



**BRAIN INJURY
ASSOCIATION**
OF NEW YORK STATE

10 Colvin Avenue

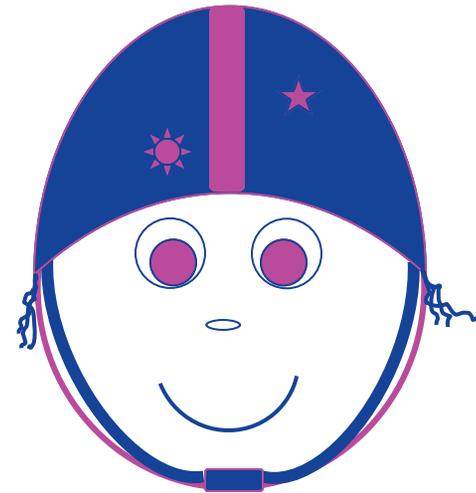
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Get Into the Helmet Habit!



**Kids Keeping Kids Safe
One Head At A Time!**

Get Into The Helmet Habit!

This book is about kids helping kids stay safe and injury-free. Each one of us is in charge of our own safety. The choices we make are important to the kind of future we can look forward to. Many of our choices will help decide the kind of person we will become.

This book is about only one of those choices -- but a very important one. This book is about kids helping kids to remember to wear a helmet **every time** they bike, in-line skate, ski or ride a scooter. It is about the choice to **get into the helmet habit**.

YOUR MIND MATTERS!

About the Brain Injury Association of N.Y.S.

A statewide, non-profit membership organization, the Brain Injury Association of New York State (BIANYS) provides help and hope for individuals with brain injury and their families. The Association is the premier support and advocacy organization in New York State for those thrust into the often confusing and overwhelming world of brain injury, offering information, answering questions, sharing experiences, providing comfort and caring, as well as promoting prevention. Through its comprehensive Family Advocacy, Counseling, and Training Services Program (FACTS), online LEARNet resource, as well as training, public education, advocacy, chapters and support groups, BIANYS assures no one is forced to face the trauma of brain injury alone. BIANYS is the chartered affiliate of the Brain Injury Association of America.

HELMET SAFETY RESOURCES

For more information on helmet safety programs, contact the **Brain Injury Association of New York State at 1 (800) 444-6443**.

Listed below are some of the best websites offering information on safety and helmet use.

Brain Injury Association of New York State
www.bianys.org

NYS Department of Health Injury Prevention
www.health.ny.gov/prevention/injury_prevention/

American Automobile Association
www.aaa.com

The National Safety Council
www.nsc.org

Consumer Products Safety Commission
www.cpsc.gov

Bicycle Helmet Safety Institute
www.helmets.org

Cornell University
www.bike.cornell.edu

National Ski Area Association
www.nsaa.org

Think First—National Injury Prevention Foundation
www.thinkfirst.org

Safe Riders Snowmobile Safety Awareness Program
www.snowmobilers.org



(rev. 2012 E.Weaver)

