



## CYCLING WITH A CHILD

**ALWAYS MAKE SURE  
A CHILD'S BIKE FITS  
THEM AND THAT ALL  
BIKES ARE ROADWORTHY  
BEFORE STARTING TO  
CYCLE!**

**ALWAYS PERFORM BIKE/  
HELMET/CLOTHING/  
CONDITIONS CHECKS  
WITH CHILDREN!**

See the CYCLE RIGHT  
Parent/Guardian  
manual, Stage One,  
Session One

## BUYING A BIKE TO CYCLE WITH A CHILD

If you need to buy a new bike to go cycling with a child, there are a few things to think about;

- **Weight** – a child will add extra kilograms to the bike, so pick a light model
- **Comfort** – get advice from the bike shop on buying the right bike for your needs and ask them to set it up correctly for you
- **What type of bike?** – a mountain bike with full suspension won't take a rear-mounted child seat

## CARRYING YOUNG CHILDREN ON A BIKE

Mount devices for carrying children **correctly** according to the **manufacturer's instructions**

- A seat mounted on the **crossbar** is the safest way to carry a **young child** (pre-walking age), once they can sit independently and fully support their head. Ideally this will have a windscreen to give protection from wind and rain
  - The child is in front where you can talk to them when pedalling, but the steering and balance take getting used to
- A **seat mounted behind the bicycle seat** is suitable for most **toddlers** aged 2-3 years – check the recommended weight range of individual models
  - alters the centre of gravity of the rider
  - can increase the risk of losing balance
  - can be bumpy for the child, so cycle at a speed for THEIR comfort
- **Place and remove children** from seating **carefully**
- **Never** leave a child **unattended in the carrier**
- Carry older children in a **child bicycle trailer** towed by the bike or in a **front-mounted cargo box**
  - **stable**
  - **won't tip**
  - **ensure children are strapped in and wearing helmets**
- A trailer should meet the EN 15918:2011 standard which is intended for the carrying of up to two child passengers with the maximum weight permitted being 60 kg.
  - Lighting and/or a reflector should be attached to the trailer
  - It is recommended that trailers are used in areas that are somewhat protected from the live traffic environment eg greenways, cycle lanes etc. This will give as much protection as possible to the children in the trailer who are much closer to the ground than the cyclist towing
- Carry children who are **almost ready to cycle** independently on a **tag-along** bike attachment
  - **tandem arrangement** to the adult bike

**NOTE:** WHEN CARRYING CHILDREN ON A BIKE, CHECK BRAKES REGULARLY AS THE EXTRA WEIGHT WILL CAUSE BRAKES TO WEAR MORE QUICKLY

**NOTE:** WHEN CARRYING CHILDREN ON A BIKE, THEY ARE NOT PEDALLING AND WILL GET COLDER QUICKER THAN YOU WILL, SO BRING EXTRA LAYERS JUST IN CASE



## CYCLING WITH A CHILD

### LEARNING TO CYCLE INDEPENDENTLY

- **Training wheels or stabilizers**
  - Support the rear of the bike
  - Stabilizers should not both be in contact with the ground as this can affect the back brake function
  - May slow progress to independent cycling by reducing the need to master balance
- **Balance Bikes**
  - Great for allowing children to learn to balance and steer, without having to pedal, and while being able to get their feet to the ground
  - Ideal for initial confidence building
  - Facilitates easier transition to pedalling

#### NOTE:

BEFORE YOU CYCLE WITH A CHILD, CHECK THROUGH THE CYCLE RIGHT PARENT/GUARDIAN MANUAL STAGE ONE, SESSIONS ONE AND TWO

- Have you a suitable lock?
- Have you suitably mounted panniers or a back pack with drinks, snacks and a pump?
- Have you the equipment, and will you be able to change a puncture if required?
- Have you bells on yours and your child's bike to warn others of your approach?
- Have you appropriate lighting on all bikes – white lights to the front, red to the rear, and a rear reflector?
- Have you sun lotion – often on a bike you may not realise how hot the sun is

#### ALSO REMEMBER:

If you're cycling on paths or shared cycle tracks where there are walkers, wheelchair users or horses

- Don't go too fast – it can upset others
- Use your bell politely to let others know you are coming, but don't assume they know you are there
- Always be ready to slow down or stop if needed
- Keep to the left
- Watch out and proceed with care at junctions and driveways
- Remember, you never know what's around the bend!

### CYCLING WITH CHILDREN ON THE ROAD

- Make sure the bike is the **right size** for the child
- A child should always be on a bike they are **comfortable** with and will **grow out of**, not one that is too big and they need to grow into – this affects confidence, **balance and control** and progress towards independent cycling
  - Both feet should be able to reach the ground
  - be sure to always complete the **pre-cycle checks**
- **Keep the child**
    - **closer to the side** of the road than the accompanying adult to protect them from traffic coming from behind
    - **in front** of the adult
    - keep distance **from the edge** of the road to avoid falls (one metre)
    - Use **flagpoles and side-extended reflectors** to increase visibility
  - **Start with a route**
    - with **little or no traffic** to give a child the chance to get used to the physical environment of the road
      - ~ discuss the **correct direction to cycle** in and where
      - ~ discuss **road signage, road markings and right of way**
      - ~ cycle **short distances** the child is comfortable with until stamina builds
  - Use **clear, calm, early instructions**
    - Giving a child an instruction to turn just before a corner can cause anxiety and can affect confidence and balance
  - Pull in, get off the bike, and **walk carefully across the road for difficult manoeuvres** with young or novice cyclists
    - **right-hand turns**
    - **roundabouts**