



Protecting Our Children

A Safe School Commute

(NAPSA)—Keeping children safe before and after school can be as easy as A-B-C if they have proper safety equipment for an injury-free commute to and from school on skates or bicycles.

“Oftentimes parents may not think to check safety gear for their children who ride bikes or rollerblade to school,” said James Wells, M.D., president of The American Society of Plastic Surgeons (ASPS). “Plastic surgeons treat children injured in bicycle or skating collisions throughout the year. Proper helmet and wrist guard use minimizes soft-tissue injuries of the face and hands such as bruises, scrapes and cuts.”

Dr. Wells reminds parents that particular concern should be given to injuries on the face where the potential for scarring and nerve damage exists. A surgeon qualified to repair the face and all areas of the body should treat the injuries.

ASPS urges parents to take the following safety precautions:

1. Make sure children wear safety equipment—helmets, elbow pads, knee pads and wrist guards.

2. Remember, children grow fast. The helmet that fit last year may now be too small. All helmets, knee pads and wrist guards should fit snug and be worn as described on the equipment’s directions.

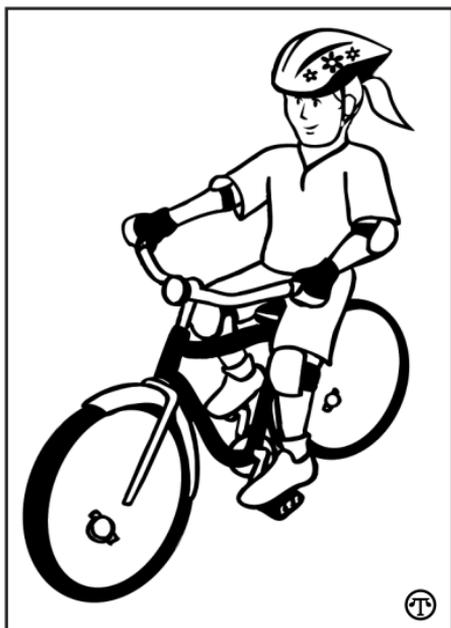
3. Caution children to use bicycles, scooters, in-line skates and skateboards only on smooth-paved roads.

4. Teach children how to stop properly.

5. Check park districts and sports stores for classes on safety and proper equipment usage.

6. Know what to do in an emergency situation. Have emergency phone numbers available.

7. If the injury requires a trip to the emergency room, consult with the emergency room physician regarding the need for a plastic surgeon.



Head for safety: Parents should be sure youngsters wear helmets and other protective gear when cycling or skating.

8. Make sure the plastic surgeon called is certified by The American Board of Plastic Surgery (ABPS). Board-certified plastic surgeons have specialized training to treat cut tendons and soft tissue that require complex repair.

“Child safety is of great importance to ASPS as the use of proper safety equipment can minimize or eliminate injuries when a child falls,” said Dr. Wells.

ASPS supports child safety with its “Helmets 4 Safety” annual event, distributing helmets to school children in the city that hosts its annual meeting. To learn more or to find a plastic surgeon certified by the ABPS, the only board approved by the American Board of Medical Specialties that certifies physicians in plastic surgery of the face and all areas of the body, log-on to www.plasticsurgery.org or call 1-888-4-PLASTIC (1-888-475-2784).