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New Safety Standard For Bike Helmets

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) has issued the first ever mandated safety standard for bicycle helmets. Beginning March 1999, all helmets manufactured in the United States must meet the CPSC federal standard.

The helmets will carry a certification label, making it easier for parents to identify them. While all new helmets must be certified by the CPSC, some helmets also might carry additional certification by other agencies.

Providing greater protection for bicyclists, the new standard ensures helmets adequately protect the head, and chin straps are strong enough to prevent helmets from coming off in a crash, collision or fall. Helmets for children under age 5 years will cover more of the head.

While the new ruling forces manufacturers to meet stringent requirements, the CPSC strongly encourages parents to enforce proper use of helmets by their children. Tips include:

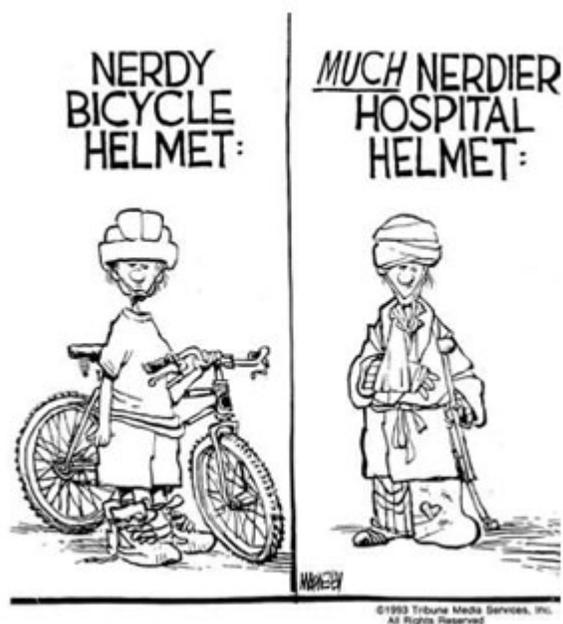
- Wearing the helmet every time you ride.
- Wearing the helmet flat atop your head, not tilted at an angle.
- Making sure the helmet fits snugly and does not obstruct your child's vision.
- Making sure the chin strap fits securely.

To view proper bicycle helmet use, visit the CPSC Web site at : www.cpsc.gov.

In-Line Skating Injuries

Parents and pediatricians should encourage children to wear protective gear while in-line skating, due to the growing number of related injuries reported

In-line skating has become one of the fastest growing sports in the United States, with an estimated 17.7 million people younger than age 18 participating in it, according to the American Academy of Pediatrics.



In 1996, an estimated 76,000 people under age 21 suffered significant injuries while inline skating. The cause of most common injuries include losing one's balance due to road debris, an inability to stop, out-of-control speeding or attempting to do a stunt, according to the statement.

The AAP Committees on Injury and Poison Prevention and Sports Medicine and Fitness recommend the following tips for children who participate in in-line skating:

- Wear full protective gear, including a certified helmet, wrist guards, knee pads and elbow pads.
- Only skate on streets blocked off or closed to through traffic (dead-ends or cul-de-sacs) and make sure paths are cleared of debris such as rocks and sticks.
- Novice skaters should skate only in rinks and should not attempt tricks.
- "Truck surfing" or "skitching" should be prohibited under all circumstances.
- Skates should have wheels that are worn evenly and spin freely.
- Skates should fit snugly and be appropriate for the child's size, ability and purpose.
- Children with large-muscle motor skill problems or balance problems and those with hearing and vision deficits should skate only in a protected environment.
- In addition, the Consumer Product Safety Commission recommends learning to stop using the brake pads at the heel of most in-line skates.
- In general, parents should observe their children's athletic abilities to ensure they are ready for in-line skating.



Those interested in obtaining the AAP statement can visit the Academy's Web site at www.aap.org. Click on Professional Education.

This information should not be used as substitute for the medical care and advice of your child's physician. Health related topics found on the Andorra Pediatrics web site should not be used for diagnosing purposes or be substituted for medical advice. As with any new or ongoing treatment, always consult your professional healthcare provider before making any changes in treatment or beginning any new treatment. If you have any questions or concerns, please call our office.