



Early Childhood Traffic Education – 2  
Ages 3 to 6

I LISTEN  
AND LOOK  
FOR CARS  
COMING



## To parents:

Please review "Parents' Guide for Action" before using this booklet which can help children learn how and why to listen and look for traffic. After discussing the booklet, you should help your child practice these procedures. When you ask your children to listen for approaching vehicles, a comment or question is all that is needed. For example, "Do you hear a car coming?" or "Are you listening for cars coming?" Hearing a vehicle approach immediately prompts your child to look for it. Show your child how to look for approaching vehicles. Remember to gain a child's perspective by stooping or kneeling when you are demonstrating scanning. Turn your head to the left and then to the right when scanning for traffic. At the same time point left, then right, with an arm and finger movement explaining, "This is how we look for cars coming."

Help your youngster learn the same actions.

- "Find the street with your finger."
- "Follow the street with your finger as far as you can see one way." (left)
- "Do you see any cars, trucks or buses coming?"
- "Now follow the street with your finger as far as you can see the other way." (right)
- "Do you see anything coming? A car, a truck, a bus, a bicycle?"

If needed, gently guide the child's body placement and arm/finger movement a few times. On a two-way street, teach your child to always look first "one way" and then "the other way." It is recommended that you not use the words left and right. Most three-to six-year-olds have difficulty telling left from right. Use the term "one way" for left as you look for traffic nearest your side of the street. Use the term "the other way" for traffic coming from the right.

You may need to demonstrate scanning in the manner described above several times before your youngster has the idea. Watch to make sure the child is scanning. Many



times he or she will not remember to scan. When that happens, a question or comment will serve as a reminder.

The following examples could be used:

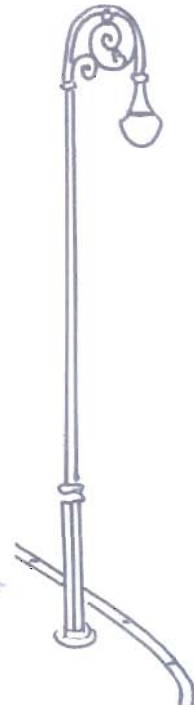
- "Point to the cars coming."
- "Do you see a truck coming?"
- "Are you scanning for cars coming?"
- "How many cars are coming?"

If your child does not scan adequately for approaching vehicles even with a gentle reminder to do so, repeat your demonstration of how to scan.

Children have to see the street before they can scan for approaching vehicles. Therefore, select locations where they can see in both directions. Your youngster's eye level is approximately 36 to 41 inches above the ground. Bushes, fences, parked cars and other objects can obstruct their vision. Plant growth may obstruct visibility to a greater extent in the summer than in winter. Mounds of snow may obstruct visibility in winter.

Eventually the stop, listen and scan processes will occur simultaneously. However, very young children handle each of these tasks separately and need your help and time to practice each skill.

In addition to helping your youngster learn how to listen and scan for approaching vehicles, explain why walkers should take these actions. Tell them that the reason for stopping, listening and scanning is to avoid being hit by approaching or backing vehicles. They need to understand that it is possible for a vehicle to hit them if they are in the street or driveway. Children must understand that they cannot be in the street when a car is coming. They can help drivers by moving out of their way.



These walkers are listening for cars.

Did you know that sometimes you can hear a car coming before you see it?

A car sounds louder when it is coming closer.

The sound gets softer when it is going away.



When we go for a walk, we'll listen for the different noises cars make when they are coming and going. Walkers use their eyes to see if cars are coming before they cross a street.