Decorate A Helmet

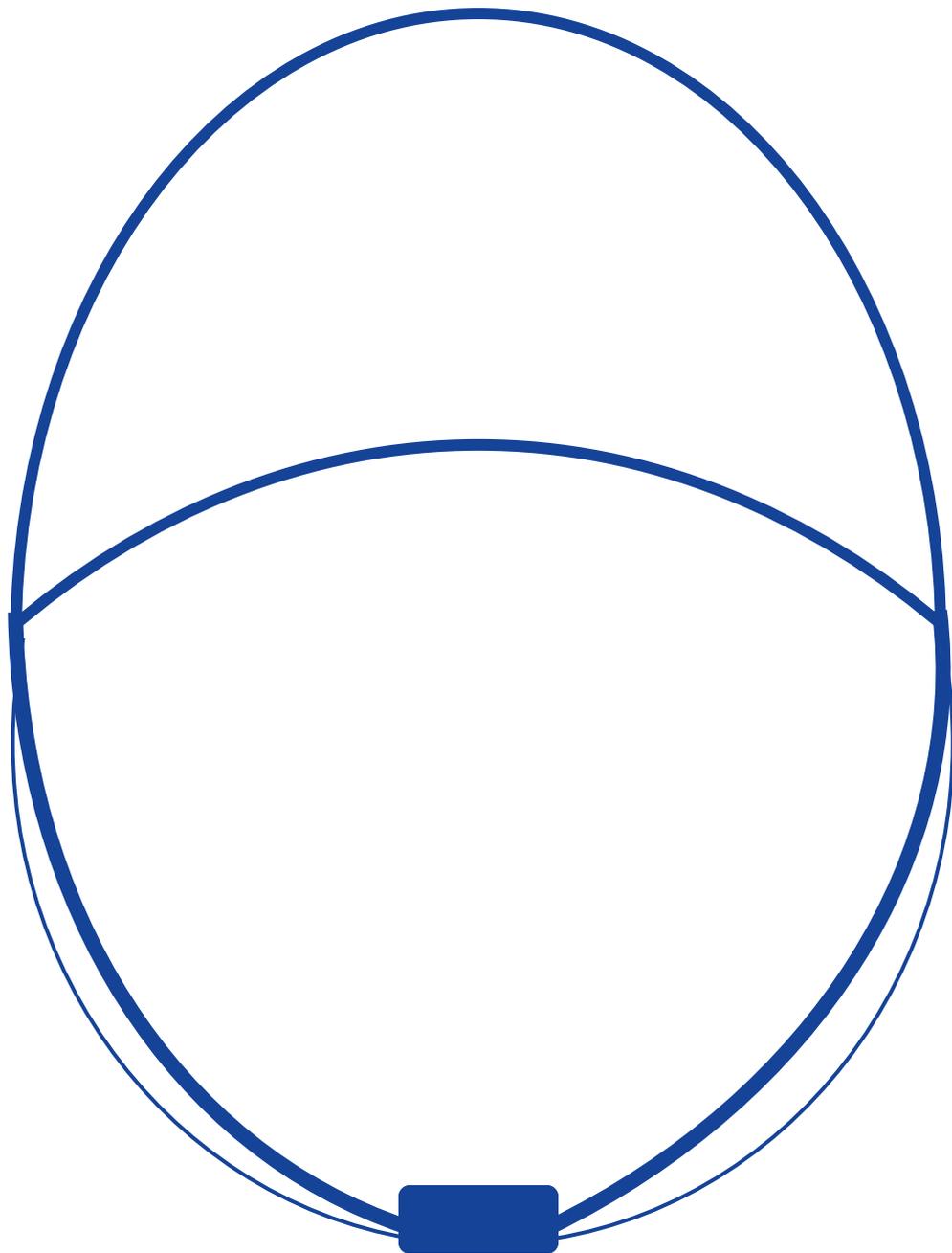


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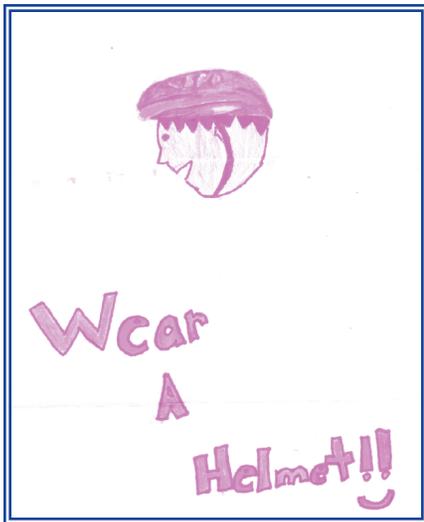
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- American Automobile Association
- BIA of America *Be Head Smart* Program
- National Highway Transportation Safety Administration
- Bicycle Safety Institute
- New York State Police

This program was supported with funds provided by NYS OPWDD Family Advocacy, Counseling, and Training Services Program (FACTS).



Justin, age 11

As a Safety Smart Friend I Pledge to:

1. wear a properly fitted helmet every time I ride my bike, skateboard, scooter, ski, snowboard, ride a horse, ATV, snowmobile;
2. buckle my safety belt on every trip;
3. stop, look left, right, and left again before I cross the street and use the crosswalk;
4. stay 5 giant steps away from the street when I'm waiting for a bus;
5. wear a life jacket when I'm on a boat or around water;
6. wear light, bright colors and reflectors so I can be seen in the dark;
7. "Stop, Look and Listen" before I cross railroad tracks and never play on or near the tracks;
8. stay alert while I'm waiting for a train and stay away from the platform edge;
9. stand facing forward and hold the hand rail when I'm on an escalator;
10. stay out of the back of pick-up trucks;
11. never hitch a ride from a car, bus or truck using my skateboard.

YOUR NAME

YOUR FRIEND'S NAME

Adapted from the US Department of Transportation



Did You Know?

Did you know that the **Consumer Product Safety Commission** has information about helmets for **BMX biking**, downhill mountain biking, **ATV riding**, Moto crossing, **go-karting**, powered scooters, **horseback riding**, rock-wall climbing, **baseball**, football, **ice hockey**, lacrosse, **ice skating** and sledding, **skydiving** and white water rafting? Woah!

