

## Bicycle Safety/Helmet Tips

- Don't negotiate. It's estimated that 75 percent of bicycle-related deaths among children could be prevented with a bicycle helmet.
- Buy a helmet that meets or exceeds current safety standards developed by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (hyperlink <http://www.cpsc.gov/>).
- Correct fit is essential. Do the "Eyes, Ears and Mouth" check:
  - EYES check: Position the helmet on your head. Look up and you should see the bottom rim of the helmet (one to two fingers above the eyebrows).
  - EARS check: Make sure the straps of the helmet form a "V" under your ears when buckled. The strap should be snug but comfortable.
  - MOUTH check: Now open your mouth as wide as you can! Do you feel the helmet hug your head? If not, tighten those straps! If you can put more than two fingers between the chin strap and your chin, the helmet is too loose.
- If your child is reluctant to wear her helmet, try letting her choose her own. Helmets come in many colors and styles – allowing children to choose a helmet that's "cool" may make them less likely to take it off when you're not around. Personalize their helmets with stickers.
- Talk to other parents and encourage them to have their kids wear helmets. Let your children see that you wear a helmet, too. You set the best example! Children are more likely to wear helmets when riding with others who wear them.

### Practice bike safety:

- Unsupervised bicyclists should be restricted to driveways, yards, and other places well away from traffic. Sidewalks are NOT safe places because they cross driveways and they become crosswalks at cross streets. Supervision, until they reach the age of 10, is essential until children demonstrate they know the rules of the road and develop the necessary traffic skills and judgment.
- Children under the age of 16 should not ride at night. If riding their bike at dusk, dawn or at night is unavoidable, the bike must have a white light in front, a red light and reflector on the back, and, more importantly, to be very visible to all traffic.

**Teach your children:** A bicycle is a vehicle, not a toy. Riding a bike – especially around traffic – is an important responsibility. Following the traffic laws help keep everyone safer and predictable.

- Ride with traffic, not against it. Ride on the right (correct) side of the road.
- Use appropriate hand signals.
- Respect traffic signals. Stop at all stop signs and red lights.
- Stop and look left, right and left again before entering a street.
- Look back and yield to traffic coming from behind and use hand signals before turning left at intersections.
- Don't ride when it's dark. – Adults and older children, riding at dusk, dawn or at night, must use lights and reflectors!



Finally, proper bike fit and maintenance can help prevent injuries. For a young child, both feet should reach the ground while sitting on the bike seat. Make sure the handlebars, seat, pedals, and reflectors are secure, brakes work properly, gears shift smoothly, and tires are inflated to the proper pressure.

To purchase a helmet for your child, please contact **SAFE KIDS STARK COUNTY, 3951 Convenience Circle NW, Canton, Ohio 44718** at 330-493-9904 x 282. SAFE KIDS sells all size of helmets for \$7.00.