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BC INJURY research and prevention unit

# got Wheels, Get a Helmet!



## Fitting your helmet

*Head injuries are the leading cause of serious injury and death to kids on wheels.*

*A helmet could save your child's life!*

*Be sure they wear a helmet every time they ride.*



### Get the right kind of helmet.

- Choose a bicycle helmet for bike riding, in-line skating, and scooter riding.
- Skateboard riders need a special skateboarding helmet which covers more of the back of the head.
- Make sure the helmet meets safety standards such as CSA, CPSC, Snell or ASTM.
- Replace any helmet that has been in a crash.



### Make sure the helmet fits your child's head.

- Try the helmet on your child's head before you buy it.
- Helmets are sold with foam pads that attach to the inside of the helmet. Try different pads until the helmet fits firmly on your child's head.
- The helmet should cover the top of the forehead and should rest about 2 fingers' width above the eyebrows.
- Adjust the side straps so that they fit snugly around your child's ears in a "V" shape. The buckles on the side strap should fit right under the ear.
- Buckle the chin strap. Tighten it until you can only fit one finger between the strap and your child's chin.
- Remove anything that could change the way a helmet fits, such as baseball caps, big hair clips and headphones.



### Check that the helmet fits correctly.

- Have your child shake her head from side to side and from front to back. The helmet should NOT move around when she shakes her head.
- Make sure the helmet is level on your child's head. Look at the picture to the left.
- Teach your child to check the helmet fit every time.



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Remember: You are your child's best role model.

## Children are most likely to be badly hurt when:

- > They ride or skate near cars and traffic
- > They do not use safety gear
- > They are beginners and just learning how to ride or skate
- > They go too fast or try stunts

## When is your child ready to ride a bike on the road?

Children under 10 should not ride their bicycles on the road. They do not have the physical and thinking skills to handle their bikes safely in traffic.

Children over 10 need to practice before they can ride on the road.

Everyone should wear a helmet when they ride or skate.

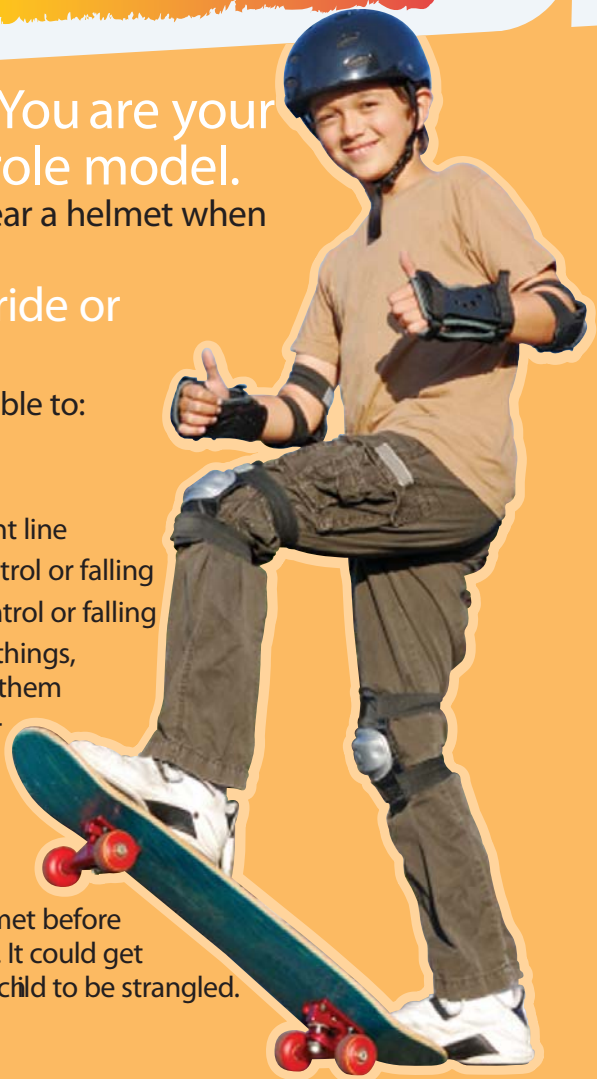
## Can your child ride or skate safely?

Your child should be able to:

- Keep his balance
- Control his speed
- Ride or skate in a straight line
- Turn without losing control or falling
- Stop without losing control or falling
- Notice other people or things, and avoid running into them
- Check over his shoulder without losing control

## Going to the playground?

- Take off your child's helmet before he plays on equipment. It could get caught and cause your child to be strangled.



For more information, visit  
[www.safekidscanada.ca](http://www.safekidscanada.ca)  
1-888-SAFE-TIP (723-3847)  
or

BC Injury Research & Prevention Unit  
[www.injuryresearch.bc.ca](http://www.injuryresearch.bc.ca)

## British Columbia Statistics:

- From 2003 to 2007, 79 cases of head injuries in children riding bicycles were seen at BC Children's Hospital.
- 17 of those cases involved a collision with a motor vehicle and 86 cases resulted in a concussion or intracranial (brain) injury.
- Since 2000, 17 children under the age of 19 have died as a result of a fatal head injury while bicycling, inline skating or skateboarding.
- A properly fitted helmet decreases the risk of a serious head injury by as much as 85 percent.

(Source: BC CHIRPP / BC Coroners Service)