Bike and Wheeled Sports Safety

Bikes cause more childhood injuries than any other consumer product except cars.

- Always wear a helmet on every ride.
- Buy a bike that fits right. Check it often to make sure it’s safe.
- Make sure drivers can see you.
- Learn and follow the rules of the road.

For more information, contact
The Injury Prevention Center
at Rhode Island Hospital
401-444-5018
401-444-2208

www.ipc.rhodeislandhospital.org

www.facebook.com/safekidsrhodeisland
**Wear a Helmet, Every Ride**

- Get a helmet. Today, helmets cost less and are more comfortable. When worn, bicycle helmets cut the risk of severe brain damage by up to 88%.
- Children should always wear a helmet for all wheeled sports activities.
  - A bike helmet that fits well should be worn when roller skating, inline skating or riding a scooter.
  - For skateboarding and longboarding, a skateboarding helmet is best.

**Ways to Get Your Child to Wear a Helmet, Every Ride**

- Make it a habit from the first time your child rides a tricycle, bike or roller skates. Be sure he or she wears a helmet every time.
- Enforce the simple rule: -No helmet, No bike.- (or skateboard, or roller skates, or scooter.)
- Explain that riding on wheels can be fun but dangerous, too and wearing a helmet can keep him from badly hurting his head.
- Let your child pick out the helmet so he or she is more likely to wear it.
- Wear one yourself. Remember: a child is more likely to wear her helmet when you do too!

**Before the Ride**

- Buy a bicycle that is the right size for your child—not one he or she will -grow into.- Bring him along to the bike shop for the right fit.
- Place reflectors on the front, back and sides of the bike, skates or scooter.
- Check often to be sure that:
  - reflectors are secure
  - brakes work well
  - gears shift smoothly
  - tires are on tight and properly inflated.
- Consider clothes with reflective materials to help drivers spot kids on wheels.

Take the helmet fit test:

- **Eyes:** Put the helmet on your head. Look up. You should see the bottom rim of the helmet.
- **Ears:** Make sure the straps form a _V_ under your ears when buckled. The straps should be a little tight but comfortable.
- **Mouth:** Open your mouth as wide as you can. Does the helmet hug your head? If not, tighten the straps.

**Reminders for Adults, Lessons to Teach Children**

- Always follow the safety rules and traffic laws.
- **Ride right:** Bikes travel with traffic, not against it. Ride on the right-hand side of the road.
  - Bicycling on the street can be safe for older children, especially where there are bike lanes.
  - Children who are 10 years or older, and mature and skilled enough to make safe decisions, should be taught how to ride in bike lanes.
- Children should only ride or skate in good weather and during the day. They should stay on sidewalks and paths—not roads—until age 10.
- Use hand signals when turning.
- Before you cross a street:
  - use a crosswalk if you can
    - stop and look: LEFT, RIGHT, and LEFT AGAIN
    - if a car or truck is coming, wait until they are gone before you start to cross.
- Watch for uneven surfaces while riding or skating (potholes, cracks, rocks, railroad tracks, storm grates).