

# Your Activity Guide for Teaching Bike Safety Skills



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**preventioninstitute**  
our goal is **healthy** children

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Resource 4-217  
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## Introduction

This booklet is for any individual to use in educating children and youth about bicycle safety. These activities are designed for teaching bike safety skills for children ages 5 – 12. Engaging volunteers (e.g., older children, parents, and educational assistants) will speed up the activities. Working with community partners such as police, fire, and ambulance to teach safe cycling behaviours will enhance your educational event. Your educational event could include families, food, prizes, and other activities. This booklet will help individuals focus on the importance of safe cycling through education.

### Items required:

- Space large enough for the children to sit on the floor and stand
- Computer with Internet access
- Projector and speakers
- Tarmac area or other open outside area with space to drive bikes (e.g., empty parking lot). In case of inclement weather, arrange for an indoor space with a wood or concrete floor (e.g., large gymnasium, curling rink, skating rink).
- Bikes and helmets for each child

The first two activities can be done inside before going outside or to a large indoor space to do the remaining activities. Adaptations can be made for younger children, larger groups of children, or children using a scooter, skateboard, or roller blades.

**Note to educator:** The activities listed in this guide should take approximately one and one-half hours with approximately twenty-five children. Watch the videos listed for each activity to choose the most appropriate video for the audience.

# Activity 1 – Importance of Helmets and Proper Helmet Fit

## Tools to support this activity:

- Resources from the Saskatchewan Prevention Institute, available at <https://skprevention.ca/product-category/safety/>
  - 2V1 bookmark (Resource 4-221)
  - 2V1 poster (Resource 4-222)
  - Bicycle Safety for Children and Parents booklet (Resource 4-203)
  - Gotta Brain Getta Helmet booklet (Resource 4-220)
- Helmet for demonstration (See photo in Appendix A)

## YouTube video links:

Time: 2:27 minutes

Title: Always Wear a Helmet (WonderGrove Kids)

Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NF8CiNXEmcU&t=30s>

Recommended audience: Children (Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 2)

Time: 1:06 minutes

Title: Connecting Kids – Helmets Protect Your Brain (South Georgia Medical Center)

Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KRqsRV8pqe0>

Recommended audience: Children (Kindergarten to Grade 3)

Time: 3:03 minutes

Title: Bike Helmet (Manitoba Government)

Link: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b6r3f7M\\_XOY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b6r3f7M_XOY)

Recommended audience: Youth

Time: 2:15 minutes

Title: Top Ten Reasons to Wear a Bike Helmet (OlatheGovTVNetwork)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=76xXa6Mo7p4>

Recommended audience: Youth

## Speaking notes:

Why should you wear a helmet when you ride a bike?

A helmet is made to absorb the force of a crash or fall and spread the impact over the entire helmet. A helmet is like a seat belt for your brain.

Wearing a helmet can reduce the risk of a serious head or brain injury.

A helmet can help protect your head from injuries like skull fractures, cuts, and bruises. A helmet can protect your brain from an injury that may last throughout your life. You only have one brain – Protect it!

**Note to educator:** Play the video(s) listed above that is most appropriate for the audience.

### **Demonstrate: How to Fit a Helmet**

It is not enough to just plop the helmet on your head – you must do up the straps. To make sure that your helmet fits properly, use the 2V1 Rule.

2 - The front of the helmet should be 2 fingers above your eyebrows.

V - The side straps should form a “V” around the ear.

1 - Only one finger-width between the chin and the chin strap.

Your helmet should fit squarely on top of your head with little movement in any direction when the chin strap is done up. Most helmets come with sizing pads to help ensure a proper fit.

Adjust the straps and pads so the helmet sits level and snug on the head. To get a good fit if you have long hair, tie your hair back below the helmet. Don't wear anything under the helmet, such as a toque or hat.



### **Additional information about the brain:**

The human brain is so important. Our brain controls everything we do and experience including memory, goals and dreams, personality, and how we move, speak, feel, see, hear, taste, and smell.

