



BikeSafe's Top 10 Tips for Parents

1. Make sure your child wears a helmet! **Many states (including Florida) require by law that children under the age of 16 wear a helmet** when riding a bike. Helmets are the *single most effective way* to reduce head injuries and fatalities resulting from bicycle crashes.
2. Teach your child to **ride in the same direction as traffic** (NOT facing it). When bicycling, we move at much higher speeds than when jogging or walking. Thus, the safest place to ride a bike is always WITH the direction of traffic.
3. Teach your child to **obey traffic signs and signals**. Just like cars, bicyclists need to follow the rules of the road too – which includes yielding to pedestrians and stopping at stop signs and red lights.
4. Teach your child to **STOP and look LEFT-RIGHT-LEFT to ensure that it is clear before pulling out of driveways**. Driveways are a common site of bicyclist-hit-by-car crashes.
5. Teach your child to **scan for cars, to make their presence known to drivers, and to do the proper hand signals** when they want to make a turn on a bike. Weaving in and out of cars (parked or moving) is unsafe; it is a common cause for bicyclist-hit-by-car crashes.
6. Make sure your child is **visible** with bike lights, reflectivity, and light-colored clothing. Reflective tape can be placed on backpacks and reflective bracelets can be worn too. Many states (including Florida) require by law that anyone riding a bike before dawn or after dusk must have a white light on the front of the bike and a red light (actual *lights*, not just reflectors) on the back.
7. Teach your child what it means to ride **predictably**. Your child should be able to ride in a straight line, and look over his/her shoulder to scan for cars without swerving.
8. Teach your child how to **stop and control their speed properly**. Your child needs to learn to stop a bike by using the **brakes**, not by dragging their feet.
9. Before the age of 10, most children do not fully understand how traffic works. Developmentally, they are not able to judge the speed and distance of nearby cars. **Children 9 years old and under should ride on the right side of the sidewalk with caution** and walk, not ride, their bikes across crosswalks.
10. Most importantly, **your child watches YOU!** Remember to **model safe behaviors** when bicycling with your child. Teach by example: wear your helmet, be visible to cars, and ride predictably.

For more information, visit our website: www.ibikesafe.us!