SCARY FACT

More than 112,000 people need to go to the emergency room each year because of getting hurt using their skateboard.



Get into the Helmet Habit!

"Get into the Helmet Habit" is written for every child who has a brain and wants to keep it.

Of course every kid has a brain and wants to keep it. The truth is, the brain is in charge of everything that goes on in your body. So - what happens when your brain is injured and doesn't work as well as it did before?

That's an interesting question. You'll need to know something about the brain before you can get into the Helmet Habit - and before you can help other kids to make good choices about protecting their heads. Remember that your mind matters!



Andrew, age 13

Some Interesting Things About Your Brain...

The brain is your **own** personal computer - no website, no iPod app, no fighting with your parents about more time to e-mail your friends. Your brain has just one job: working for you.

When a kid's brain is injured it does not heal like a broken bone or a sprained ankle. The brain does not repair itself in the same way. If your brain is hurt, this may mean that your life will never be the same. You may have problems learning, speaking, feeling, walking, running, seeing, and hearing.

SCARY FACT

**More than 30,000
kids each year are
permanently
disabled from a
brain injury!**



A Short Review...

☆ **Make sure your helmet fits.**

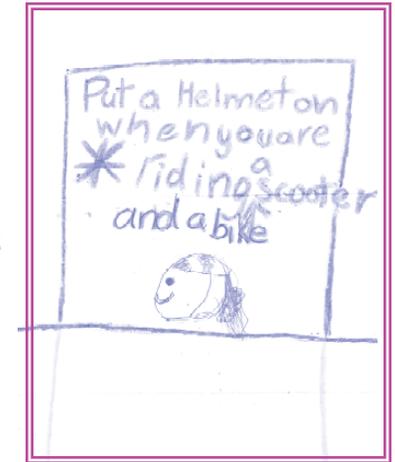
☆ You must try the helmet on your own head.

☆ **Pick a bright color so you can be easily seen!**

☆ Nearly 16,000 head injuries could be prevented or decreased in severity each year by wearing a helmet while snowboarding or skiing.

☆ Remember that you don't have to go far to crash. You can expect to crash in your next 4,500 miles, or maybe much sooner than that.

☆ Helmet standards are taken care of by the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC). Look for a CPSC sticker inside the helmet before you buy it. If you have a bicycle helmet that has an ASTM, Snell, or ANSI sticker, you do not need to buy a new helmet.



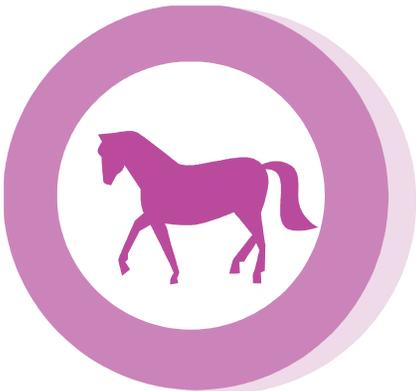
Kayla, age 7

Spread the Word...

Right about now, we hope you're thinking, "I'm pretty sure that I need to get a helmet and keep the helmet habit! I don't want to have a brain injury. But, how do I make sure my friends wear a helmet too?"

Sometimes it's hard to tell someone about how they act, or what they do. The Brain Injury Association of New York State is worried about how hard this is too. We know that if kids wear their helmets, the number of serious brain injuries will go down. We want that to happen. So, here's how you can help.

If you don't already wear your helmet every time your head needs protection, say out loud right now, "**I WILL GET INTO THE HELMET HABIT TODAY.**" Go ahead, say it! That felt a little silly didn't it? Something else you can do is fill out the SAFETY PLEDGE at the end of this book...make sure to do this with a friend or all of your friends, ask an adult to help you cut it out, email it on the computer or send it in a text message. Help your friends get the facts and stay safe!



