



Working TOWARD Wellness

LIVE BETTER. LIVE LONGER.

PROVIDED BY HEART HEALTH ACTION WINDSOR-ESSEX
AND THE WINDSOR-ESSEX COUNTY HEALTH UNIT

PLAYING IT SAFE ON ROADS & TRAILS



Besides motorists, there are many others who use our roads for recreation or transportation. These include people who walk or jog on the shoulder of the road and those who cycle on the road. Bicycles are considered to be a vehicle by law. As a result, cyclists are legally required to follow the same rules of the road as motorists.

All other forms of "wheeled" recreation such as in-line skates, skateboards and scooters should be used on the sidewalk or trails with appropriate and safe

surfaces. While these forms of wheeled recreation provide great exercise and are good for the environment, they are not without risk, particularly when it comes to interaction with motorized vehicles, cyclists, pedestrians and other trail users.

Although not practiced often enough, it is well known that all cyclists and other wheelers should wear the appropriate safety and protective gear. This can help dramatically reduce the number of catastrophic injuries and

premature deaths that occur in our communities.

Further, collisions that involve pedestrians, cyclists and wheelers can be significantly reduced if everyone plays their part in being where they're supposed to be, staying alert and respecting the rules of the road and trail. While many of us may think we know how to "play it safe" on roads and trails, we can all benefit from being reminded. Read on to find out more...

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE!

- | | T | F |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Adult cyclists are NOT advised to wear a CSA-approved bicycle helmet. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 2. Almost 50% of injuries and fatalities in 2001 in Ontario between pedestrians and motorists occurred because the pedestrian did not follow the rules of the road. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 3. If there is no sidewalk, it is safer to walk on the left side of the road, facing oncoming traffic. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 4. You should wear short-sleeved shirts when in-line skating. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 5. All municipal by-laws state that wheelers must stay off of sidewalks. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 6. Stay on the left side of the trail when walking, jogging, cycling or wheeling. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 7. Head injuries are the leading cause of fatalities and serious injuries among wheelers. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 8. The cyclist has the right of way over pedestrians on a trail. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 9. When you practice safe habits, you act as a good role model for children. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 10. The rules of the road are the same for cyclists as they are for automobile drivers. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

see answers on back panel

Practicing safe road and trail user habits have benefits for everyone:

Reduces trips to emergency rooms resulting from injuries to yourself and others.

Makes it safer for cyclists to share the road with motorists.

Ensures everyone feels safe and welcome on recreational trail systems.

Serves as good role model for children grandchildren and other adults.

Encourages more people to be physically active.

Enhances enjoyment of the recreational activities you choose to do.



Why SHOULD I BE SO CONCERNED ABOUT SAFETY?

The Ministry of Transportation of Ontario (MTO) reported that in 2001, more than 7,400 pedestrians and cyclists combined were injured and 135 were killed as a result of collisions with motor vehicles.

Although the public perception may be that the driver is to blame for most of these collisions, studies show that pedestrians and cyclists also share responsibility. In fact, the MTO reports that almost 50% of injuries and fatalities between pedestrians and motorists occurred because the

pedestrian did not obey the rules of the road. Further, it is estimated that 70% of traffic collisions between cyclists and motor vehicles are the fault of the individual on the bike.

It's a known fact that bicycle helmets save lives and prevent serious injury. The problem is that many children wear their helmets but adults don't. In fact, while many adults agree with the importance of practicing proper safety habits, only half of those surveyed actually wore helmets when biking.

Helmets are also important safety gear for those who participate in wheeling activities. Head injuries are the leading cause of fatalities and serious injuries among this group. However, it is estimated that almost 70% of in-line skaters do not use any protective equipment.

The bottom line is that practicing safe habits on the road or on multi-use trails is in everyone's best interest. Think about this the next time you head out the door with your bike, your skates or your walking shoes.

How CAN I PLAY IT SAFE ON

Get Started

Before setting out to go biking, walking, running or wheeling, make sure that you are wearing the proper clothing and protective gear, and that all of your equipment is in good working order.

- When walking or jogging, wear bright or lightly coloured clothing at dusk or after dark. It also helps to wear clothing that has reflective strips.
- Be aware of the weather and dress according to the conditions.
- Your bike should be the proper size for you and be in good working order. Check the brakes, gears and tires regularly. If you are not sure what to look for, your local bike shop should be able to help.
- Everyone who rides a bike is strongly advised to wear a properly fitting, CSA-approved bicycle helmet to help reduce the risk of a serious head injury. In Ontario, it is the law to wear an approved bicycle helmet

for those under the age of 18 years.

- A bike should include a light and reflectors especially when riding near or after dark. As well, a horn or bell should be installed to communicate your intention to others.
- When wheeling, as a minimum, you should wear a bicycle helmet (see above), wrist guards, knee and elbow pads and protective clothing (long sleeves and pants).

Take Steps

Once you have prepared yourself, you need to be aware or be reminded of the rules of the road and how you can help prevent an unwanted injury. Some suggestions include:

Walking or Jogging

- Always use the sidewalk if available. If not, stay on the left side of the road so that you can always see the oncoming traffic and they can see you.
- Don't cross the street between

parked cars. Always cross at marked crosswalks or traffic lights.