What happens if your brain gets hurt? When your brain gets hurt, we call this an acquired brain injury. Here are some things you might not be able to do after your brain gets hurt.

- You might not be able to see, talk, and walk the same way as you do now.

- You might have trouble at school.
- Lights might bother you.
- You may not be able to remember as quickly.
- You might have trouble paying attention.
- You might feel differently more often, get angry more quickly, or feel sad more often.

Depending on which part of your brain is injured and how severe the injury, you may have to live this way for a very long time.

What does your brain feel like?

The brain is soft and squishy. It feels like soft tofu or Jell-O. Your brain is made up of fluid and soft, thin tissue.

**Note to educator:** A brain mold recipe can be made in advance. Visit <https://parachute.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Brain-Mold-Recipe.pdf>

How much do you think the brain weighs?

The adult brain weighs approximately 3 pounds. That is about as heavy as a football, cantaloupe, or a pineapple.

**Note to educator:** A 3 pound cantaloupe can be passed around to have children feel approximately how heavy a brain is.

## Activity 2 – Arm Signals

### Speaking notes:

Stay alert and aware of what's around you. Cars, trucks, and other vehicles have signal lights. A bicycle does not have turning signals or brake lights. It is important that you use arm signals to tell others around you what you are going to do. Use arm signals to show others where you are going to turn and when you are going to stop. Signal the move while getting close to a corner or intersection. Use your left arm to signal and right hand to hang on to the handlebar.

### Demonstrate:

Ask the children to stand up and make sure there is space between them and the next child when their left arm is straight out to the side. Have the children pretend they are holding onto the handlebar of a bike with their right hand. Remind them to use their left arm to signal.

To show that you are stopping, make an upside down L with your left arm.

To show that you are turning left, make a straight line with your left arm.

To show that you are turning right, make an L shape with your left arm.

Demonstrate the signals while facing the children and saying “left turn”, “right turn”, and “stop”. Demonstrate facing away from the children and have them stand and copy your actions. Do this slowly several times, then increase the speed of calling out the signals without demonstrating. Play a game of “Simon Says”. Simon says turn left, etc. See photo in Appendix A.



STOP



LEFT



RIGHT

**Note to educator:** Move to an outside or large indoor space for the remaining activities.

Encourage children to put their helmets on using the 2V1 rule. Have volunteers ensure that the children's helmets fit properly, making adjustments as necessary.

## Activity 3 – Is Your Bike the Right Size for You?

### Tools to support this activity:

- Bicycle Safety for Children and Parents booklet (Resource 4-203) from the Saskatchewan Prevention Institute, available at <https://skprevention.ca/product-category/safety/>
- Volunteer for demonstration
- Child bicycle or adult bicycle

### YouTube video link:

Time: 2:53 minutes

Title: How to Size a Bike for Your Child

Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bbnziWQpyBg>

Recommended audience: Parents/Teachers

### Speaking notes:

It doesn't matter what kind of bike you have, but it is important that your bike fits you. You should not ride a bike that is too big for you. To find out if your bike is the right size for you, straddle your bike. You should be able to stand with both of your feet flat on the ground with at least one inch of space above the bike frame. When you are sitting on your bike, you should be able to reach the pedals with a slight bend in your knees. When you are holding the handlebars, you should also have a slight bend in your elbows and you shouldn't have to stretch your arms to turn your handlebars.

### Demonstrate:

Have a volunteer straddle a bike. He should be able to stand flatfooted over the bike with at least one inch of clearance above the top tube. Point out if this is true.

Have a volunteer sit on the bike. She should be able to place both feet on the pedals with a slight bend in the knees. She should be able to hold the handlebars with a slight bend in the elbows. Point out if the volunteer can do this or not.

**Note to educator:** You will need to hold the bicycle as the volunteer sits on the bike. If the seat is too low, raise it one inch at a time and re-check the fit. Knees should not touch the handlebars when turning the pedals. See photo in Appendix A.

