

## Safety on Wheels – Spring 2005

*Keep your children safe ... Make sure they ALWAYS wear a helmet whenever riding a bike, scooter, skates or a skateboard!*

- More than 450,000 children are treated in emergency rooms each year due to falls on bikes, skates, scooters and skateboards.
- Older children are more likely to receive severe head injuries, as helmet usage decreases between 11 - 14 years of age.
- Bicycle helmets can prevent 85% of head injuries to cyclists.
- 75% of fatal cycling accidents are due to head injuries.
- Thousand of cyclists suffer debilitating head injuries each year due to lack of helmet use.
- A traumatic brain injury can result from a fall of less than 2 feet.
- Most bike injuries occur within 1 mile of home.
- Helmets should fit snugly and be certified by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI), the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) or the Consumer Product Safety Commission.

*Wearing proper gear is essential for safe skating! In addition to a helmet, be sure your children also wear wrist guards, knee pads and elbow pads.*

- Almost 100,000 children are treated in emergency rooms each year due to skating injuries.
- The wrist is the most common site of injury while skating.
- Wearing wrist guards, knee and elbow pads can reduce injuries by almost 90%.

*Review important “safety on wheels” rules with your children!*

- Always wear a helmet and other protective gear, no matter how short a ride is or how close to home.
- Watch the road for debris and defects, which may precipitate a loss of balance.
- Oversized bicycles are dangerous. Children should be able to sit on the seat, with hands on the handlebars, and the balls of the feet touching the ground. A child’s first bike should be equipped with footbrakes, since young children’s hands are not mature enough to control hand brakes.
- When skating, the design of the skates should match the ability of the skater. Three or four wheeled skates are suitable for novice or intermediate level skaters. Five wheeled, low friction skates should only be used by experienced, competitive skaters.
- Novice skaters should only ride in indoor or outdoor skating rinks. More experienced skaters should be encourage to skate either in a rink or on streets that are closed off to through traffic.
- Skating behind or alongside a vehicle while the skater holds on to the vehicle should **NEVER** be permitted.
- Always ride on the right side of the street, along with traffic, and avoid heavy traffic areas.
- Teach your child to use appropriate hand signals and respect traffic signals.
- Never allow your child to ride or skate at dusk or after dark.