

Bicycle News and Notes



Safe Bike Selecting And Riding

(NAPSA)—When it comes to buying your youngster a new bike, AAA's Rhonda Shah says it's vital that you find one that's the proper size.

How To Size A Bike

You'll know the bike fits the child when he or she can sit on the seat and balance the bicycle with the balls of both feet touching the ground and without leaning to one side or the other. If the bicycle seat is in the lowest position and the child cannot touch both feet to the ground, the bike is too large to be ridden safely.

"If you want to give the bike as a surprise present," says Shah, "you'd be wise to go to the bike shop with the child's measurements and a tape measure in hand."

Measure the child's inseam to the ground. The distance from the top of the bike's horizontal bar (or where it would be on a girl's bike) to the ground should be an inch or two shorter than that.

Other Safety Suggestions

- Consider brake design. Children's bicycles typically have either hand brakes or coaster brakes, which engage when pedaling backwards. Keep in mind that hand brakes can be dangerous for younger children, who have smaller hands and less strength in the wrists.

- Everyone, regardless of age or skill level, should wear a bicycle helmet on every ride. Head injuries are the leading cause of death in bicycle crashes but wearing a properly fitted bicycle hel-



The right size bike and helmet mean more comfort and a greater ability to control and ride.

met has been shown to reduce the risk by up to 85 percent, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

Just as a bike must be sized correctly, so should helmets. It's best to try on a helmet, but if that's not possible, measure around the recipient's head at the forehead to determine which size to purchase. Make sure the helmet meets safety standards by looking for a sticker on the inside from the Snell Memorial Foundation, the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), ASTM International, or the American National Standards Institute (ANSI).

- Before taking a spin on a new bike, check that it's put together securely and that additional safety equipment, such as horns or lights, have been installed correctly. Wear brightly colored or reflective clothing and learn all safety rules.

- For more safe bicycling tips, go to ShareTheRoad.AAA.com.