

Safe Summer Biking

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Schools are letting out for the summer, which means more kids could end up in the emergency room.

Pediatric trauma doctors at UT Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas say they can tell when school lets out for the summer because they see more cases of children on bicycles hit by motor vehicles.

Children are out more, and with school zone speed limits no longer being enforced, drivers may go more rapidly through school zones and pedestrian crossings. These crossings aren't monitored, so children may forget to follow the usual safety rules.

Dr. Todd Maxson, head of UT Southwestern's pediatric trauma program, offers these tips for summer bicycle safety:

Don't ride your bike at dusk, in the dark or in other conditions when lighting is poor.

Adults and kids on bicycles should wear brightly colored clothes and helmets. Look for clothing with reflective strips that will show up in headlights, and make sure your bike has reflectors.

Although a parking lot may seem like a good place to ride, with all that open space, it's best to avoid riding in parking lots unless they're empty. Traffic can be unpredictable, with cars pulling in and out of spaces or driving across rows of parking spaces.

Even if there are no crossing guards, kids should follow the same safety rules they have to follow during the school year. Cross streets only at corners and look both ways.

If someone does get hit by a vehicle, call for help and keep the victim still until help arrives.

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