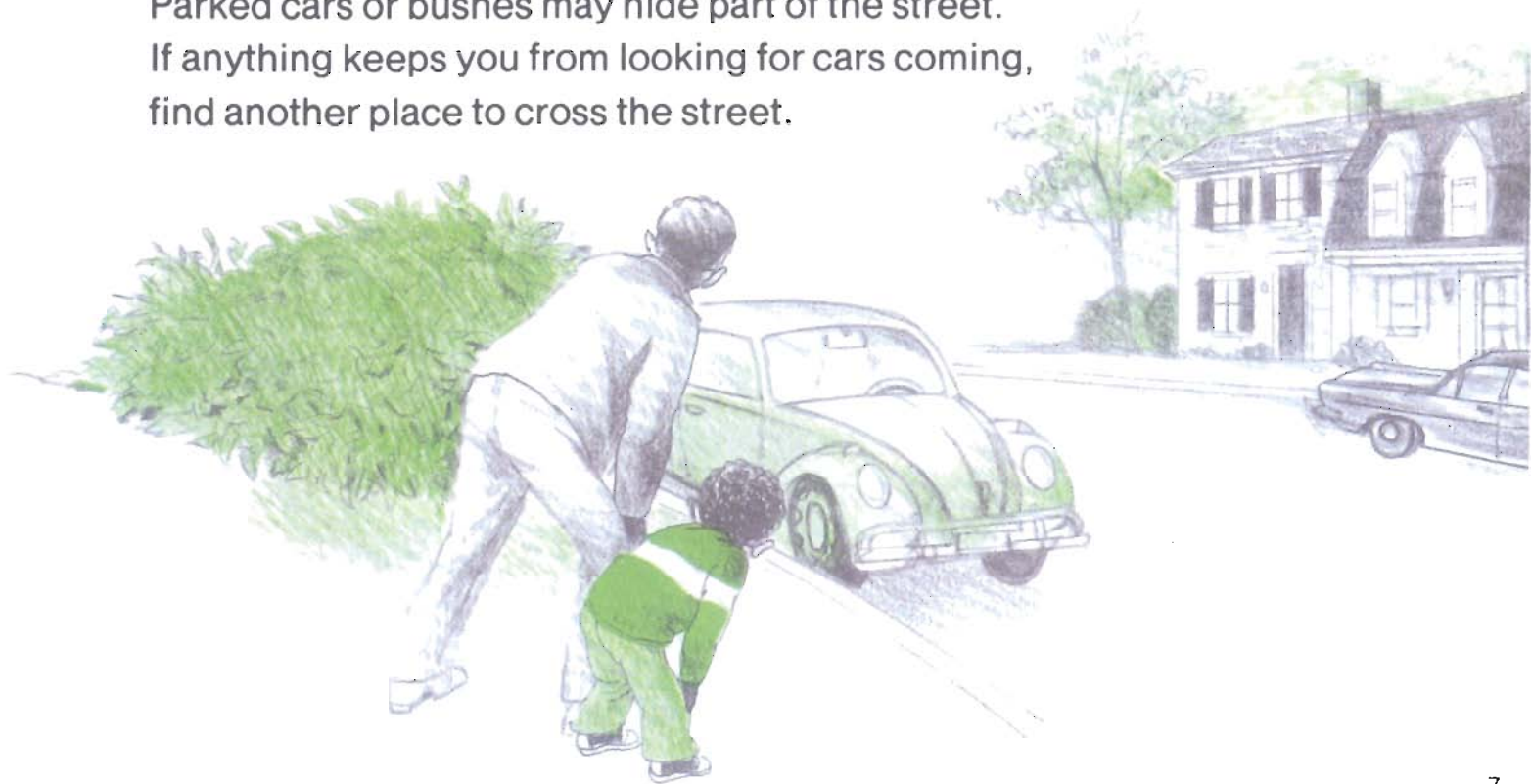
First they look one way for cars coming.  
Then they look the other way  
to see if cars are coming.



The next time we go for a walk,  
we will look for cars the way  
this walker is looking.

