

Safety Standards

You should only buy helmets that meet helmet safety standards. Not all helmets sold in stores meet these standards! For bicycle, multi-sport and ski/snowboard helmets, look for a designation from ASTM, Snell, CPSC or CEN.

Sizing and Proper Fit

Helmets are available in toddler, child, youth and adult sizes. Babies less than 1 year of age have a relatively weak neck structure. Neither helmets, nor bike travel, is recommended for them.

Proper fit is always of the utmost importance. Bicycle, multi-sport and skiing/snowboarding helmets each come with specific instructions for fitting that helmet. However, there are some general guidelines to follow.

- A helmet should fit squarely on top of the head, covering the top of the forehead for proper protection. This means it sits level and not tilted back on the head.
- The straps on the helmet should be adjusted according to the instructions that come with the helmet.
- The chin strap should be snug, but not uncomfortable and should always be kept fastened.
- The helmet should not move around the head or slide down over the eyes or the back of the head.

Some bicycle helmets and multi-sport helmets come with removable fitting pads that can be replaced when a child's head grows.

How to Get Your Child to Wear It

Helmets may take some getting used to at first. These tips may help encourage the helmet habit.

1. Let your child help pick out the helmet. After all, he or she is the one who will be wearing it. Helmet straps may be difficult for little fingers. Help your child practice until he or she can buckle them easily.
2. Always insist your child wear the helmet. Remember, a fall or crash can happen anytime, anywhere.
3. Set an example. Wear a helmet. Your own good example can make a big difference in encouraging your child to wear one.
4. Praise and reward your child each time he/she wears their helmet. Your child may feel strange at first; take away some of the discomfort with words of support.
5. Begin the helmet habit early. Insist your child wear a helmet from the time they first begin bike riding, skateboarding, skiing, etc. Then, it will become a natural habit as your child grows.
6. Encourage other parents to buy helmets. Making helmets common is the best way to eliminate the discomfort of being "different".

Other Important Facts about Helmets

1. **"One crash and it's trash"!** If you are involved in a significant fall or crash the helmet must be replaced. The foam liner is designed to absorb the impact of a blow to the head and can be damaged in a crash or fall.

2. **Replacement.** Helmets should be replaced every 3-5 years, when they no longer fit and/or when there are any broken parts.
3. **Removal of helmet.** Always remove your helmet whenever you are done with an activity. When on playground equipment, it is especially important to remove a bicycle or multi-sport helmet as the straps can pose a strangulation hazard and the helmet can pose an entrapment hazard.
4. **Cleaning.** Simply clean a dirty helmet by wiping with warm water and gentle soap. Cleaners and solvents can cause unseen damage to a helmet.
5. **Taking care of a helmet.** Helmets should not be thrown, dropped or kicked. They need to be treated with respect!

For more information contact
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How to Choose and Use



a Proper Helmet



Why wear a helmet?

A helmet is a simple piece of equipment, so simple that it is easy to underestimate its importance. But what could be more important than protecting your head from the impact of a fall? That's exactly what a helmet does. A serious head injury can cause lifelong disability or death.

Helmets protect the head because during a fall or collision, the helmet absorbs the impact energy instead of the head and brain.

Wearing a helmet can greatly reduce your risk of serious injury.

Where to buy a helmet

The helmets discussed in this brochure are available at local sporting goods stores as well as discount department stores.

Safe Kids Grand Forks also has bicycle, multi-sports and toddler helmets available year round. Ski helmets can be purchased seasonally.

If interested in purchasing a reduced price helmet from Safe Kids Grand Forks, call 701.780.1489 or email safekids@altru.org.



Which Helmet for Which Activity?

All helmets are not the same. Each type of helmet is designed to protect your head from the type of blows most likely to be sustained in that particular sport. There are several types of helmets. It is important that you know the difference.

Non-Motorized Wheeled Sports

This includes bike riding, skateboarding, inline skating and use of non-motorized scooters. These helmets can not be used for motorized wheeled sports (i.e. 4-wheelers, snowmobiles, etc.).



Bicycle Helmet

A fall from a bicycle is most likely to cause a blow to the front and/or side of the head. This helmet protects these portions of the head.



Toddler Helmet

This is usually used by children under the age of 4. When riding tricycles and other bikes with three wheels, young children can sustain blows to the back, side and/or front of the head. Similar to a multi-sport helmet, the toddler helmet protects the back of the head in addition to the sides and front.

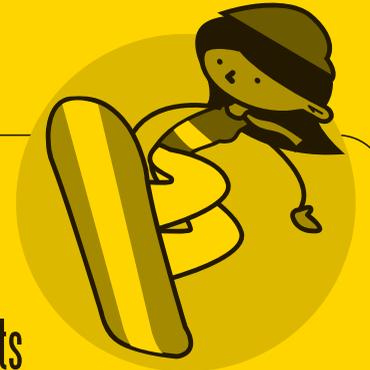
Team Sports

Every team sport (hockey, football, baseball, lacrosse, field hockey, etc.) has a helmet specific to that sport. Check your local sporting goods store for more information. If the helmet is provided by the team, assure they are in good condition and fit properly.



Winter Sports

There are helmets made specifically for skiing and snowboarding. Bicycle and multi-sport helmets should not be used for such activities as they do not provide adequate protection.



Skiing/Snowboarding Helmet

When properly fitted, it can be worn by children of all ages and adults. This helmet is designed to protect the parts of the head most likely to sustain a blow in a skiing or snowboarding crash.



While there are currently not any helmets specifically made for ice skating and sledding, any of the mentioned helmets may be used for such activities. Remember, some protection is better than none.

Remember, the majority of collisions and injures involving individuals participating in wheeled sports do not occur with cars. They happen from falls. Falls do not occur only in the street, they can also occur in the driveway, on a path or in the park – anywhere, anytime.