

# Start the Helmet Habit Early

## Make Every Ride a Safer Ride



Child  
Safety  
Facts  
2009



**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 bike helmets. Many states and counties require them.**



### Choose a safe helmet

Choose a bike helmet that meets the standards set by the CPSC (Consumer Product Safety Commission). Find "CPSC" on the label. Check the CPSC for recalls of existing helmets (see Resources).

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.

A bike helmet also can be used for roller / inline skating and riding a scooter.

For skateboarding, a helmet tested to protect from many impacts is best. This kind should meet either the ASTM F-1492 or Snell N-94 standard. Youngsters doing tricks or competing on inline skates or scooters also should use this type of helmet.

**Replace a bike helmet after it has been used in a crash.**

### 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.



**Right fit**



**Wrong fit**

### Adjust the helmet and strap for a snug fit

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, the less padding you add, the better protection the helmet can give.

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.

Each child needs his or her own helmet so it fits well and is adjusted properly.

Some children wear hair in pony tails or braids or put beads in their hair. Some like to wear caps. It is best to have nothing hard or lumpy under the helmet to get the best fit. In any case, make sure the helmet is big enough to fit well. Adjust the chin strap to be snug.

### Warning: Take off bike helmet when not riding

Children should only wear their helmets when on their bikes. It is dangerous to wear a helmet when climbing at the playground or in a tree.

### 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 bouncing in a bike carrier or trailer.

A child should always wear a helmet when in a bike carrier or trailer. Helmets for toddlers are light weight and shaped to cover the back of the head.

### Resources

American Academy of Pediatrics:  
[www.aap.org/family/thelmabt.htm](http://www.aap.org/family/thelmabt.htm)

Bicycle Helmet  
Safety Institute:  
[www.helmets.org](http://www.helmets.org)  
(click on Children)

CPSC: recalls and  
standards: [www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov)  
(search for bike  
helmet),  
800-638-2772

Safe Kids USA: [www.usa.safekids.org](http://www.usa.safekids.org)

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



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