



Bike Safety: Prevent Head Injuries

Helmets are the most effective safety device available to reduce head injury and death from bicycle crashes.

HARD FACTS

Sports such as bicycling, skateboarding and inline skating account for 50 percent of head injuries that occur in children engaged in recreational activities.

Hawai'i state law requires all kids younger than 16 to wear a properly fitted helmet while riding a bike.

For more information on bicycle safety, visit the National Highway Traffic Safety website at www.nhtsa.dot.gov/bicycles.

CHILDREN AND HELMETS

More children ages 5 to 14 are seen in emergency rooms for injuries related to biking than any other sport. Helmets can reduce the risk of severe brain injuries by 88 percent yet only 45 percent of children ages 14 and younger usually wear a helmet while biking.

Make sure your child wears a properly fitted helmet and wears it every time they ride a bike, skateboard, scooter, etc.

CHOOSING A HELMET

- You should only buy a helmet that meets the bicycle helmet safety standards of the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC). Any helmet meeting these standards is labeled. Check the inside.
- When buying a helmet for your child, be sure to choose a helmet that fits your child now, not one to grow into.
- Ensure helmet comfort. If you buy a helmet that your child finds comfortable and attractive, they are more likely to wear it.

FINDING THE RIGHT HELMET FIT

A helmet should be:

- **Snug.** It does not slide from side to side or front to back. Both the side and chin straps need to be snug.
- **Level.** It is square on top of the head, covering the top of the forehead. It does not tilt in any direction.
- **Stable.** The chin strap should be buckled at all times when riding, but not too tightly.

HELMET FIT TEST FOR YOUR CHILD

- **Eyes:** Put the helmet on your head. Look up. You should see the bottom rim of the helmet. The rim should be one to two finger widths above the eyebrows.
- **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.

Source: safekids.org

For more information on injury prevention, call 983-6786.

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