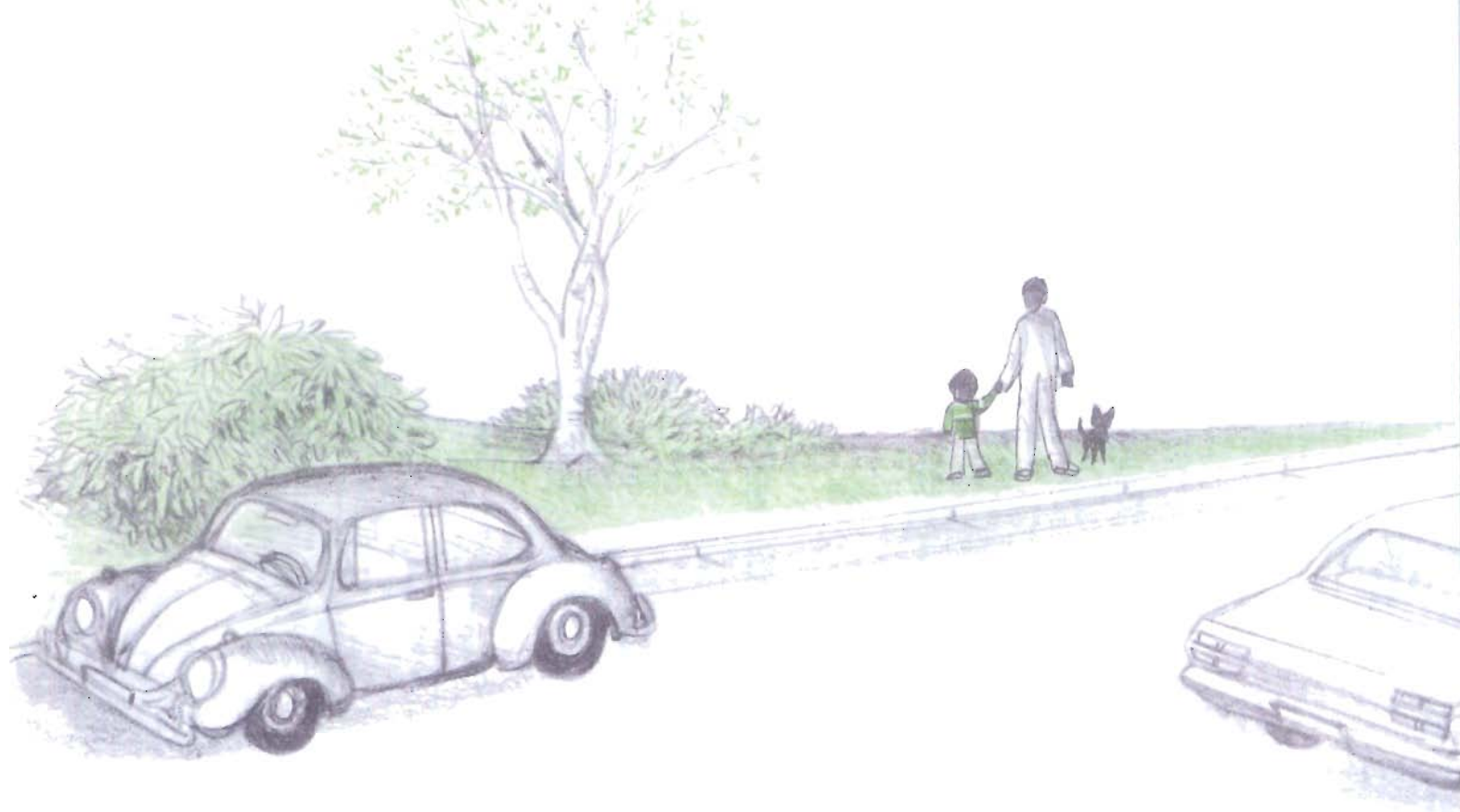


Walkers have to see the street before they can look for cars coming.  
Parked cars or bushes may hide part of the street.  
If anything keeps you from looking for cars coming,  
find another place to cross the street.





The walkers are finding a place where they can look for cars coming, a place where drivers can see them, too.



They have to see a long way in both directions before they can cross the street.

How can walkers be sure they will not be in the street when a car is coming? First, *stop* before the edge of the street.