- Watch for traffic turning at intersections or driveways.

Cycling

- Before making a turn or stopping, check over your shoulder and then use the proper hand signals.
- Make sure to stop at all stop signs and traffic lights and scan both directions for traffic.
- When at crosswalks, walk your bike across to the other side of the road.
- Remember that a cyclist must obey the same rules of the road as motor vehicle drivers.

Wheeling

- Make sure you know how to stop and turn before skating in crowds. Practice first in empty parking lots.
- Stay on designated paved trails, roller rinks, parks or sidewalks and

What IS A MAJOR BARRIER TO HAVING BETTER SAFETY HABITS?

Many of us feel that when it comes to safety, it's the "other" person who has unsafe practices that must be improved. For example, we may believe that it's always the other person who is biking too fast, wheeling without any regard for others or the runner who is not paying attention to the traffic when crossing the street. How often have you wanted to tell these people to "Smarten-up"?

The fact is, we have to change our attitudes about safety. We need to agree that all of us have habits that could be improved. Whether we're out for a walk or a jog, riding our bicycle or wheeling, we all need to take that first step by becoming responsible for improving our own track record when it comes to safety on the road and on the trails.

ROADS AND TRAILS?

keep off of roads. Check with your local municipality for by-laws that may restrict where you can do these activities.

- Skate on smooth, dry surfaces under good weather conditions.

General Safety Guidelines

- Communicate! Make sure other road and trail users know your intentions.
- Reduce your speed when the road or trail traffic is heavy.
- Stop at all train crossings and look both ways before proceeding.
- Be courteous to other road or trail users. Remember, kindness to others can go a long way in preventing collisions.
- Keep to the right side of trails when walking, running, biking or wheeling. Pass only on the left.
- Check out resources and websites listed in this brochure for more

information on the rules of the road, and safety guidelines for cyclists, pedestrians and wheelers.

Stick To It

As with any habit that you want to change, it takes time. It also becomes harder to change those habits that you've had for a long time. But remember that every time you practice safer habits, you could be preventing serious injuries for yourself or others. Also, by sticking to safe habits, you are acting as a great role model for your children, grandchildren and others.

Celebrate

Treat yourself to some new equipment or accessories for practicing safe road and trail use habits. You deserve to pat yourself on the back because not only are you playing it safe, but you are also getting some great physical activity and contributing to a safer community.

Go for it!

RESOURCES

Transport Canada
1-800-333-0371

Parks and Recreation Department
for trail maps

Public Health Unit for information on Injury Prevention Programs such as the Kiss 'n Ride Program

Shops that sell and service recreational safety equipment

Police and Fire Departments for safety programs

Children's Safety Village of Windsor-Essex County
972-5654

Brain Injury Association of Windsor-Essex County
254-0097

WEBSITES

Transport Canada
www.tc.gc.ca

Ontario Ministry of Transportation
www.mto.gov.on.ca

Canada Safety Council
www.safety-council.org/

Traffic Injury Research Foundation
www.trafficinjuryresearch.com

Trail Information
www.trailpaq.com

SmartRisk
www.smartrisk.ca/

Bicycling Life
www.bicyclinglife.com/SafetySkills/

www.wehealthunit.org and at www.windsor-heart-health.com

CLIP & KEEP THIS INFO!

Tips to Remember When Sharing the Roads and Trails

- Always walk or jog on the sidewalk. If there is none, use the side of the road where you will always face traffic.
- Stop at the curb or the edge of the road and make sure to stop and look left, then right, then left again before you step onto the street.
- Cycle on the right side of the road and always ride with the flow of traffic.
- Be careful when riding by parked cars as someone could open their door unexpectedly.
- Yield to pedestrians when wheeling or cycling on trails.
- Watch out for water, oil, debris, or uneven or broken pavement when biking, walking or wheeling.
- Be courteous to motorists and others who use the road and trails for recreational purposes.
- Refresh your memory on all of the rules of the road related to these recreational activities by checking out the resources and websites listed in this brochure.

Pass it on!

Please feel free to copy any articles in this brochure as long as you acknowledge the source.

Make it happen at your workplace!

Here are some suggestions to promote and support injury-free active transportation and other recreational activities:

- Make sure to wear bright or reflective clothing during dawn, dusk or after dark.
- Identify areas where bicycles can be securely parked.
- Create, distribute and post maps that show safe pedestrian and bike routes to work.
- Post maps of local trails that could be used for walking, biking or wheeling.
- Promote and support participation in “Bike to Work Any Day in June” and other active transportation events.
- Take a workshop on safety topics such as bicycle and helmet safety, walking at night, etc.
- Work with the community to host a “Wheels Safety Rodeo” to help ensure that workers and their families have bikes, scooters, in-line skates and skateboards that are safe to ride.
- Set up an area where you can display and distribute safety information and brochures.

“If our heads were bowling balls, we wouldn’t need helmets - but they’re not and we do!”

Anonymous

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Answers (from front page): 1-F • 2-T • 3-T • 4-F • 5-F • 6-F • 7-T • 8-F • 9-T • 10-T



This brochure and others in this series available online at:
www.wehealthunit.org and at www.windsor-heart-health.com