## Activity 4 – Starting and Stopping

### Tools to support this activity:

- Bicycle
- Cone, Stop sign, or a volunteer to indicate when to stop

### Speaking notes:

To ride safely, you must know how to start and stop while riding your bicycle. Properly controlled starts and stops will prevent you from skidding and crashing.

Ask the children to identify the type of brakes they have on their bike:

- **Coaster brakes** (brakes that are engaged by pushing backwards on the pedal)
- **Hand brakes** (brakes that are engaged by squeezing the lever evenly)

Ask children to demonstrate using their brakes by pushing backwards on the pedal or squeezing the lever. Practice this a few times.

**Note to educator:** If the bike has only one lever brake (front or rear) it is harder to stop than on a bike with lever brakes on both the front and rear tires. Using only the front brake can be dangerous (e.g., somersaulting over the bike or skidding out of control). Hand brakes are not the best choice for young or small children because they may not have the strength to control their stop. Discourage stops that are executed by dragging feet. This is an unsafe way to execute a stop.

### Demonstrate:

Straddle the bicycle with both feet on the ground; do not sit on the seat. Raise a pedal of your choice to the two o'clock position. See photo in Appendix A. Put your foot on the raised pedal, keeping the other foot on the ground. Push off with the foot on the ground at the same time as you stand on the raised pedal. The raised pedal will now be in the six o'clock position. Do not continue to pedal after pushing off. Coast along while standing on the pedal that has been pushed down to a six o'clock position. Lightly bring the foot on the ground to the other pedal. To stop, squeeze brakes or push backward on the pedal. Come to a complete stop. Put both feet back on the ground and straddle the bicycle as you did to start.

Repeat, but this time pedal and come to a complete stop at the volunteer, cone, or stop sign.



## Activity 5 – Balance

### Tools to support this activity:

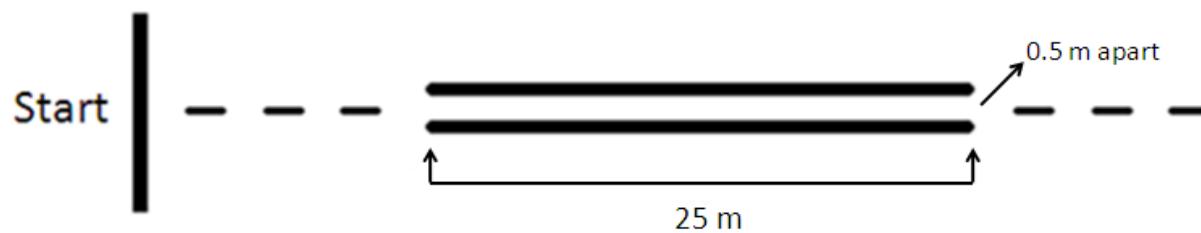
- Bicycle
- Chalk, sidewalk paint, or cones to make two lines approximately 25 metres long and spaced 0.5 metres apart (see diagram below).

### Speaking notes:

Riding a bike requires balance to start, stop, and turn, as well as to move around things like rocks, pot holes, pedestrians, and animals.

### Demonstrate:

At the start line, ride between the two lines at a medium speed without touching either line or hitting a cone. Come to a complete stop and walk the bike back to the starting line. Have children repeat three times or until they have properly demonstrated the activity.



**Note to educator:** Ensure that all riders stay between the two lines, that the riders' feet are on the pedals at all times, and that the handlebars are gripped with both hands at all times. Instruct children to look forward towards a volunteer who should be standing at the end of the course.

