

Helmet Wearing

Children are vulnerable to head injuries and should wear an approved bicycle helmet whenever they ride a tricycle, scooter or other wheeled toy.

[NSW Road Rule 256](#) states that **all** riders of bikes – and their passengers – must wear an approved bicycle helmet that is securely fitted and fastened when riding on a road or road-related area. [NSW Road Rule 250](#) states that riders under 12 years of age and an adult 18 years or older who is supervising them may ride on a footpath. Riders must give way to any pedestrian on footpaths.

[Education and Care Services National Regulation 168\(2\)](#) requires children's services to have policies and procedures to protect children's health and safety and to provide a child safe environment. The *Kids and Traffic* team can help children's services develop policies and procedures for helmet wearing and the safe use of wheeled toys.

The earlier young children learn how important it is to wear helmets whenever they ride, the more likely they are to continue wearing them as they grow older.



How to make sure each child's helmet fits properly

- Make sure it meets Australian Standards, no matter what size, colour or style
- Choose a helmet that is the right size for each child – not too big that it falls over ears and eyes, and – not too small that it sits only on the top of the head
- Choose a helmet that is lightweight – not too heavy for their heads and necks to carry.
- Helmets must stay securely in place. Straps need to sit flat without twists and fasten snugly under the chin.
- To fit properly, a child's helmet should be worn two child finger widths above the eyebrows so that it sits about half way down the forehead.
- Wearing anything under a helmet stops it from fitting properly. Sun hats or pony tails lift the helmet higher on the child's head and reduces its protection. Sun protection helmet covers or shaded play areas are preferable.
- As each child grows, keep checking that the helmet still fits properly. Some helmets come with padded inserts or a 'ring fit' system to allow you to adjust them.
- Advise families to make sure their child tries a helmet on before they buy it. Then they can be sure that it fits properly and is one that their child is happy to wear.
- Sharing helmets presents little risk of spreading head lice. They can only survive on human heads and, when removed from the head, die within 6-24 hours.¹



Adults are responsible for making sure that children always wear properly fitted helmets

¹National Health and Medical Research Council (2006). *Staying Healthy in Child Care* (4th ed.) Canberra: NHMRC.