



Help Your Child Stay Safe While Riding a Bike

Spring Lake Park-Blaine-Mounds View Fire Department

Getting a “big” bike is a milestone for children. Unfortunately, according to Safe Kids USA, bicycles are associated with more childhood injuries than any other consumer product except the automobile. These injuries can be prevented.

Requiring a child to wear a helmet can reduce risk of injury by as much as 85%. The typical bicycle crash occurs within one mile from home. A helmet needs to be worn every time the bicycle is used. Adults also need to wear helmets. A helmet should sit flat on the head in a level position. It should not move forward, backward or side-to-side. The helmet should be buckled snugly under the chin.

Children should be taught the rules of the road. Insist that they look both ways before entering a street. A bicyclist needs to obey all traffic laws, stopping at all stop signs and stop lights. Adult supervision is essential until the child demonstrates good traffic skills and judgment while riding. Remember to ride with traffic when riding a bike and cross only at intersections.

When shopping for a bike, bring the child along to ensure a proper bike fit. Buy a bike that is the right size for the child, not one he/she will grow into. When sitting on the seat, the child’s feet should touch the ground. There should be 1-3 inches of space

between the rider and the top bar. The breaks, tires and chain should be checked regularly.

Wear bright clothing while riding a bike. Sneakers or close toed shoes should be worn when riding bike.

Risks such as a child's size and cognitive ability, and environmental risk, such as speeding motorists, are numerous. That is why prevention measures are so important. Reduce a child's risk by modeling and teaching safe behaviors.