

# Safety Fact Sheet



The Utah Safety Council cares about your safety outside of the work setting. We offer resources that keep you and your loved ones safe at home, at play and on the go.

## BIKE SAFETY

Bicycling is one of the most popular recreational activities in the U.S. and an important means of transportation. More than 70 percent of children ages 5 to 14 (27.7 million) ride bicycles. This age group rides 50 percent more than the average bicyclist and accounts for approximately 21 percent of all bicycle-related deaths and nearly half of all bicycle-related injuries.



Head injury is the leading cause of death in bicycle crashes and is the most important determinant of bicycle-related death and permanent disability. Head injuries account for more than 60 percent of bicycle-related deaths, more than two-thirds of bicycle-related hospital admissions and about one-third of hospital emergency room visits for bicycling injuries.

The single most effective safety device available to reduce head injury and death from bicycle crashes is a helmet. Helmet use reduces the risk of bicycle-related death and injury and the severity of head injury when a crash occurs. Unfortunately, national estimate report that bicycle helmet use among child bicyclist ranges only from 15 to 25 percent.

A properly fitted helmet should ride level on the head and not move. If a helmet moves when worn, adjust side and chin straps and add sizing pads to prevent the helmet from sliding. Double check the helmet before every ride.

### **Bicycles are vehicles, and riders must follow the rules of the road**

- Stay to the right and ride with traffic
- Stop at all stop signs, red lights and yield signs
- Pedestrians always have the right of way
- Use appropriate hand signals when turning and stopping. Look behind before turning across traffic lanes

### **Don't assume motorists can see you**

- Avoid riding at night if possible. If you must ride after dark, make sure you are visible.
- In addition to light or brightly colored clothing, wear retroreflective material such as a vest and reflective straps on arms and legs. Retroreflective patches can be purchased inexpensively at fabric stores.
- Use a front and rear light -- reflectors alone are not adequate for a motorist to see a cyclist.

**Keep your bike properly maintained.** Have it checked over by a competent bike mechanic at least once a year.

While traveling with "tunes" may be fun, avoid wearing headphones while bicycling. Headphones can impair your ability to hear traffic noise.