## Activity 6 – Figure Eight

### Tools to support this activity:

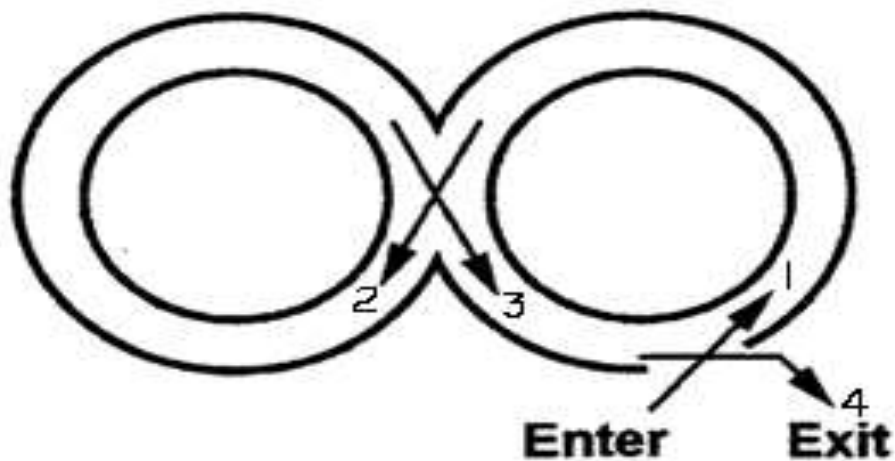
- Bicycle
- Chalk or sidewalk paint to make a figure eight (see diagram below)
- Cone placed to indicate entry or start

### Speaking notes:

Riding a bike requires balance at all times, including when making turns. It is important to go the right speed for the path you are taking. For this activity, make sure you go the same speed through the entire course.

### Demonstrate:

Ride your bike along the figure 8 chalk line. See photo in Appendix A. Stay on the line or between the lines, pedaling at medium speed without touching your feet down on the ground. Come to a complete stop when you exit the figure 8. Have children repeat three times or until they have properly demonstrated the activity.



## Activity 7 – Rock Dodge

### Tools to support this activity:

- Bicycle
- Cones (at least 6)\* (see diagram below)
- Volunteers to direct children at the beginning and end of the course

*\*Moist sponges or bean bags also work as well as cones because they don't blow away easily.*

### Speaking notes:

This activity is about learning how to avoid hazards while riding. Roadway hazards include rocks, debris, grates, animals, other riders, people walking, and broken pavement. Hitting one of these things can cause serious crashes and injuries.

**Note to educator:** Place cones approximately 2 metres apart in a straight line. Option is to place in zig-zag pattern. Placement and spacing can be adjusted based on the age and skill level of participants.

### Demonstrate:

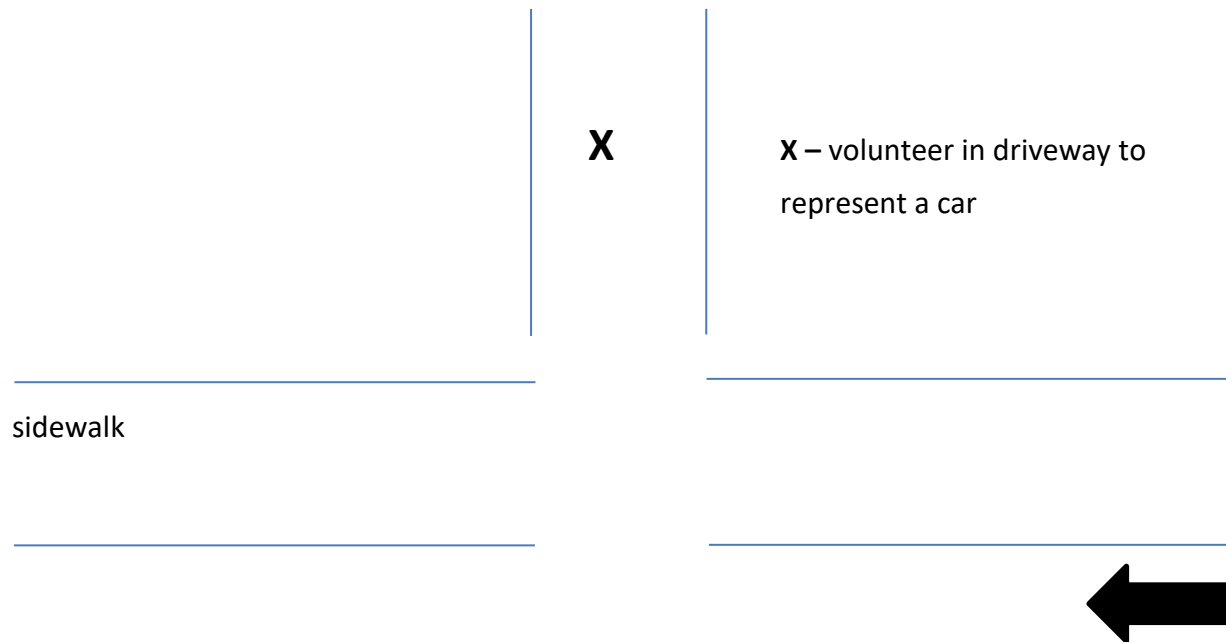
Ride straight toward the first cone and steer around it. See photo in Appendix A. Steer by turning your handlebars first one way (to avoid the object), and then turning back the other way to put the bike back in the direction you are going. Maintain a medium speed of pedaling. The placement of the cones close together is designed to make sure the cyclist doesn't simply make a big swerve that would put them in traffic lanes.



