



Welcome to our June issue of Health Matters Online!

In recognition of Safe Kids Week (June 5-11) this issue is all about safety.

You may be surprised to learn that every year in Canada 2,400 children are injured as pedestrians and another 4,700 are injured in non-motorized wheeled activities.

By teaching children and parents about keeping themselves and their loved ones safe, we can help reduce the number of children who are injured.

JUNE 2017

PEDESTRIAN SAFETY TIPS

STREET PROOFING YOUR TODDLER

BIKE CARRIERS AND TRAILERS

HELMETS FOR TODDLERS

SOURCES AND WHERE TO GO FOR MORE INFO

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WALK: PEDESTRIAN SAFETY TIPS

Young children can't properly judge safe gaps in traffic or speeds. Adults or older children should always walk with younger children and teach them how to cross the road safely. Children learn by what they are taught and what they see happening around them. You can help keep kids safe by teaching and modeling these skills early and often.

- Always look left, right and left again when crossing the road.
- Always cross the street at corners.



- Use traffic signals and crosswalks.
- Walk on sidewalks or paths. Sidewalks can reduce pedestrian collisions. No sidewalks? Walk facing traffic as far away from vehicles as possible.
- Put your phone away and keep your head up when walking. Teach kids to put phones, headphones and other devices away when crossing the street.
- Be seen. Teach kids it is important to be especially alert and visible to drivers when walking after dark. Wear brightly coloured clothing and reflective gear help increase 360- degree visibility.

For more information on pedestrian safety visit [Parachute Canada](#).

WALK: STREET PROOFING YOUR TODDLER

Safety in the community is very important. Toddlers are too young to be able to protect themselves so parents need to take responsibility for their safety.

Tips to help protect your toddler:

- Make sure you always know where your toddler is.
- Only leave your toddler alone with people you trust completely.
- Stay well informed of the possible dangers in your community.

You can help your toddler develop self-protection skills and learn to be cautious by street proofing your toddler. Street proofing helps toddlers develop and use good sense in potentially dangerous situations such as traffic, or approached by someone who may harm him/her.

Make sure your toddler knows these things:

- Her first and last names.
- Your first and last names.
- The name of the street he/she lives on - repeat the street name often when you talk to your child.
- Your phone number - try turning the number into a song to help make it easier to recall.

Teach Toddlers to "Check With Me First"

Unfortunately, the majority of people who harm young children are people they know, like a family member, a family friend or acquaintance. It does not help just to tell your toddler "never talk to strangers."

Teach your child to check with you or a caregiver first before going anywhere with anyone or taking a gift or treat. Make sure your toddler understands you need to know where he is all the time and what things are given to him. Tell other caregivers you use this system so they can reinforce the same information.

For more valuable information on keeping kids safe in the community and in the home, check out [Toddler's First Steps](#) page 145.



WHEELS: BIKE CARRIERS AND TRAILERS

Putting a baby or young child in a carrier that is attached to an adult's bike can cause injury to your child, even when you use all the latest safety equipment. It is safest to wait until children are old enough to have the balance and coordination to ride along with you on their own bicycles. Usually, this is around ages 4 to 7.

If you are really set on biking with a baby or young child, the following suggestions can help you minimize the risk of injury:



Children younger than 1 year should not ride in any type of seat mounted on your bicycle. Before sitting in a rear-mounted seat, your child must sit well without support and be able to wear a lightweight helmet. These types of child carriers must:

- Attach securely over the rear wheel.
- Have spoke guards so your child's hands and feet will not get caught in the wheels.
- Have a secure shoulder harness, lap belt, and a high back. A child should be able to fall asleep and be well supported.

If you are using a trailer seat for your child, always have him or her wear a lightweight infant bike helmet. See the next article for tips on how to make sure a helmet fits.

Be a good role model. Helmets aren't just for kids. Adults should always wear a helmet when cycling. Children learn by what they are taught and also from what they see happening around them.

Be careful where you ride. Do not ride with your child on busy streets, even where there is a bike lane. Try to ride in bicycle-only areas, such as recreational paths. Do not ride with your child during bad weather.

Never carry infants in backpacks or front packs on a bike.

For more information check out [HealthLinkBC](#)

WHEELS: HELMETS FOR TODDLERS

Helmets come in a variety of sizes. There are special helmets for toddlers (under age five) that provide more protection at the back of the head. Some children may outgrow the "toddler" size helmet before age five and may need to use a bigger helmet.

Helmets come with extra padding that can be added to the inside of the helmet. Your child may need extra padding at the front or the back of the helmet so that it fits correctly.

Make sure it fits.

A proper fit is very important. Here are some things you can do to make the helmet fits properly.



- Have your child shake her head from side to side and from front to back. The helmet should not move around when she shakes her head.
- The helmet should cover the top of the forehead and should rest about two fingers' width above the eyebrows.
- The side straps should fit snugly around your child's ears in a "V" shape.
- The buckles on the side strap should fit right under the ear. Buckle the chin strap. Tighten it until you can fit only one finger between the strap and your child's chin.

More information is available at parachute.ca

Sources and where to get more info

[Interior Health - Search for Health Centres under "location type"](#)

[Interior Health](#)

[HealthLinkBC](#)

[Parachute Canada](#)

This e-newsletter is an Interior Health project to provide quick and easy health tips for new parents and caregivers of children ages 0 to 2 years. Your comments and topic suggestions are welcome! Simply email us at: healthmatters@interiorhealth.ca.

For more info or to attend a free child health clinic, contact your local Public Health Centre. You can find contact info online at: www.interiorhealth.ca or look it up under Interior Health in the blue pages of your local phone book.

Sincerely,
Interior Health Authority

