

# WHEEL/BIKE SAFE

## HAVE TIME FOR A LESSON?

### Use Your Head: Wear a Helmet

**OVERVIEW:** The purpose of this activity/lesson is to help motivate students to 1) always wear a helmet when they ride anything with wheels and 2) wear their helmets the right way.

*Note: Approximately 75 percent of bicycle-related fatalities among children could be prevented with a bicycle helmet. Bicycle helmets reduce the risk of head injury by as much as 85 percent and the risk of brain injury by as much as 88 percent. (Source: The National SAFE KIDS Campaign)*

**DURATION:** 30-45 minutes

#### OBJECTIVES:

- ★ Students will be able to identify a bicycle helmet.
- ★ Students will be able to identify activities that require a helmet.
- ★ Students will be able to explain why a helmet is needed.
- ★ Students will be able to show how a helmet should sit on the head in a level position.
- ★ Students will be able to test the helmet's fit by shaking their heads.

#### MATERIALS NEEDED:

- A bike helmet for each child labeled with his name.
- Extra pads to help ensure a snug fit.
- Visual aids (pictures or actual items): child's bicycle, skateboard, roller blades, tricycle, scooter, etc. Include some silly items like a carrot, a book, or a telephone.
- Mirrors so students can see how their helmets fit.
- A stuffed animal with a head large enough to wear a helmet and pillows.



#### LET'S GO!

- 🚲 Talk about helmets: "Who wears helmets? Why do they wear them?" (*Construction workers, motorcyclists, firemen, football players . . .*)
- 🚲 Show the visual aids. Ask for volunteers to pick an item that you would use with a helmet. When every child has had a turn, point out that we need to wear helmets when we ride on any "wheels."
- 🚲 Explain that it is not enough to wear a helmet; the helmet also has to fit. Put a bike helmet on the stuffed animal that is sitting on the floor, but do not buckle the straps. Surround the animal with pillows to be sure the helmet doesn't hit the ground. Shake the animal's head. Ask the children to tell you what you need to do to get the helmet to stay on. Do one thing they suggest (buckle the straps, tighten the straps, use pads . . . etc.) and try again. Keep following the children's suggestions until you can shake the stuffed animal's head and the helmet stays on.
- 🚲 Ask the children why they think you put the pillows on the floor. Explain that it is important that helmets do not drop on the ground. Every impact lessens the helmet's ability to protect your head in a crash.
- 🚲 "Now you try it!" Divide the children into small groups and assign one teacher or volunteer to each group. Make sure each child has a helmet. Stand in front of the mirrors. *The helmet should sit on the head in a level position. One strap goes in front of the ear and the other, behind the ear. You should be able to fit two fingers between your eyebrow and the edge of the helmet. Adjust pads and straps so the fit is snug.* When you are done, have the children shake their heads vigorously to be sure the helmets will stay on if they fall. (Option: Have the children check the fit of the your helmet!)



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