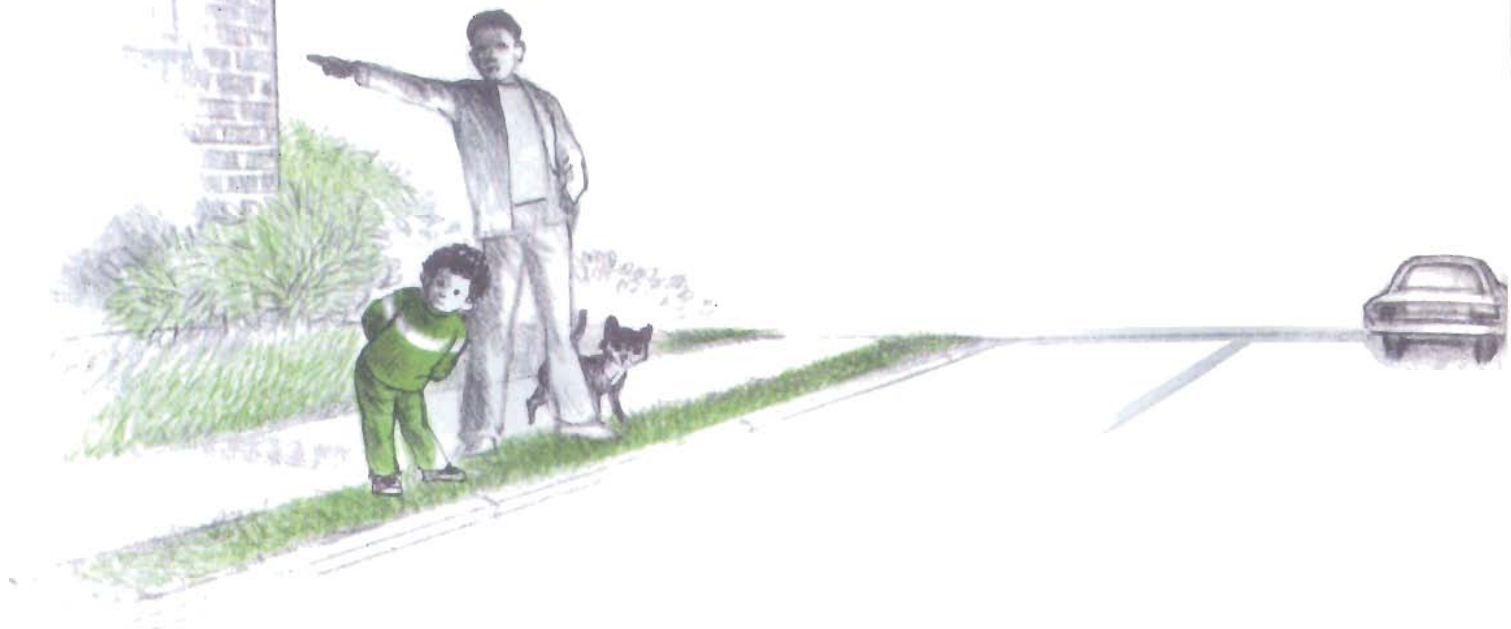
Then *listen* for cars coming.



