Safe Blocks Near Schools and Parks

Updated October 28, 2026. Every phone number was checked against an official page.

Parents should not have to explain a crisis on the sidewalk to a two-year-old on the walk to the park. This initiative asks for priority response on the blocks around every school and park, and parks full of life after dark. It needs no new law.

What does the law already cover near schools?

Santa Monica's camping ban, Municipal Code section 4.08.095, applies citywide, and the Santa Monica Daily Press reported in May 2025 that it explicitly covers Santa Monica College and school district property. Related rules cover blocking the public right-of-way (3.12.360) and parks closed at night (4.55.120). Only police enforce these rules.

Does Los Angeles's 500-foot school rule apply in Santa Monica?

No. In 2022 the Los Angeles City Council voted to bar encampments within 500 feet of schools and day care centers under its Municipal Code section 41.18. That is City of Los Angeles law. Santa Monica is a separate city with its own code, and its camping ban already applies on every block, not only near schools. What Santa Monica lacks is a priority on those blocks and published response times.

Who do I call about a problem near a school or park?

Situation	Call
Someone is in danger, or a child is at risk	**911**
Someone in a mental health or drug crisis, no immediate danger	**988** (call or text)
Police should come, but it is not an emergency	SMPD non-emergency **(310) 458-8491**
An encampment or abandoned property	Santa Monica 311: dial **3-1-1**, or use the City of Santa Monica app
On or next to campus	Tell the school office too, so staff can plan arrival and dismissal

More detail: Who to call about homelessness in Santa Monica.

What are Kid Corridors?

Kid Corridors are the blocks within 250 meters of the city's school campuses and parks; by our count that is 20 school campuses and 34 parks. The ask has three parts: a published response-time target for calls on those blocks, ambassador coverage at school arrival and dismissal, and lighting fixes there first. The site already flags any report made inside a Kid Corridor.

Do parks full of life after dark make a difference?

Yes, the evidence is strong. Los Angeles County's Parks After Dark program brought evening music, sports, food and family events to parks. Serious and violent crime near the first parks fell 32% from 2009 to 2013, while comparison parks rose 18%, according to the County Department of Public Health's evaluation (Nov. 2014).

Santa Monica has started: Tongva Twilight ran free Saturday concerts and films from Aug. 8 to Sept. 12, 2026. Our "Lights On" ask is to run programmed evenings year-round, not just in summer, in the five parks with the most street-related calls, starting with Reed, Tongva, Palisades, Virginia Avenue and Memorial Parks.

What can parents do this week?

- Save SMPD non-emergency, (310) 458-8491, in your phone next to 911 and 988.
- Report recurring problems through 311 with an exact location, so the block is on record even when a call is not urgent.
- Bring it to your school's PTA or PTSA, so reports from the same blocks reach the school and the City together.
- Take the two-minute neighbor survey and tell us which blocks matter to your family.
- Write to all of Council at council@santamonica.gov, or speak at a meeting, and ask for published response times around schools and parks.

How would we know it is working?

Two measures, published monthly: the median time to clear a call inside a Kid Corridor compared with citywide, and evening park attendance alongside street-related calls on the surrounding blocks from SMPD open data.

Where does this initiative stand?

It is a resident draft. Nothing has been submitted to the City Council. The first steps we propose need no vote: SMPD publishes the median time-to-clear for calls in Kid Corridors each month, and Community Services publishes a winter evening calendar for the five parks. Members plan to ask for a Council sponsor after the Nov. 3, 2026 election.

Sources

1. Santa Monica Daily Press: Gov. Newsom pushes for more camping bans but local rules already surpass state proposals (May 14, 2025)
2. City of Santa Monica: Questions and answers on the anti-camping ordinance (Sept 13, 2024)
3. ABC7: LA City Council votes to ban homeless encampments within 500 feet of schools, day care centers
4. LA County Department of Public Health: Parks After Dark evaluation (Nov 2014)
5. UCLA: Parks After Dark 2024 evaluation
6. City of Santa Monica: Tongva Twilight series (Aug 2026)
7. City of Santa Monica: Connect with homelessness services
8. City of Santa Monica Open Data: Police Calls for Service

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