

Bicycling Safety Rules



Since North Topsail Beach has a bike path, following are some safety rules for children that everyone should follow.

Most American children age six to 16 ride bicycles. Children start cycling as play when they are very young. As they grow older and become more experienced, the transition from toy to transportation is made. With increasing independence, parents have less control of where the bicycle is ridden and how it is used.

The attitudes you, as a parent, instill in your children from a young age will determine how they will ride for years to come.

Starting out

Make sure your child's bike and helmet are the right size. He or she should be able to straddle the bike with both feet on the ground; a bike that is too big or too small is a safety hazard. Ten-speed bikes are not a good idea because small hands often cannot make the handbrakes work. Buy a bike with a coaster brake. As a minimum, your child's first bike should be equipped with a bell and reflectors.

For young children, set the following hard and fast rules:

- No playing on the road.
- No riding on busy streets.
- No riding at night.
- Stop for all stop signs.
- Ride on the right with traffic.
- Make your own decisions.

Common dangers

The majority of bicycle injuries do not involve motor vehicles. Most are falls, collisions with stationary objects, and collisions with other bikes or pedestrians result from the bicyclist losing control, and most occur less than five blocks from home, in familiar surroundings.

But the most serious incidents - including over 90 per cent of cyclist deaths - involve motor vehicles. In 70 per cent of the collisions, the cyclist is at fault, either by violating a law or by poor road sense. Teach your children as if their life depended on the lessons. It does.