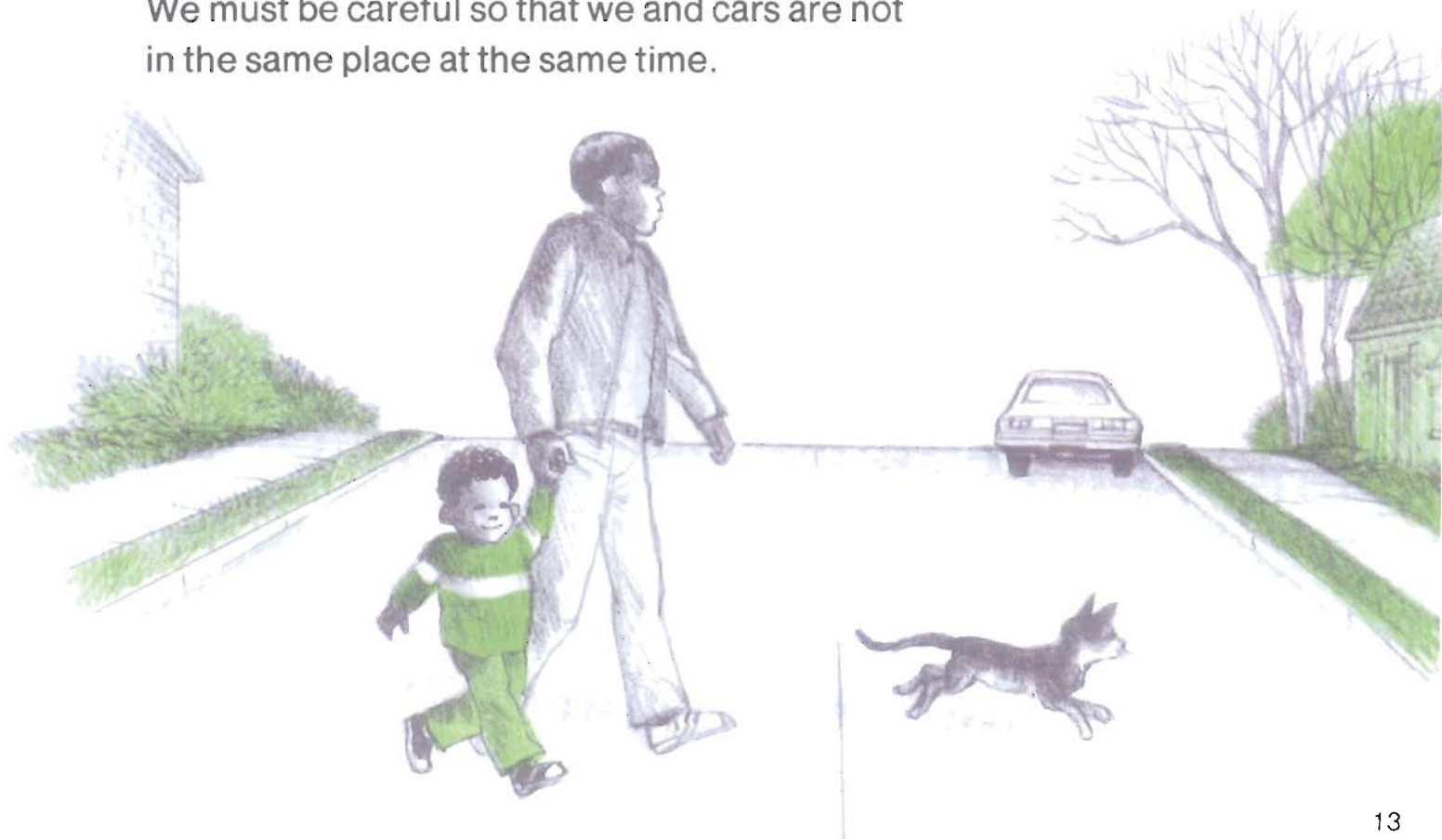
Next *look* for cars coming *one way*, on *your* side of the street,



Then look for cars coming the *other* way.  
When no cars are coming, we can cross the street.



