



A North Carolina Law: The Child Bicycle Safety Act

Q. What does the Child Bicycle Safety Act require?

A. All bicycle riders under the age of 16 must wear an approved bicycle helmet when riding on a public roadway, public bike path or any other public right-of-way. Also, all bicycle riders must be seated on a saddle seat or in a separate restraining seat if they weigh less than 40 pounds or are less than 40 inches in height.

Q. When did this law begin?

A. October 1, 2001

Q. Is there a penalty if I don't comply?

A. There is a civil fine up to \$10. The court may waive the fine if you can show you have gotten the needed equipment (e.g., helmet or saddle seat) and intend to use it when required.

Q. Why is this law needed?

A. This law is an attempt to reduce the number of child deaths and disabilities resulting from injuries in bike-related crashes.

Q. So, do helmets really work?

A. Yes. When worn properly for every ride, bicycle helmets are 85 percent effective in reducing head injuries in a crash. They also help prevent scalp and facial injuries.

Q. Are all helmets the same?

A. No. Be sure to select a helmet especially for biking. It is also important to look for a label on the helmet from the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC). This label ensures the helmet has met standards to ensure your protection.

For more information, contact Guilford County Department of Public Health at 641-7777 or www.guilfordhealth.org