## Activity 8 – Driveway

### Tools to support this activity:

- Bicycle
- An item (e.g., cardboard cut-out\*, large toy car) and an adult or child volunteer to represent a car \**If you have the time and inclination to make a cardboard cut-out.*
- Chalk, sidewalk paint, or cones (see diagram below)



**Note to educator:** Draw four lines to represent a sidewalk. Leave a space between the lines to represent the driveway. Have a volunteer stand in the driveway with his back towards the sidewalk. Line children up starting at the arrow and instruct them to take turns riding past the driveway. The volunteer can hold an item that represents the car as he backs up.

### Speaking notes:

Drive your bike in a straight line close to the sidewalk without touching the line. You are riding on the right side of the road. As you are riding, always look for a car backing out of the driveway. If you see a car moving, come to a complete stop before the end of the driveway and make eye contact with the driver.

### Demonstrate:

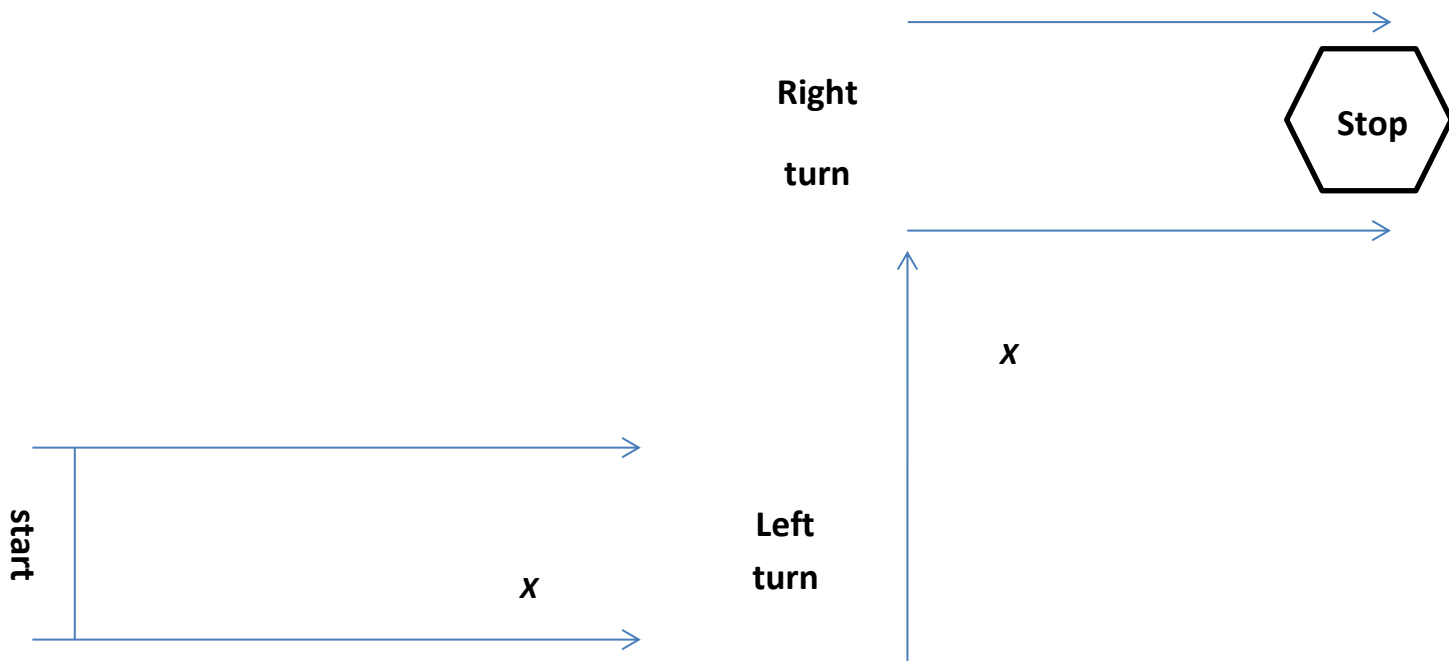
Have the volunteer walk backwards as if he is a car coming out of the driveway. He can make a beeping noise to indicate backing up. Have the children ride down the sidewalk, while watching and stopping for the “car”. Practice a few times.

