



SUPPORT SB 2627 (Sen. Silverstein) and HB 6114 (Rep. Hamos) **Child Bicycle Helmet Safety Law**

The Illinois Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (ICAAP) and its partners urge you to support legislation to require helmet use for bicycle riders.

BIKE INJURIES ARE DEVASTATING AND DEADLY

- In 2005, an estimated 494,712 of all bicycle-related injuries were treated in U.S. hospital emergency rooms. Approximately 53 percent of these were under the age of 15. (NHTSA, 1/08)
- Children 14 and younger accounted for 13% of 2006 bicycle-related fatalities, making this one of the most frequent causes of injury related death for young children. (NHTSA, 1/08)
- Bike injuries are most prevalent among Illinois children aged 5-14, with a rate of 17.5 per 100,000 children going to the emergency room or being hospitalized (Child Health Data Lab, 2008).
- Among Illinois children aged 5-14 who were admitted to emergency rooms for bike injuries, 40% had injuries to their head or neck. (CompData, 2008)

BIKE HELMETS SAVE LIVES

- Helmets reduce the risk of head injury by up to 88%, and reduce the risk of facial injury by 65%. (Thompson, 2001).
- Universal bike helmet use by children 4-15 would prevent 39,000 to 45,000 head injuries, and 18,000 to 55,000 scalp and face injuries annually. (NHTSA, 1/08)

HELMET LAWS WORK

- Reviews of scientific studies show that 1) legislation increases helmet use among cyclists, particularly younger age groups and those less likely to be using helmets prior to the law (Injury Prevention, 2006), and 2) legislation is effective in decreasing head injury rates. (Cochrane Collaboration, 2009)
- One study showed bike-related head injury rates declined significantly (45%) in areas where legislation had been adopted compared with those that did not adopt legislation (27%) over a 4-year period. (Pediatrics, 11/02)

THIS LAW IS NEEDED IN ILLINOIS

- Almost all Illinois children (87% of middle school students, and 68-74% of high school students) reported riding bikes in the past 12 months. (YRBS, 2009)
- Despite the fact that nearly 70 percent of all fatal bicycle crashes involve head injuries, only about 20 to 25 percent of all bicyclists wear bicycle helmets. (NHTSA, 1/08)
- Illinois is behind in protecting its children from bicycle-related injury. 21 other states, the District of Columbia, and 150 or more municipal localities have enacted age-specific bicycle helmet laws. (NHTSA, 1/08).
- Thousands of Illinois children already wear helmets due to local laws in five communities (Barrington, Cicero, Inverness, Libertyville, and Skokie). A statewide law will bring equity and consistency.

BIKE HELMETS MEAN COST SAVINGS

- The annual cost of bicycle related injuries and deaths (for all ages) is \$8 billion. (NHTSA, 1/08)
- Bicycle head injuries are expensive; these injuries endure and require treatment for a lifetime. (NHTSA, 1/08)
- Every dollar spent on bike helmets saves society \$30 in indirect medical costs and other costs (NHTSA, 1/08)

NO NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES

- Helmet use and related laws are already increasing. HB 6114 and SB 2627 are what parents and healthcare providers already want.
- HB 6114 and SB 2627 will only affect minors, not adult bicycle riders or motorcycle riders.
- Bike helmets are affordable, as low as \$10 at widely available (Target, Wal-mart) stores, and as low as \$3-5 when purchased in bulk (www.prorider.com). Many community and hospital programs, such as Injury Free Coalition for Kids of Peoria, provide helmets for free to families and will be more likely to do so once the law is passed.
- Opponents argue that helmet requirements reduce the number of people cycling and that use of helmets encourages reckless biking behavior, however there is little to no research to support these arguments.

PLEASE SUPPORT THIS SIMPLE, EFFECTIVE STRATEGY TO SAVE LIVES AND REDUCE COSTS.

HB 6114 and SB 2627 are supported by:

American Academy of Pediatrics,
 Illinois Chapter
 Brain Injury Association of Illinois
 Chicago Medical Legal Partnership
 for Children
 Children's Memorial Hospital
 Cook County Department of Public
 Health
 Health & Disability Advocates
 Helmets First!
 Illinois Academy of Family
 Physicians
 Illinois Association of School Nurses
 Illinois State Medical Society
 Illinois Maternal and Child Health
 Coalition
 Loyola University Medical Center
 Quad Cities Bicycle Club
 SafeKids Illinois, Chicago and
 Macon, Winnebago Counties
 Shriners Hospital for Children
 Think First National Injury
 Prevention (7 IL Chapters)