

ABC BICYCLE SAFETY CHECK & HELMET CHECK

LESSON PLAN – Grades 1-3

PURPOSE:

To teach young students how to check their bikes for safety, why they should wear bike helmets, and how to wear helmets correctly.

OBJECTIVE:

Students will learn how to check their bikes and make sure their helmets are on properly. This is basic enough for young students and will help them form good habits. Students will understand why checking their bikes and wearing helmets are important. They will know the quick bike and helmet safety refreshers: **ABC, Eyes, Ears and Mouth.**

INTRODUCTION:

Total Lesson Time: 20-25 minutes

I. Type: Fact-based Attention Getter

Helmets can prevent up to 84 per cent of cyclists' brain injuries,¹ but they have to be worn and fitted properly to work. Education and promotion can increase helmet use and decrease brain injury.² Checking your bike over before you ride can help to prevent crashes.

Today's lesson is on safety precautions for you and your bicycle.

II. Establish Credibility:

How many of you ever have fallen off a bike – a friend's bike or your own? How many of you ever have fallen anywhere and felt like you were shaken all over? Your head felt "funny?" When you fall, you risk hurting your head and your brain. Why do we want to protect our brains? [Help us walk, talk, play, move, eat, do everything, etc.]

III. Preview Main Points:

Today, we will talk about how to do a quick safety check on your bike before riding and how to make sure that your bike helmet is on your head correctly so that you don't hurt your brain.

¹ Jeffrey J. Sacks, MD, MPH; Patricia Holmgreen, MS; Suzanne M. Smith, MD; Daniel M. Sosin, MD *Bicycle-Associated Head Injuries and Deaths in the United States From 1984 Through 1988 How Many Are Preventable?* JAMA. 1991;266(21):3016-3018.

² Rivara FP, Thompson DC, Thompson RS, Rogers LW, Alexander B, Felix D, Bergman AB. *The Seattle Children's Bicycle Helmet Campaign: Changes in Helmet Use and Head Injury Admissions* Pediatrics, Apr 1994; 93: 567 - 569.

PRESENTATION:

Type: Lecture + Discussion + Activity

Materials: Helmet Coloring Sheet [at the end of the Lesson Plan]; **make copies**
Bicycle to demonstrate A,B,C
1 – 2 bicycle helmets for demonstrations
Hair coverings if you want students to try on helmets

Outline:

1st Main Point: ABC Bicycle Check:

An ABC check is a quick once over that you give your bike before riding, even in the neighborhood. Doing an ABC check every time you ride lets you know your bike is good to go.

A is for AIR. Check to make sure your tires are fully pumped up. A tire low on air is more likely to get a flat which could cause a crash. Tires without enough air also make it hard to pedal. Have your parent or guardian push down on your tires. If they are able to make a dent in the tire, it is time to pump it up. Do not over pump them; the side of the tires tells the best pressure [measured in psi – pressure per square inch.] Check the condition of your tires. If they are worn or cracked, it may be time to replace them.

B is for BRAKES. Make sure your brakes are working. You do not want to find your brakes aren't going to stop you when you are cruising down a hill. If you have hand breaks, make sure the brake lever doesn't touch the handle bar when you squeeze it. Squeeze your brakes one at a time while trying to push your bike forward. When you squeeze the brake on your front wheel and push on your handle bars, the back tire will come up off the ground. When you squeeze the brake on your back wheel and push your bike forward, you bike will move but your tire will not. If you have coaster breaks, the next step is key!

C is for CHAIN. Look over your chain and make sure it is not too dirty, rusty or broken. If your chain is too loose it is more likely to fall off. If you have coaster breaks (back pedal brakes) and your chain falls off or breaks, your brakes will not work! Turn your pedals and make sure your chain runs smoothly.

Are there any questions about the A,B,C Bicycle Check?

Transition: After we've checked our bikes to make sure they're ready to go, we have to get ourselves ready to go! **ALWAYS WEAR YOUR HELMETS – EVERYWHERE, EVEN IN YOUR YARD!** Helmets keep our brains safe. We need our brains to walk, ride, talk, play, learn move – everything, so we need to be very careful.

2nd Main Point: Check your helmet – Wear it Correctly

Your helmet should be straight on your forehead- not tilted back and not tilted down to your eyes. You should be able to just see the rim of you helmet when you look up. The side straps should come down just below your ear lobes in a V shape. The chin strap should be buckled under your chin. You should be able to get one or two fingers between you strap and your chin. Remember eyes, ears and mouth.

1. **EYES-** you should be able to see the rim of your helmet.
2. **EARS-** your straps should come to a V just below your ears.
3. **MOUTH-** you should be able to feel your chin strap when you open your mouth.

Transition: Let’s put our learning to work and see it in “real life.”

Suggested Demonstration:

Bring in a bike for a hands-on ABC bike check. Point to and name different parts of the bicycle. Have students feel what proper tire pressure feels like. Demonstrate an eyes, ears, mouth helmet check. Have students fit helmets on each other or respond to whether one helmet on a student model is on correctly or not – and why. [note – use hair coverings for trying on helmets.]

Activity: Helmet Coloring Sheet- have students design their own helmets. [Small photo on the coloring sheet shows the correct position of a helmet.]

Any Questions?

Transition and CONCLUSION: Now you know some easy ways to check your bike for safety and how to wear a helmet to keep your brain safe. You can practice these skills on your bike if you have one or on one of your friend’s bikes – teach your friend, too!

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The Statewide Health Improvement Program (SHIP) is a nation-leading effort to reduce the incidence of chronic disease, such as obesity, diabetes and heart disease through prevention. It focuses on creating sustainable, systemic changes that make it easier for individuals to make healthy choices in their daily lives. SHIP is working in communities across Minnesota using a health promotion and prevention approach to help all Minnesotans lead healthier lives. The Minneapolis Department of Health and Family Support is a SHIP grantee and has subcontracted with the Minneapolis Public Schools (MPS) to implement health interventions in the areas of Active Recess/Playground management, Safe Routes to School, Physical Education and Nutrition.