

Helmet & Bike Safety

- Bicycling is one of the most popular recreational activities in the U.S. and an important means of transportation.
- More than 70% of children ages 5 to 14 (27.7 million) ride bicycles. This age group rides 50% more than the average bicyclist and accounts for approximately 21% of all bicycle-related deaths and nearly half of all bicycle-related injuries.
- Head injuries account for more than 60% of bicycle-related deaths, more than two-thirds of bicycle-related hospital admissions and about one-third of hospital emergency room visits for bicycling injuries.
- Using a helmet is the single most effective safety device available to reduce head injury and death from bicycle crashes and can reduce the risk of severe brain injuries by 88%. Helmet use reduces the severity of head injury when a crash occurs.
- When buying a helmet, let your children pick out their own, they'll be more likely to wear them for every ride.
- Made sure the helmet fits and your child knows how to put it on correctly.
- A helmet should sit on top of the head in a level position, and should not rock forward, backward or side to side. The helmet straps must always be buckled, but not too tightly. If a helmet moves when worn, adjust side and chin straps and add sizing pads to prevent the helmet from sliding. Double check the helmet before every ride.

When riding a bike:

- Ensure proper bike fit by bringing the child along when shopping for a bike. Select one that is the right size for the child, not one he or she will grow into.
- Long or loose clothing can get caught in bike chains or wheel spokes. Dress young kids appropriately to ensure a safe ride.
- Actively supervise children until you're comfortable they are responsible to ride on their own.
- Keep your bike properly maintained. Have it checked over by a competent bike mechanic at least once a year.
- Model and teach proper behavior. Kids learn from watching you!

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Use a helmet correctly:

- Make sure to have the right size helmet and wear it every time when riding, skating or scooting.
- Be sure the helmet meets the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission's (CPSC) standards.



Check out our course list online for a variety of safety trainings provided across the state at

www.ndsc.org

The North Dakota Safety Council is a private non-profit organization supported through grants, donations, memberships and training.



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Bicycles are vehicles, and riders must follow the rules of the road:

- Stay to the right and ride with traffic.
- Stop at all stop signs, red lights and yield signs.
- Use appropriate hand signals when turning and stopping. Look behind before turning across traffic lanes.
- Stop at all stop signs and stoplights.
- Pedestrians always have the right of way.

- In addition to light or brightly colored clothing, wear retroreflective material such as a vest and reflective straps on arms and legs. Retroreflective patches can be purchased inexpensively at fabric stores.
- Use a front and rear light -- reflectors alone are not adequate for a motorist to see a cyclist.
- Teach your child to stay alert and watch for cars and trucks.
- While traveling with "tunes" may be fun, avoid wearing headphones while bicycling. Headphones can impair your ability to hear traffic noise.

Information gathered from www.safekids.org.

Don't assume motorists can see you:

- Make eye contact with drivers. Make sure drivers are paying attention and are going to stop before crossing the street.
- Avoid riding at night if possible. If you must ride after dark, make sure you are visible.



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