



NORTH DAKOTA
DEPARTMENT *of* HEALTH

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:
June 6, 2011

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State Health Department Offers Tips To Keep Bicyclers Safe This Summer

BISMARCK, N.D. – School is out, the weather is nice and now is the time that the bicycles have come out of storage and kids of all ages are engaging in the healthy activity of bike riding. It is also a time to remind bicyclers to keep themselves safe while riding, according to Diana Read, Injury/Violence Prevention Program director for the North Dakota Department of Health

Each year more than one-half million bike riders are injured seriously enough to go to emergency rooms, and approximately 900 die due to bicycle-related incidents. Between 2005 and 2009, six North Dakotans died in bicycle-related accidents.

“This is a good time to remind all bike riders that the first and most important step in bicycle safety is wearing a helmet and wearing it correctly,” Read said. “Wearing a helmet is the single most effective thing a person can do to avoid injury and death. It can reduce head injuries up to 85 percent. That’s why everyone must make wearing a helmet a priority.”

According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, every day about 1,000 kids end up in hospital emergency rooms with injuries from bikes, like broken bones or brain concussions. Because head injury is the leading cause of death and long-lasting impairments related to bike crashes, the Department of Health urges all bike riders to wear helmets – every time they ride.

“Wearing a helmet as an adult is the best way to help ensure your children wear their helmets,” Read said. “Starting the helmet habit with children at an early age increases their chances of wearing helmets when they are older.”

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Visit the health department home page at www.ndhealth.gov.

The Department of Health offers the following tips for fitting and adjusting your helmet for best use and protection:

- Wear a bicycle helmet on every bike ride. Anyone can get hurt anywhere at any time.
- Understand why a helmet is important and relay that information to your family and friends.
- Make sure the helmet fits correctly. Get professional advice about adjusting the helmet to your head. A helmet that does not fit correctly most likely won't be worn.
- Set a good example for your children by wearing helmets.
- Begin a helmet habit with the first tricycle or bicycle to ensure that it continues as your child grows.
- Be sure to include all passengers in helmet use, even children in baby carriers or trailers.
- Help your child practice putting on the helmet until he or she is able to buckle the straps easily.
- Because there are different helmets for different sports, check the inside labels to make sure that it states the helmet is in conformance with the CPSC standard.
- Remember that a helmet is meant to withstand one crash – after that, it should be replaced.

For more information about bike safety and how to fit a bike helmet correctly, visit www.ndhealth.gov/injury or contact Diana Read, North Dakota Department of Health, at 800.472.2286 (press 1).

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