

Start the Helmet Habit Early

Make Every Ride a Safer Ride

Child
Safety
Facts
2011



Brain injury can be severe—and it lasts a lifetime.

A bike helmet can reduce the chance of brain injury by 75 percent.

Make sure that your children wear helmets for wheeled sports, horse riding, ice skating, and snow sports.

Choose a safe helmet

There now are several types helmets recommended for specific sports. See the **Bike Helmet Safety Institute** website (www.helmets.org) for information and links about helmets for many sports.

Buy a helmet that fits snugly. A helmet that is too big is much less protective. There are helmets specially made for toddlers and children.

For bike riding, choose a helmet that meets the standards set by the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC). Find "CPSC" on the label. Check the CPSC for recalls of existing helmets. A bike helmet also can be used for roller or inline skating and riding a scooter. It should be replaced after one hard crash.

For skateboarding, a helmet tested to protect from many impacts is best. This kind should meet the ASTM F-1492 standard. Youngsters doing tricks or competing on inline skates or scooters also should use this type of helmet.

Bikes helmets for babies?

Doctors and safety experts warn against carrying babies under age 1 on bikes. A baby's neck is not strong enough to hold up a helmet when in a bike carrier or trailer. **Helmets for toddlers** are light weight and shaped to cover the back of the head.

Wear the helmet right

A bike helmet should fit straight on the top of the head. The rim should cover the top of the forehead. Adjust the straps to hold it in place. See pictures below.

Adjust it to fit snugly

A helmet must stay in place with its strap buckled. If it moves from front to back and/or side to side, it could come off in a crash.

Some helmets have foam pads to stick inside the rim. These help make the helmet fit more snugly. However, thick foam padding give less protection. A helmet that fits is best.

Adjust the straps so the helmet stays in place when you pull it forward and side to side. The chin strap should be snug. Check the strap before every ride. It may get loose during use.

Some children wear hair in pony tails or braids or put beads in their hair. Some like to wear caps. For the best fit, do not wear anything hard or lumpy under the helmet. In any case, make sure the helmet is big enough to fit well. Make chin strap snug.



Right fit



Wrong fit



Warning: Take off the helmet when it's not needed

Children should only wear their helmets when riding, skating, or doing other sports for which the helmet is intended. It is dangerous to wear a helmet when climbing at the playground or in a tree. The child's head could get stuck in a small space.

Resources

American Academy of Pediatrics:
www.aap.org/family/thelmabt.htm

Bicycle Helmet Safety Institute:
www.helmets.org
(click on "Children,"
"Other Helmets")

CPSC: recalls and standards: www.cpsc.gov (search for bike helmet)

Safe Kids USA: www.usa.safekids.org

Int. Bicycle Fund: <http://www.ibike.org/education/>



For more information, contact
North Dakota Department of Health
Child Passenger Safety Program
1.800.472.2286 (press 1)