

## BIKE CRASH CHECKLIST

- Call (or ask someone to call) 911 and ask for the police. Do not hesitate to ask for an ambulance if you are hurt.
- Ask the motorist to provide ID and stay at the scene until the police arrive. If the driver leaves, he/she is guilty of hit and run, which is a serious crime. Be prepared to describe the driver.
- Get the name, phone number, address, driver's license number and license plate number of the motorist.
- Get names and phone numbers of any witnesses — the more the better. A business card is great. If someone seems friendly, ask for their help.
- Get the name of the car owner's insurance company and the policy number. If the driver doesn't own the car, make sure you get insurance information on the vehicle AND the driver.

## WHEN THE POLICE ARRIVE

- Request that the police take an accident report. A report is required if the crash involves serious bodily injury, death, or if more than \$1,000 of total property damage occurs. Below that amount, a report is optional under the law, but you should insist that one be completed. Sometimes, the officer will give you the form to fill out and mail in.
- Get the reporting officer's name, badge number, and department or agency.
- If you are hurt, go in an ambulance to a hospital or at least see a doctor to rule out serious injury.



## Children

### What parents should know

Bicycles are an economical and practical means of transportation from an early age.

In most instances, the only bicycle safety education children will receive is from their parents. Since children perceive traffic situations differently than adults, it is important for parents to teach them the dangers of traffic. With proper training, bicycle riding can be a safe, healthy, fun activity for the whole family to share. Here are some things to keep in mind when educating children about bicycle and pedestrian safety:

- Young children lack well developed peripheral vision.
- Children often have trouble determining the source of a sound. They may hear a car coming, but look the wrong way.
- Until about eight years of age, children typically lack a sense of danger and they don't really understand how vulnerable they are.
- Children have trouble evaluating cause and effect. It's hard for them to determine a dangerous situation.
- Children have trouble judging the speed and distance of oncoming vehicles.

*(What parents should know cont.)*

- Children are often restless and eager to go. It's hard for them to stop and wait for traffic lights.
- Children focus on things that are most interesting to them. An ice cream truck may take their attention from another approaching vehicle.
- Children often mix fantasy with reality. They may see cars as friendly creatures or think they can go 90 mph on their bicycles.
- Children often believe grown-ups will look out for them. They may think that because they can see the car, the motorist will see them.
- Children are very vulnerable to peer pressure and follow the lead of their friends. Many crashes happen when one child takes a risk and a second follows and is hit by a vehicle.

### **When should a child start riding a bicycle?**

Let the child's motivation and motor coordination be your guide. Schedule this event when you can provide the necessary time to train your child. Training wheels only support the rider. Balance and leaning in the turns are learned on two wheels.

There are many sources to help teach your child safe riding. Contact the League of American Bicyclists for a certified trainer in your area. Local service groups and police departments also provide training in some areas.

### **One Size Doesn't Fit All**

In sizing bicycles for children, they should be able to **comfortably straddle the top bar of the frame while standing flat footed**. This should provide a size for good control yet large enough to allow for growth.

Learning to ride on a traditional girl's bike is a choice to consider for both girls and boys as the sloping top tube

reduces the risk of injury to the groin. When the child is just learning to ride, they should be able to sit **on the seat and put both feet flat on the ground**.

### **When should a child begin to ride in the street?**

In most instances, when they can demonstrate the necessary cycling skills, alertness to traffic, and appropriate decision making skills, they're ready. Until that time, bicycle driving should be limited to sidewalks, parks and bike paths. The most effective and fun way to teach your children safe riding habits is to ride with them. At first, let them follow you as in follow the leader. As they become more able, let them lead while you observe and instruct.

When training your child, give special attention to children's high-risk behaviors.

### **MAKE SURE THEY:**

- 1** Ride on the right in the same direction as traffic. Riding on the left puts cyclists where motorists least expect to see them.
- 2** Stop before riding out of the driveway into the street. Help your child understand that your own driveway is dangerous when used as a launching pad for a bike ride.
- 3** Stop at all stop signs and red traffic lights. Children need to understand that they must stop every time, so that it becomes a habit.
- 4** Ride predictably. Ride in a straight line, and signal all turns. Teach children to use hand signals, look to the rear and then turn.