INTRODUCTION

For the month of October Oregon Parenting Together will focus on physical safety, and what parents can do to help keep their children safe when riding in cars, riding bikes, and as pedestrians.

CAR SEATS: Which ones to use, and proper installation

As parents you want to do everything you can to keep your children safe. Car seats and booster seats are the best ways to keep your children safe when riding in a car. In fact, it is estimated that almost 10,000 lives of children under the age of four have been saved because of car seats. However, for the car seats to provide the best protection, they have to be the right kind and installed properly. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) states that 3 out of 4 car seats are not used correctly. The NHTSA created a set of guidelines to help parents select the correct car seat for their child (see their diagram to the right). Be sure to read the instructions carefully when installing the car seat to make sure it is installed correctly and safely. Also, you can stop by most fire departments and they can check to see if your car seat is installed properly! It is also important to register your car seat with the manufacturer in case there are any recalls. The state of Oregon has the following laws regarding car seats:

- Child passengers must be restrained in child safety seats until they weigh forty pounds or reach the upper weight limit for the car seat in use.
- Infants must ride rear-facing until they reach both one year of age AND weigh twenty pounds.

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This series of newsletters is inspired and created just for parents. If you have suggestions, comments or ideas for future newsletters please share on our Facebook (Oregon Parenting Education Collaborative) or Twitter page (@OPECParentingEd).

If you have more questions about finding the right car seat, installations, or laws, please see the REFERENCES list on the next page.
SHARING THE ROAD

When thinking about road safety for your children, it is important not only to think of their safety as a passenger in a car, but also when they are biking, skating, and walking. One of the easiest ways to help protect your children is to make sure they have the proper protective gear. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), "For children, wearing a **helmet** is the single most effective strategy for reducing the risk of injury to the head while riding bicycles." Children who are skating should also wear a **helmet** and as well as **knee and elbow pads**. When walking it is important that vehicles can see your children, so make sure they are wearing bright or reflective clothing. If it is nighttime, carrying a **flashlight** can make your children stand out even more!

Besides wearing the right protective gear, it is also important that you teach children the proper rules of the road. When biking, make sure your children know how to signal with their arms to let other vehicles know they are going to turn. When walking, make sure your children look both ways before they cross the street, and to cross the street at a designated crosswalk or intersection. It is much safer to walk on a sidewalk or path, but if a sidewalk or path is not available, walk on the shoulder and facing traffic. For specific rules on using the roads with bicycles or as pedestrians in the state of Oregon, please visit:

https://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/HWY/BIKEPED/Pages/laws_regs.aspx

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**REFERENCES**

- Center for Disease Control
  - http://www.cdc.gov/safetchild/road_traffic_injuries/
- Center for Disease Control
- State of Oregon
- National Highway and Traffic Safety Administration
- Safe Kids Worldwide
  - https://www.safekids.org/walkingsafetytips
- World Health Organization
  - http://www.who.int/roadsafety/week/2015/Ten_Strategies_For_Keeping_Children_Safe_on_the_Road.pdf

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