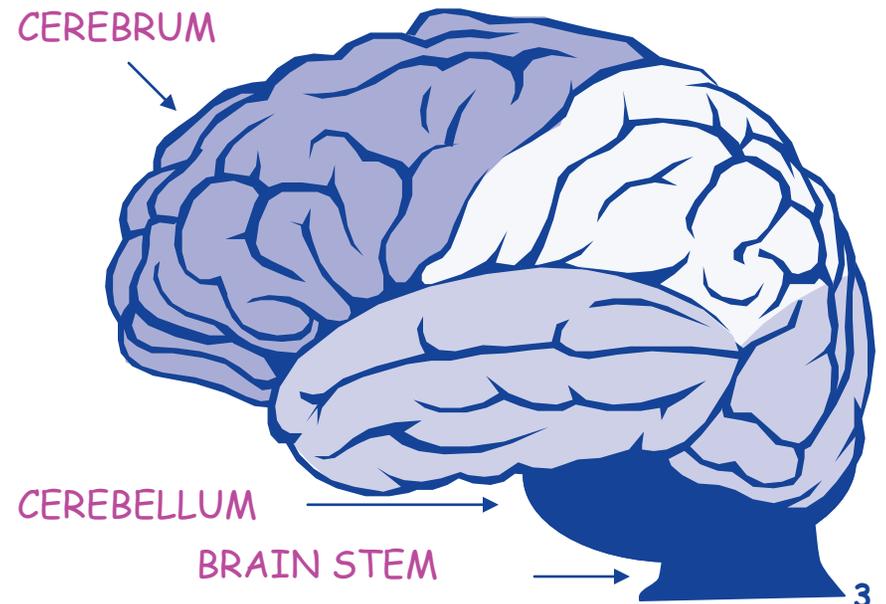
If you are an equestrian, remember, it's important to wear your helmet while riding on your horse OR dismounted! 1 in 3 injuries happen while dismounted!

Words to Know...

Cerebrum Controls your ability to do things like talk, think when you do your math homework, see your video games, smell flowers or clean your room.

Cerebellum Controls your ability to stay balanced on your bike or skateboard, run around the playground, and helps your muscles work together.

Brain Stem Controls your heartbeat, helps you breath or swallow your food.



Why Wear a Helmet?

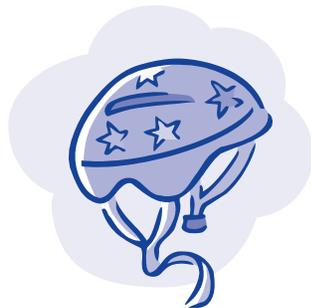
We are betting you have asked that question before! Here's the answer.

How Does a Helmet Work?

Just like a sponge absorbs water, a helmet can absorb the force of a hard impact. If you fall off of your bike, your horse, crash when skiing, snowboarding, skateboarding or even riding your scooter, you can be sure that your head is going to hit something very hard. It could be the ground, a telephone pole or a car that you bang into.

Now, look inside a bike helmet. There is a layer of stiff foam, called **expanded polystyrene (EPS)**. That's a big word for the stuff that white picnic coolers are made of. You know, those lightweight boxes that keep your sandwiches from getting yucky when you're on a school field trip or spend a day at the park? Helmets are lined with this foam, because when you have a crash, the foam gets dented and collapses - not your head.

Now look at the outside of your helmet. It's a plastic shell, right? It has a job, also. The shell is designed to help the helmet slide smoothly over rough pavement or gravel so that your neck doesn't get jerked around after you fall. That plastic shell also keeps the foam in place so it can do its job of protecting your brain. Because the foam is surrounding your head, your brain won't bounce around inside your head, causing a brain injury.



It's A Fact:

The oldest use of helmets was by Ancient Greek soldiers, who wore thick leather or bronze helmets to protect their head!

What to Wear When You're Biking, In-Line Skating, Skateboarding or Using Your Scooter...

Neon green, yellow or orange are all great choices. If you're wearing these colors, other bikers, skaters, motorists and pedestrians will be able to see you better.



For riding at night (**which is not a good idea**) you'll need reflective clothing. You'll also need one good light source, like a bright headlamp.



Make sure the straps of your book bag, loose clothing or anything else isn't going to cause you to lose control.

Don't use your i-Pod while riding. We all love good music, but headphones are a no-no! You won't be able to hear what's going on around you.



Clothing that's too loose is dangerous. The wrong shoes like high heels, sandals and clogs can mean big trouble! No bare feet ever! Grab your sneakers and make sure your laces are tight.



Dark clothes, or clothes with no reflective tape or cloth are NO-NOs!





Excuses ... Excuses!

EXCUSE: "I never fall."

FACT: Experienced, careful bike riders crash after riding a total of 4,500 miles. It's just a matter of time before your 4,500 miles are up.

EXCUSE: "I look stupid."

FACT: Crashing and getting a brain injury that never heals is sad and scary. It also can be prevented. Choosing safety is never stupid.

EXCUSE: "Helmets are not cool. I'm into fashion!"

FACT: Kids wearing helmets can be seen better by others, and get more respect on the road. Helmets today come in every color, design and style.

