



## Bike Safety

### Why use helmets:

- Quite simply put, helmets save lives
- The single most effective safety device available to reduce head injury and death from bicycle crashes is a helmet
- Your child is 14 times more likely to survive a bike crash if he/she is wearing a helmet
- Helmets have been shown to reduce the risk of head injury by as much as 85% and the risk of brain injury by 88%

### Bicycle helmet laws:

- "No person under the age of 16 years shall operate or be a passenger on a bicycle on a highway, bicycle path, or sidewalk under the jurisdiction or control of this state or any local political subdivision thereof without wearing a bicycle helmet" 40-6-296-(e)(1)

### Choosing a helmet for your child:

- Choose a helmet that meets or exceeds safety standards developed by the US Consumer Product Safety Commission

### Correct fit and proper positioning:

- Correct fit is essential
  - Helmets should fit comfortably and snug - not too tight but should not rock side-to-side or front-to-back
- Make sure your child wears the helmet correctly
  - Level on top of the head
  - Two fingers above the eyebrow
  - Straps should form a V directly under the ear
  - Strap buckled under the chin
  - Strap should be tightened so that when the child opens his/her mouth wide the straps become snug

### Recommendations:

- Set a good example - Adults need to wear helmets when bicycling too
- Assure bicycle readiness - make sure the bike is adjusted properly and that the child can stand over the top tube
- Be sure that the bike is in good working order and that the brakes are working
- Supervision is essential until children develop the necessary traffic skills and judgment
- Riders should be restricted to sidewalks and paths until at least age 10 and can demonstrate the rules of the road
- Rules of the Road:
  - When on the road, ride with traffic and not against it as far to the right as possible
  - Use appropriate hand signals
  - Respect traffic signals - stop at all stop signs and red lights
  - Stop and look Left-Right and Left again before crossing an intersection
  - Yield to traffic coming from behind before turning left at intersections
- Don't ride when it's dark - If riding at dusk, dawn or in the evening is unavoidable:
  - The front of the bike should have a white light
  - The back of the bike should have a reflector
  - Wear clothing and accessories that include retroreflective material - bright colored clothing is important, but not enough

Resources: SAFE KIDS East Central led by MCG Children's Medical Center, 706- 721-KIDS, [www.MCGHealth.org/SafeKids](http://www.MCGHealth.org/SafeKids)  
US Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), [www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov)