



PRESS RELEASE

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90 Days of Summer Safety: Roll With It!

Aug. 24, 2009 (*Fort Worth, Texas*) Bicycles are associated with more childhood injuries than any consumer product except the automobile. Only about one in four children ages 4-15 years wears bicycle helmets when riding, and teen use of helmets is nearly zero. Some 140,000 children are treated in emergency departments each year for head injuries sustained while they were bicycling, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

That's why it's so important to teach your kids bike safety as they enjoy their increased independence. You can greatly reduce your children's risk of injury and death simply by a single rule – wear a helmet. This can reduce the risk of head injury by as much as 88 percent.

Collisions with motor vehicles are another significant risk factor. It is estimated that motor vehicle collisions account for nearly 90 percent of all bicycle-related deaths. Collision with a motor vehicle increases the risk of death, severity of injury, and probability of head injury.

Outfit your child with the proper gear.

- When riding a bicycle, wear a helmet.
- When riding a scooter, wear a helmet, knee pads and elbow pads.
- When riding a skateboard, wear a helmet, knee pads, elbow pads and wrist guards.
- When inline skating, wear a helmet, knee pads, elbow pads and wrist guards.

Ensure a proper fit.

- The helmet should be comfortable and snug, but not too tight. It should not rock back and forth or side to side.
- Wear the helmet correctly. It should sit centered on top of the head. Always buckle the straps. Do the "Eyes, Ears and Mouth" check:
 1. EYES check: Position the helmet on your head. Look up and you should see the bottom rim of the helmet (one to two fingers above the eyebrows).
 2. EARS check: Make sure the straps of the helmet form a "V" under your ears when buckled. The strap should be snug but comfortable.
 3. MOUTH check: Now open your mouth as wide as you can! Do you feel the helmet hug your head? If not, tighten those straps!
- Buy and wear only helmets that meet or exceed safety standards developed by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission. This is indicated by a label found on the helmet box and on the inside of the helmet.

Teach the rules of the road.

- Riders should be restricted to sidewalks and paths until they reach the age of 10 and can demonstrate that they know the rules of the road.
- Supervision is essential until children develop the necessary traffic skills and judgment.

Be a safety role model.

- Wear your helmet each and every time you ride with your child. Children are more likely to wear a helmet when riding with others who wear one. Encourage other parents to do the same.

Tips provided by Safe Kids Tarrant County, led by Cook Children's Medical Center. Safe Kids works to educate parents and children about injury prevention.

90 Days of Summer Safety

MedStar EMS encourages the community to enjoy their summer activities safely through 90 Days of Summer Safety. Each week from June 15 through September 7 a new summer-themed safety topic will be highlighted with tips and information. Topics include firework safety, drunk driving awareness, and tips for avoiding heat stroke. Check www.medstar911.org each week for the latest Summer Safety topic.

About MedStar

MedStar is the exclusive emergency and non-emergency ambulance service provider to 15 Tarrant County cities including Blue Mound, Burleson, Edgecliff Village, Forest Hill, Fort Worth, Haltom City, Haslet, Lakeside, Lake Worth, River Oaks, Saginaw, Sansom Park, Westover Hills, Westworth Village, and White Settlement. Established in 1986, MedStar provides advanced life support ambulance service to 421 square miles and more than 860,000 residents in Tarrant County. MedStar responds to about 100,000 emergency calls a year with a fleet of 47 ambulances.

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