

Lesson 4: Rules of the Road

Parent/Guardian Instructions:

- Review the “Rules of the Road” lesson.
- Have your child (ren) complete the ‘rules of the road” maze. When traveling through the maze utilize your alert skills and have a clear view of the street during your bike ride to the park.
- Always set a good example by following these rules yourself, whether walking, bicycling, or driving.

“Rules of the Road” Background

The goal of this lesson is to learn the “Rules of the Road.” Thirty percent of all automobile-bicycle collisions involving children under 15 occur when a child (ren) rides through a stop sign or stop light without yielding to crossing traffic or when a child (ren) turns unpredictably into the path of faster moving traffic.

Parent/Guardian and Child (ren) Activity:

Lesson Discussion:

Review with your child (ren) the “Rules of the Road”

- **Go With the Traffic Flow.** Ride on the right in the same direction as other vehicles. Go with the flow – not against it.
- **Obey All Traffic Laws.** A bicycle is a vehicle and you are a driver. When you ride in the street, obey all traffic signs, signals, and lane markings.
- **Yield to Traffic When Appropriate.** Almost always, drivers on a smaller road must yield (wait) for traffic on a major or larger road. If there is no stop sign or traffic signal and you are coming from a smaller roadway (out of a driveway, from a sidewalk, a bike path, etc.), you must slow down and look to see if the way is clear before proceeding. This also means yielding to pedestrians who have already entered a crosswalk.
- **Controlled Intersections.** At stop signs, stop lights and other controlled intersections, you should stop, look left, look right, look left again, look back in the direction of traffic, listen and make sure it is clear of traffic before crossing. If traffic is approaching, wait until it has cleared and initiate the look sequence again. Keep looking as you go through the intersection.
- **Be Predictable.** Ride in a straight line, not in and out of cars. Signal your moves to others.
- **Stay Alert at All Times.** Use your eyes AND ears. Watch out for potholes, cracks, wet leaves, storm grates, railroad tracks, or anything that could make you lose control of your bike. You need your ears to hear traffic and avoid dangerous situations; don't wear a headset when you ride.
- **Look Before Turning.** When turning left or right, always look behind you for a break in traffic, and then signal before making the turn. Watch for left- or right-turning traffic.
- **Watch for Parked Cars.** Ride far enough out from the curb to avoid the unexpected from parked cars (like doors opening, or cars pulling out).

Practice:

Review the "rules of the road" regarding traffic flow, traffic laws, controlled intersections and staying alert. Then, take your child (ren) to a controlled intersection and practice crossing safely. Explain when riding in a group, each bicyclist must stop and make sure it is clear of traffic before crossing. Teach young children to walk their bikes through busy intersections. Remind them it is the law to obey traffic signals even when no one appears to be coming. Most importantly, set a good example by following the "rules of the road" yourself when you are driving and riding a bike.

Take your children to a safe parking lot or playground. Stand behind them while they ride along a straight painted line. Hold up numbered or colored cards and have them practice looking back over their shoulder and telling you the number or color of the card -- without riding off the painted line. Next, have your Fren practice the lane change process: Look back over the shoulder, look again, and then change lanes. ***Children should not be allowed to ride their bikes on the street until they have mastered this skill.***

Parent/Guardian and Child (ren) Activity

- Have your child complete the ‘rules of the road’ maze.
- When traveling through the maze utilize your alert skills and have a clear view of the street during your bike ride to the park.
- Describe how much time you think it would take to stop your bicycle correctly, look left, right, left again, look back, keep looking as you face front again, and proceed cautiously.
- Discuss with your child the fact that although riding in a straight line may not always be easy, in traffic it is critically important.
- Remember this question when discussing the “rules of the road” with your child *“Is it worth possible serious injury or death to save a few seconds by not stopping at intersections?”*