

FACT SHEET:

bicycle helmets



Every day in Queensland, up to six* children under 18 are treated in an emergency department for a bicycle-related injury.^{1,2}

Three children a week under 14 are admitted to hospital for one day or longer in Queensland because of a bicycle-related injury,³ while 10 children a day are admitted to hospital across Australia.⁴

The risks

- Of the 23 children admitted to hospital on an average day in Australia because of bicycle injuries, almost half are under 14, and most of these are between five and 14.⁴
- Most bicycle-related injuries in children do *not* involve other vehicles, including bikes – they just fall off. Cycling injuries can occur when a child falls off their bike, comes into contact with another moving object (such as vehicle, another bike, a pedestrian), or strikes a static object (such as a pole, gutter or fence).²
- 41 people died in Queensland in 2010 due to bicycle-related injuries, and one third of these were not wearing a helmet.⁵
- Cyclists not wearing a helmet when they crash are much more likely to suffer a head and brain injury.⁶

Be a role model: set a good example when cycling with your children. Make sure that your bicycle meets all the safety requirements and that you wear a helmet, enclosed shoes and bright clothing.

Injuries¹

- A quarter of bicycle injuries resulting in admission to hospital in Australia are due to head injuries.⁴ Bicycles are involved in 10% of head injury cases for children aged five to 14.²
- The head, face and neck are the most commonly injured part of the body in children under six.^{1,2}

Prevention

- Bicycle helmets help reduce injury, particularly to the brain.⁷
- Every child needs a helmet, even if they are not riding on the road or they are being supervised by an adult.
- Helmets must comply with with Australian standard AS/NZS 2063.
- To be effective, a helmet must fit well and be strapped on.
- Helmets should be worn when cycling, skateboarding, rollerblading, rollerskating or using micro-scooters.

- Children should be introduced to a helmet when they first start to use ride-on toys.

Helmet fit

- Measure the child's head before buying to ensure you select the correct size.
- The helmet should fit firmly on the head, cover most of the forehead, and have the chinstrap securely fastened.
- Do a 'push' test once fastened – if the helmet can be pushed back and forwards, then it won't protect the front or back of the head in a fall. The helmet is too big.

** Figure extrapolated from Queensland Injury Surveillance Unit data.*

Sources

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