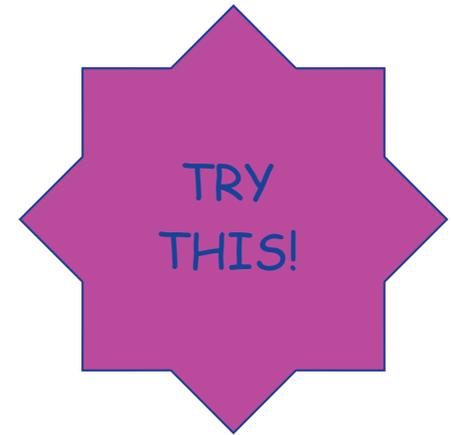
EXCUSE: "Helmets are not comfortable."

FACT: Helmets today are lightweight and made to catch the breeze with lots of vents. If it is properly fitted, a helmet is very comfortable.

EXCUSE: "I know I don't have to wear a helmet after I'm 14. What's the point?"

FACT: SAFETY!! New York State law says that you must wear a helmet when you bike or in-line skate until you're 14. In 2001 scooters were added, followed by skateboards in 2004. So when you're on wheels, put on a helmet!

Ask someone who has had a bad crash to show you the helmet they were wearing. Chances are, the outside will be cracked, the foam inside will be broken and crushed. People who have survived crashes usually love showing off their helmets. Maybe this is because they know if they hadn't been wearing a helmet, they might not be talking to you at all.



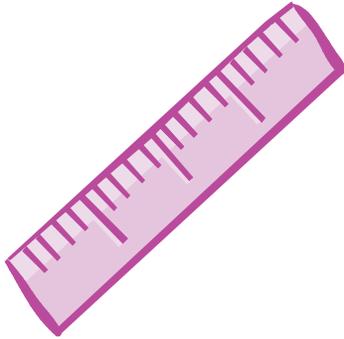
Why Won't Kids Wear Helmets?

The Brain Injury Association of New York State really wanted to know the answer to this question. We already know that wearing a helmet can save your life. Yet, fewer than half of kids and adults wear them, and teenagers almost never do. Ugh!

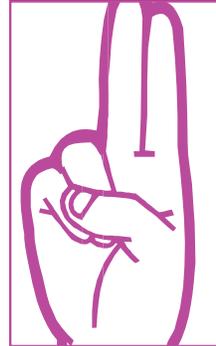
So, we asked about 100 kids between the ages of 8 and 14 if they wear helmets. They gave us a lot of excuses for not wearing helmets. We thought you might be interested in the real deal, so we're giving you the excuses we heard and the facts about helmets and injury prevention. Check out the next page...

EASY STEPS FOR A PERFECTLY FITTED HELMET

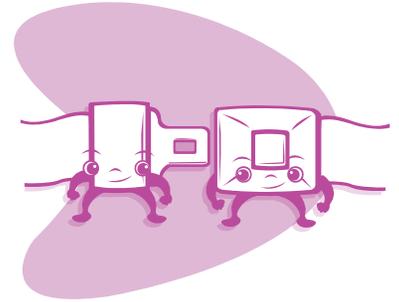
SIZE: Measure your head. Try on the helmet to ensure it fits your head comfortably. **It should not rock side to side.** You can use sizing pads to adjust the fit to different head shapes.



POSITION: The helmet should sit level on the head so that the forehead is covered within **two finger widths of the eyebrow**



BUCKLES: Center the left buckle under the chin. On most helmets the straps can be pulled from the back of the helmet to lengthen or shorten the chin straps.



SIDE STRAPS:

Adjust the slider on both straps to form a "V" shape under and slightly in front of the ears



CHIN STRAP: Roll the rubber band toward the slider. **Buckle up!** Starting loose, while holding the buckle, pull the strap tight. No more than one or two fingers should fit under the strap.

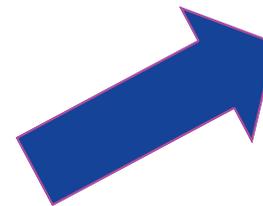


3 tricks to see if your helmet fits right...

1. Open your mouth wide... **BIG YAWN!** The helmet should pull down on the head. If not, tighten the chin strap.

2. Does your helmet rock back more than two fingers above the eyebrows? If so, unbuckle, shorten the front strap by moving the slider forward. Buckle, retighten the chin strap, and test again.

3. Does your helmet rock forward into your eyes? If so, unbuckle, tighten the back strap by moving the slider back toward the ear. Buckle, retighten the chin strap and test again.



ONE MORE STEP

Roll the rubber band down the buckle. All four straps must go through the rubber band and be close to the buckle to prevent the buckle from slipping.