



Bike Helmets for Children with Special Needs

All Children can enjoy bike riding and must wear a bike helmet to prevent head, brain, spinal cord, and other injuries.

To pick out a bike helmet for a child with special needs:

1. Ask your child's doctor if your child is able to wear a bike helmet.

Consider:

- a. Can your child safely and properly wear a bike helmet?
- b. If your child has no hair, ask your child's doctor if it is safe to put a helmet on your child's bare head. Your doctor may suggest putting a skull cap or bandana on your child's head before putting on the helmet for added comfort and protection from sweat and the sun.

2. Find out if regular bike helmets can be fitted to your child's head.

You can buy bike helmets at low cost for all members of your family at The Safety Store at Riley Hospital for Children. The staff will help you:

- a. Pick out a bike helmet size that may fit your child.
- b. Put the helmet on your child's head to adjust to a proper fit.
- c. Provide information on safety basics when using regular bikes, adapted bikes, and bike trailers.

3. If your child needs a customized fitting of a bike helmet, consider:

- a. Most new bike helmets come with foam inserts that can be put inside the helmet for a more snug fit.
- b. Measure the distance around your child's head for the correct helmet size. Children's growth, development, or special needs are different so helmet size will vary for each child.
- c. Toddler-sized bike helmets also may work for some children with very small heads, regardless of age.
- d. The Bicycle Safety Institute has resources for larger helmets at www.helmets.org.

4. To prepare for a safe bike ride, you should:

- a. Carry important medical information while bike riding.
- b. Use sunscreen with at least a 15 SPF to cover all bare skin areas and use often.
- c. Plan regular stops to rest and drink water.
- d. Talk about bike safety basics with all members of your family.
- e. Make sure all bikes are in working order before going out to ride.



Bike Helmets for Children with Special Needs

(continued)

For more information and resources:

- 1) Visit: racingforsafety.pediatrics.iu.edu to learn more about: The Racing for Safety Planning Guide, adaptive bikes, and other resources to set up a practice course for children to learn about and practice how to be safe on bikes or other wheels they use.
- 2) For examples of skull caps that can be used to cover a child's head with no hair before putting on a bike helmet, visit:
 - a) www.skullcapcity.com
 - b) www.crownwear.com/headliner.asp
- 3) The Medical Information Carrier System has a pouch for a child's medical information sheet that is put inside a plastic carrier envelope inside the bike helmet. For more Information visit: www.idformyhelmet.com

Please contact The Safety Store at Riley Hospital for Children at 1-888-365-2022 for more information or visit our website at safetystore.iu.edu.

Products mentioned herein are not an endorsement of these manufacturers but is intended as a starting point for information.