Heads up on Helmets
Why your teenager should wear a bike helmet

Facts:

1. Teenagers are less likely than other cyclists to wear a bike helmet.

2. Half of the teenage cyclists involved in a bike crash risked serious head injury by NOT wearing a bike helmet.*

3. 1 in 4 teenage cyclists who end up in hospital after a bike crash suffer a head injury - a head injury can have lifelong consequences.

4. Cyclists can reduce the risk of head injury by more than 60% by wearing an approved bike helmet which is correctly fitted and fastened.

It’s the law
All bike riders must wear a helmet that complies with the Australian and New Zealand Standards (AS/NZ2063) securely fitted and fastened on their head.

Each year in NSW over 3000 young cyclists are fined for not wearing a helmet or wearing a helmet incorrectly. That’s more than 60 fines a week! The fine is over $50!

A bike helmet will protect the head only if it is the right size and worn correctly. This means:

Firm fit. The helmet has a secure fit and cannot move around on the head.

Sit square. The helmet sits straight on the head, not tilted in any direction.

Protect forehead. The rim of the helmet sits 2 finger widths above the eyebrows.

Closed buckle. The buckle is securely fastened under the chin - check that no more than 2 fingers can fit between the buckle and chin.

Snug straps. The straps are not loose or twisted. Adjust straps regularly.

* where helmet usage is known

This is a joint project between Youthsafe and the NSW Centre for Road Safety, RTA.
Heads up on Helmets

Parent Fact Sheet:

Encourage your teenager to wear a bike helmet correctly

Parent attitudes do matter to teenagers

• Have a “no helmet, no bike” rule - remind your teenager about this rule on a regular basis.
• Always check to see your teenager is wearing their helmet.
• Always wear your helmet when riding a bike - lead by example.

Discuss with your teenager why a properly fitted bike helmet is important

• Talk regularly about the benefits of bike helmets in reducing the risk of head injury.
• Discuss the possible consequences of head injury such as permanent brain damage.
• Remind them to wear their helmet correctly each time they ride their bike - bike crashes can happen anywhere.
• Talk about the law and the risk of a fine for not wearing a helmet or wearing it incorrectly.

Get friends on board

• What friends think and do is really important to teenagers so encourage other parents to also have a “no helmet, no bike” rule.

Buying the right helmet

• Where possible, let your teenager choose their own bike helmet.
• Make sure the helmet complies with Australian and New Zealand Standards (AS/NZ2063).
• When buying a bike helmet, ask an experienced staff member to fit the helmet and show your teenager how to adjust it correctly.

Damaged helmets are unsafe

• Helmet damage is not always visible - buy a new helmet rather than a second-hand helmet.
• Replace your teenager’s helmet if:
  - it’s been dropped on a hard surface
  - it’s been involved in a bike crash
  - it has visible signs of damage to the shell, foam or straps
• Bike helmets don’t last forever - it’s a good idea to replace a bike helmet every 3-5 years.

Remember... no helmet, no bike - no exceptions!

→ For safe cycling, teenagers also need to know about road rules and bike maintenance. For more details go to the RTA website: www.rta.nsw.gov.au
→ For further information about youth injury prevention contact Youthsafe on (02) 9809 4615 or check the website: www.youthsafe.org