large numbers of people straddling each side of the road waiting to cross to the beach or to get home to Oceanside cottages, many drivers simply disregard them.

You know the sight. Early in the day, families lugging coolers, chairs, fishing rods, body boards, and sunscreen wait with eager little children pulling at their hands to cross over to the beach. By day's end, the same sunburned entourage slugs their way from east to west with now exhausted kids who are likely to drag behind the rest of their pack. In both cases, there is serious danger created by traffic that doesn't slow to let these folks safely cross.

My good friend Kay prefers the Beach Road to the Bypass with its slower speed limit and proximity to the ocean. She's making a good choice. According to local area police departments, she learned that the chances of surviving a crash with no or limited injury is 90% greater on the Beach Road than on the Bypass. But she's been flipped off by drivers behind her when she's been traveling the speed limit or stopped to let pedestrians cross the street. But those drivers must have forgotten NC Driving Regulations. Check these out at: [www.ncdot.org/dmv](http://www.ncdot.org/dmv). At intersections controlled by traffic lights, pedestrians must obey the same signals as drivers traveling in the same direction and they should not start to cross on a red or yellow signal. But in the absence of a traffic light, mostly the case on the Beach Road, pedestrians have the right-of-way. That bears repeating. Pedestrians have the right of way.

Not only are drivers compelled by law to yield to pedestrians, there is a larger moral question. Imagine the terrible feeling you would live with forever if, as a driver, you killed or hurt someone. Safe drivers yield the right-of-way to pedestrians whether they are entitled to it or not. Stay alert. Slow down. Chill. Follow the "Two-Second Rule" that says you should allow two seconds between the time the vehicle ahead of you passes a given point and the time your vehicle reaches the same point. The driver who rear-ends another will always be held liable because he/she didn't leave enough room to safely stop.

Pedestrians can practice safety too. Hold hands with your little children as you approach the Beach Road. Hold them all the way across. Cross at a traffic light whenever possible. Walk on the left side of the road, facing traffic. Wear or carry something white. Don't assume that every driver sees you. Be alert and ready to move quickly away from the road. Remember that at night it is more difficult for drivers to see you. Use a flashlight and stay as far off the road as possible. Walk on the bike path where it is available.

You might be reading this column and think, "Kathleen, that's not me. I'm a very safe driver and I know the rules." Well, then who has been making rude hand gestures to my friend Kay for following those rules?! The record living-on-the-surface-of-the-sun temperatures can make everyone more testy and irritable. Nevertheless, if we all careful, slow down, and demonstrate compassion for each other, we will have a safe and happy remainder of the season and beyond.

Send your personal coaching questions to [kathleen@fullpotentialliving.com](mailto:kathleen@fullpotentialliving.com) or call 473-4004. Kathleen is a personal and executive coach, clinical psychologist, and writer. (©2006 Kathleen Brehony. All Rights Reserved.) Columns are archived at [www.fullpotentialliving.com](http://www.fullpotentialliving.com).