## Activity 9 – Turning

### Tools to support this activity:

- Bicycle
- Cones as indicated by an **X** in the diagram below
- Sidewalk chalk or paint
- Volunteers to remind children to indicate arm signals

**Note to educator:** Set up a course like the diagram below. Make sure the children have their right hand on the handle bar when signaling with their left arm. This requires balance and keeping their feet on the pedals.



### Speaking notes:

Show others where you are going while riding your bike. Use the arm signals that we learned earlier.

### Demonstrate:

At the first cone, indicate a left arm signal and make the turn without stopping. At the second cone, indicate a right turn signal and make the turn without stopping. At the last cone, indicate a stop signal and come to a complete stop. Practice several times.

## Appendix A – Photos

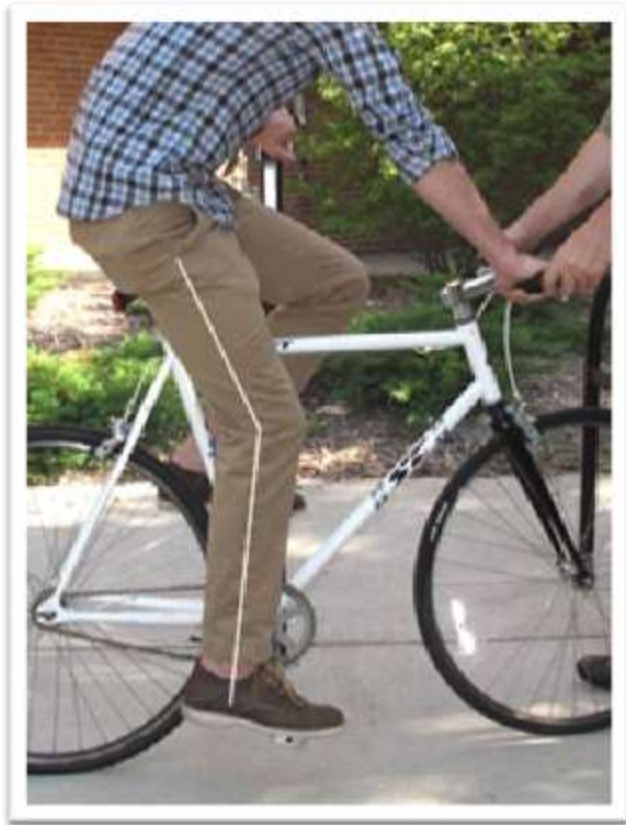
### Activity 1 – Importance of Helmets and Proper Helmet Fit



### Activity 2 – Arm Signals



### Activity 3 – Is Your Bike the Right Size for You?



## Activity 4 – Starting and Stopping

*Two o'clock foot position*





## Activity 5 – Balance



## Activity 6 – Figure Eight



## Activity 7 – Rock Dodge



**Constable M. Boxall, Regina Police Service educating children about bicycle safety.**

