



Skateboard Safety

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that children 5 years of age and under should not use skateboards. Children need coordination in order to skateboard safely. Balance/coordination develops as children grow. Skateboarding is a special risk for young children, because they have a higher centre of gravity and poor balance. This makes young children more likely to fall and injury their heads. Most skateboarding injuries are caused when the skateboarder loses control and falls.

Safety tips for parents and children

Teach children how to:

- Stop, turn, and control speed
- Stop, look and listen before going on to a road
- Follow the rules of the road
- Avoid skateboarding where there are pedestrians and vehicles

Make sure children wear the safety equipment including:

- Wear the gear EVERY time
- A certified skateboard helmet
- Wrist, elbow, and knee pads
- Closed, slip resistant shoes

Do a safety check of their skateboard:

- Is the equipment the right size for their body and matched according to skill level?
- Help children check that the wheels are in good working order, securely tightened and free of debris/grass.

Make sure children use their skateboard safely:

- Children 10 years of age or younger need an adult with them when skateboarding. Children over 10 need good training and lots of supervised practice.
- Skateboard (away from traffic) in safe places like parks and school yards. Use skateboard parks where available.
- Ride on smooth, dry and paved surfaces
- Do not wear headphones while you are skateboarding.
- Never grab onto a moving car, bike or other vehicle (NO skitching!)
- Consider taking lessons to increase your skill and knowledge

- Be a good role model – wear a helmet and safety gear when you skateboard. Children copy what adults do.

Resources:

American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons – www.orthoinfo.org

Calgary Health Region - www.capitalhealth.ca/kidsafe

Canada Safety Council - <http://www.safety-council.org/index.html>

City of Toronto website - <http://www.toronto.ca/index.htm>

Parenting website - parenthood.com

Public Health Agency of Canada - <http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/dca-dea/injury/en/sports3-eng.php>

Safekids Canada - <http://www.sickkids.ca/safekidsCanada/>

Safe USA website - <http://www.safeusa.org/sports/skates.htm>



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