



National Bike Safety Month



PATHWAYS to INJURY PREVENTION

Biking on Tribal Lands

From cruising the paved streets to going off-roading, biking is fun, easy, and a great form of exercise for our Native children. However, since injuries are the leading cause of death for American Indians ages 1-44, safety measures need to be taken when biking on the reservation roads and trails. Luckily, we can easily prevent bike related injuries.

The Single easiest way to prevent bike related injuries is to wear a helmet!

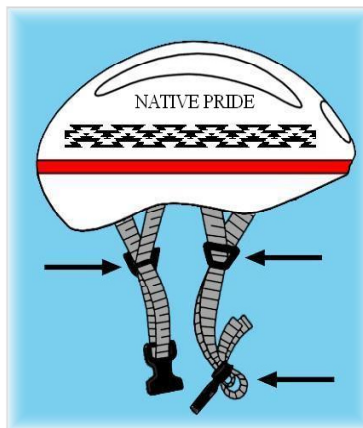


Statistics indicate that 60% of childhood bicycle-related deaths occur on rural roads and helmets can reduce head injuries by 85% and brain injuries by 88%.

What is startling is that an estimated 90% of children do not wear helmets on rural lands and 60% of California Native children do not wear a helmet every time they bike.

So what can we do to protect our Native children from bicycle-related deaths & injuries?

- Inform your community on how helmets can protect Indian people by reducing deaths and injuries from bicycle accidents
- Encourage parents to provide helmets for their kids
- Provide cool tribal, native, and/or popular stickers & decorations for helmets



- Supply information for parents on where to obtain affordable and appropriate helmets
- Talk to your tribal council leaders on encouraging bicycle helmet enforcement
- Hang posters that promote helmet use
- Inform your community on what helmet is appropriate for what activity



Did you know?

Bike Riding Hand Signals



Left Turn



Right Turn



Right Turn Alternative



Stop or Yield

In This Issue...

- ❑ Biking on Tribal Lands .. page 1
- ❑ Did You Know ..... page 1
- ❑ Safe Biking Rules of the Road ..... page 2
- ❑ A Word About ATV Safety on Tribal Lands... page 2

## Safe Biking Rules of the Road

Knowing how to ride a bike safely, along with always wearing a bike helmet, are critical to children's safety. Before allowing children to ride in the street, practice the following rules with youngsters until they become a habit. Because children learn more from actions than words, parents and caregivers should set a good example by following the same rules themselves:

### Never ride against the traffic.

Most collisions involving a car and a bicycle are caused when bicyclists fail to follow this rule. Instead, ride in the bike lane or on the shoulder going with the flow of traffic.

### Never make a left turn from the right lane.

**Don't pass through an intersection at full speed.** Slow down and respect stoplights and



**"When the spirits are low, when the day appears dark, when work becomes monotonous, when hope hardly seems worth having, just mount a bicycle and go out for a spin down the road, without thought on anything but the ride you are taking."**

**-Arthur Conan Doyle**

stop signs.

### Never enter traffic suddenly from a driveway or sidewalk.

This rule is particularly important for children, who are more difficult for motorists to see. Teach children that just because you can see them doesn't mean they can see you.



**Don't wear headphones;** they make it hard to hear and respond to traffic.



**Don't carry passengers on a bike.** The only exception is a child who is under 40 pounds but at least 1 year old and is wearing a helmet and is buckled into an approved bike safety seat.

**Take extra care when using a passenger trailer.** Because it makes one's bike longer, it requires careful control. Remember that passengers must wear helmets.

**Always use hand signals to indicate a turn.**

**The number one rule is to wear a helmet!** Helmets must be worn properly to be safe. To fit correctly, the helmet must cover the forehead (they should not be pushed back on the head) and fit snugly enough so that a finger cannot be inserted between the helmet and the head. Adjust the front and back straps so that the helmet does not move either backward or forward on the head when pushed. The chinstrap should be tight enough so the child can feel the top of the helmet when he opens his mouth.



## A Word About ATV Safety On Tribal Lands

Not enough data has been collected to prove that there is a big problem with ATV use in your community but observations show that the majority of people riding on the tribal lands do not use helmets when riding ATVs. This is a potentially deadly trend so if you see this in your community, encourage your tribal council to enforce primary helmet laws for bikes and ATVs today. You can save a life!



We know that as a caregiver you have your youngster's safety in mind. ATVs are not toys and serious injury can result from improper use of All Terrain Vehicles (ATVs). Your youngster's safety will depend on you taking a "safety first" approach to ATV riding at all times.

ATVs can be hazardous to operate. For your safety, always wear a helmet, eye

protection and protective clothing. Always avoid paved surfaces. Never ride on public roads. Never carry passengers on a single-rider vehicle or engage in stunt riding without first taking an ATV safety course. Avoid excessive speeds. And remember that alcohol and riding never mix!

ATVs handle differently than other vehicles so taking a safety course is highly recommended. If you are in a remote area and do not have access to a course you can go on-line to [www.atvsafety.org](http://www.atvsafety.org) to request their "ATV Rally" CD-ROM that can be run on your home PC and takes you through virtual scenarios. Keep our Native youth safe!

If you would like to know more about creating primary helmet laws in your community contact:

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