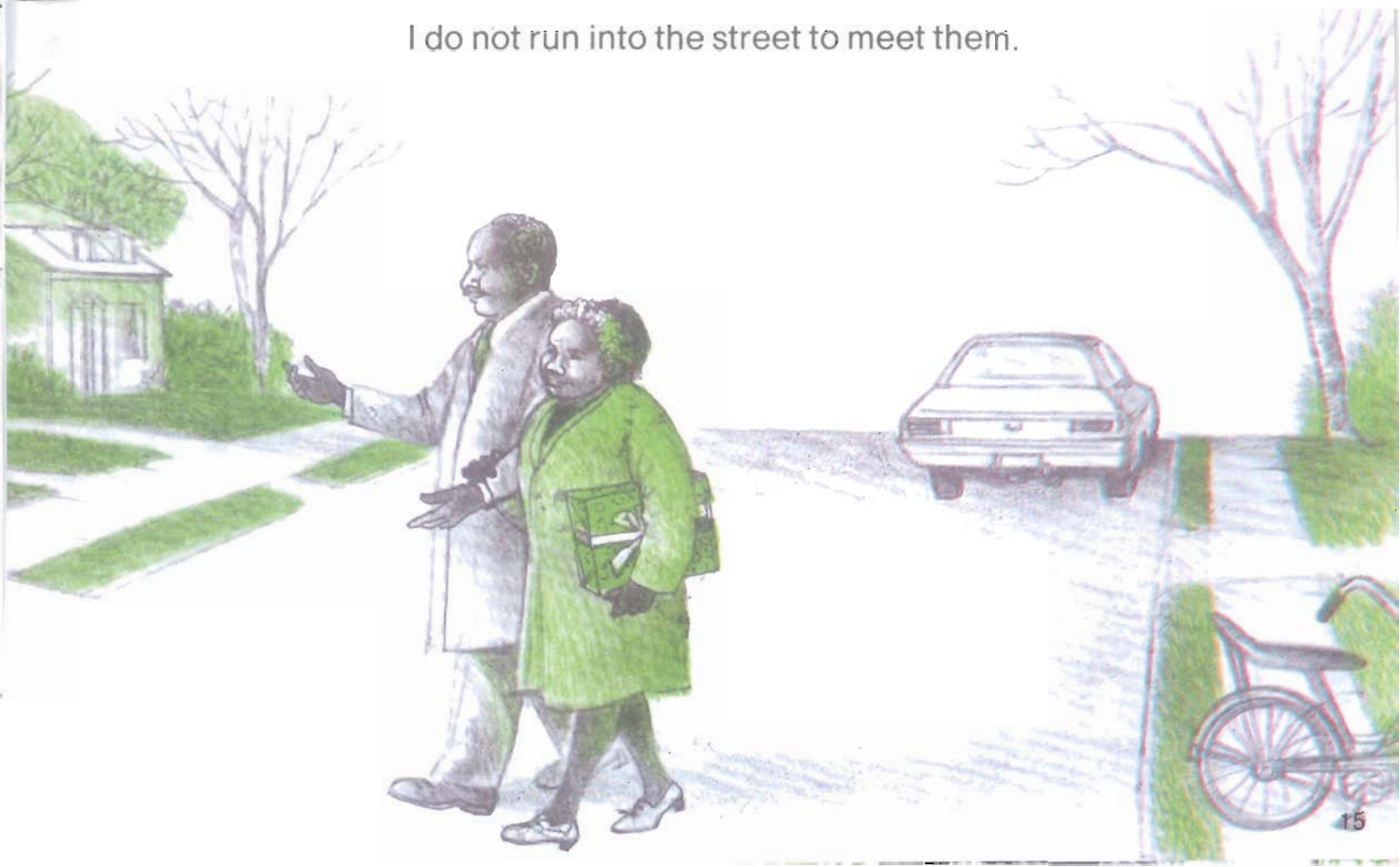
We must be careful so that we and cars are not in the same place at the same time.



I stay in my yard when someone is coming to see me.



I do not run into the street to meet them.



*The Preschool Children in Traffic program was developed by AAA to meet the critical problem of pedestrian accidents involving children under 6 years of age.*

*Need for such a program is demonstrated in these statistics: children age 2 to 6 represent just over 6% of the total population, but are involved in up to 25% of all pedestrian mishaps.*

*It was determined that the most promising approach to improving preschool pedestrian safety is to provide parents with concepts and materials needed to assist their children in learning to deal with real-world traffic environments. The problem also is suitable for use by nursery schools, day care centers and other educational systems for the very young.*

*This program was created by AAA Department of Traffic Safety.*

Stock #3265—Includes the Following:  
PRESCHOOL CHILDREN IN TRAFFIC: Parent's Guide for Action  
WHEN I GO OUTSIDE—Booklet 1  
I LISTEN AND LOOK FOR CARS COMING—Booklet 2  
HOW I CROSS A STREET—Booklet 3  
TRAFFIC SIGNAL LIGHTS—Booklet 4

