



Global Children's Fund

Bicycle Safety-Wheel sports

Please enjoy this parent safety brochure, compliments of your child's school or child care facility. Keep in mind that this is but one small part of child safety, not intended to be complete safety education. Please visit us online at WWW.KEEPYOURCHILDSAFE.org, for a variety of free book downloads covering all aspects of child safety.

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Bicycle and wheeling accidents claim the lives of about 1000 American youngsters each year. The saddest part is that nearly all would be alive today with just a few simple precautions in wheel sport safety.

Helmets, helmets, helmets!

Helmets are a must for children when riding a bike, skateboarding, rollerskating, or any other wheeled activity. Many of those thousand deaths are not caused by a collision with a car, but simply by falling off a bike and hitting their head wrong. Aside from the deaths, traumatic brain injury is the leading debilitator in young children, at about 50,000 incidents each year. Many children will suffer permanent brain injuries, all because they were not wearing a helmet

Encourage helmet wearing

Surveys done with kids have shown that the main reasons children don't wear helmets have to do with either looks or feel. So when picking out a helmet, make sure to get your child a helmet that is comfortable. Encourage helmet wearing by making it a helmet your child wants to wear and show off. You can add airbrushed designs cover it in decals, or simply get a character helmet of your child's favorite cartoon. But most surprisingly, **the #1 reason kids said they do not wear a helmet is simply that it isn't enforced.** They reported if their parents made them wear a helmet they would. So make sure your child's helmet is as mandatory as their seatbelt.

Other safety equipment

Skateboards, rollerblades, and other wheeled sports are safer when used with elbow and knee pads. Make sure your child knows how to wear them.

Riding rules:

Teach children the following rules for wheel safety:

- Always wear your helmet.
- Avoid loose clothing.
- Never ride in traffic.
- Stay to the far right of the road.
- Watch for turning cars and parked cars that might pull out in front of them.
- Walk your bike or skateboard across intersections.
- Never do stunts in traffic.
- Watch for dangerous objects in front of you.
- Always swerve away from traffic.

For extra protection

Your kids will have occasional accidents. That's why it is important to teach your child the proper way to fall. Have them practice of proper falling techniques on the lawn or another soft surface at least once a year. Also, teach them to do a safety check of their equipment frequently.

Equipment check

- Are their bicycle brakes working properly?
- Are their tires inflated?
- Is their helmet strap in good shape?
- Have they checked their skateboard for cracks or loose wheels?
- Are their elbow and knee pads in good repair?
- Have they taken a close look at the wear on their roller skates or roller blades?

Please visit us online for extra information and free resources for kids that will help you teach bicycle and wheel - recreation safety.