

## Safety Tips



- Always wear a helmet.
- Helmets should be properly sized and fitted, and approved by the Consumer Product Safety Commission.
- Chin straps should always be fastened.
- Wear bright colors when riding.
- Bicycles should be outfitted with proper safety reflectors (see MGL. Chapter 85, Section 11B for specifications); and children should avoid riding when dark, if possible.
- Tires and brakes should be inspected before riding.
- The handlebars and seat should never be loose.
- Routinely oil the chain.
- Never ride barefoot; avoid wearing flip flops or cleats; make sure that shoe laces are tied tightly.
- Always keep two hands on the handlebars.
- Do not ride in inclement weather.
- Do not wear earplugs or headphones when riding.
- Never text from a bicycle.
- Keep eyes on the road at all times.
- When riding on roadways, never ride more than two abreast. NOTE: You must allow faster motor vehicles in the same lane to pass you, which may require riding single file.

## Resources

Massachusetts Bicycle Coalition  
<http://massbike.org/resourcesnew/bike-law/>

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration  
<http://www.nhtsa.gov/people/injury/pedbimot/bike/kidsandbikesafetyweb/>

KidsHealth  
[http://kidshealth.org/kid/watch/out/bike\\_safety.html](http://kidshealth.org/kid/watch/out/bike_safety.html)

Safe Kids Worldwide  
<http://www.safekids.org/bike>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
<http://www.cdc.gov/headsup/>

Safe Babies, Safe Kids  
<http://www.middlesexda.com/>

### Parents Can Make a Difference

Talk with your children about safety tips.

Teach your children to obey bicycle laws.

Model safe and healthy behaviors, such as wearing a helmet every time you ride!

# Bike Safety for Children



## The Minuteman Safety and Health Collaborative

### A Community Partnership

*Sponsored by*

**District Attorney Marian T. Ryan**



 Lahey Hospital & Medical Center

 Winchester Hospital  
A member of Lahey Health



 **Armstrong**  
AMBULANCE SERVICE

# Bicycle Laws

- Bikers and passengers under the age of 16 must wear a helmet.
- Passengers may only be transported on a permanent seat or in a tow trailer/cart.
- Children under the age of 4 or weighing 40 pounds or less may not be carried on a bicycle unless in an attached baby seat equipped with a harness.
- Items must be carried in a designated basket, rack, case, bag, or trailer/cart.
- Handlebars may not be modified to where the rider's hands are higher than his/her shoulders, nor may the bicycle fork be altered in any way.
- Sidewalk riding is recommended for young children unless otherwise prohibited by city or town ordinance.
- Teenagers should use designated bicycle lanes, routes or pathways.
- Use hand signals when stopping or turning.
- Ride on the right side of the road.
- Stop at red lights and stop signs.
- Yield to pedestrians in cross walks.
- Accidents resulting in personal injury or property damage must be reported to the local police department.
- Parked bicycles must not obstruct pedestrians, motorists or other bikers.

*Penalties: Parents and guardians are responsible for cyclists under the age of 18. Violations of any of these laws are subject to a fine of up to \$20, and the bicycle may be impounded for up to 15 days.*



Riding a bike can be fun for the whole family, help you maintain your fitness and provide an environmentally friendly means of transportation.

## Health & Fitness

Over the last few years, legislators, police, trauma centers and others have made inroads in improving safety for bicyclists. To lower the risk for injury or death, be sure to wear a helmet every time you get on a bicycle. Here is why:

- Head injuries resulting from a sudden impact can cause bruising, bleeding, tearing and swelling to the delicate brain tissue.
- This may result in a concussion (all concussions are serious and should be reported to a health care provider) or a more serious traumatic brain injury that can affect one's ability to take care of oneself.
- Males seem to be more at risk than females, accounting for 82% of bicycle-related deaths and 70% of nonfatal injuries among children ages 14 and younger.
- Children under 14 years of age are five times more likely to be injured in a bicycle-related crash than older riders.

Children ages 10–14 are at a greater risk for traumatic brain injury from a bicycle-related crash compared to younger children, most likely because helmet use declines as children age (this makes it important for parents to model this behavior and wear helmets when riding).

- Wearing a bicycle helmet, for example, can reduce your risk of head injury by 85%, and reduce the risk of brain injury by 88%, according to a study published in the New England Journal of Medicine.
- Bicycle helmets have also been shown to offer substantial protection to the forehead and midface as well.

Helmets function in the following way:

- The cushioned material (usually a foamed polymer liner) in the helmet spreads the force of impact over a broader area which decreases the impact energy to the head.
- The cushioned material in the helmet absorbs the energy of the impact and helps to protect the scalp and skull (tissue and bones that surround and protect the brain).
- The cushioned material slows the movement of the brain decreasing the impact of a sudden stop (this is called deceleration).