

Winter months can bring new injuries

Happy holidays!! This is a fun and exciting time of year for many, but the winter months can bring about different dangers and potential for injury with cold weather, winter sports, fire safety and sparkly choking hazards. A recent study in the *Journal of Trauma* looking at bicycle and sledding injuries found that head injuries accounted for the largest percentage of sledding related injuries. Another article in *Pediatrics* found that traumatic brain injury was more likely to occur on snow tubes compared to other types of sleds. There are multiple studies in the literature illustrating the importance of helmet use during sledding, skiing and snowboarding activities. Free downloadable patient handouts on winter safety for your office are available at:

<http://injuryresearch.net/resourcelibrary.aspx>

<http://www.healthychildren.org/English/news/pages/Winter-safety.aspx>

In other helmet safety news..... thank you very much for those of you who participated in our bicycle helmet survey! Forty pediatricians from each of six major Ohio cities (Columbus, Cleveland, Cincinnati, Toledo, Akron and Dayton) were selected at random from the American Academy of Pediatrics Ohio Chapter database. The survey was developed to determine how frequently bike helmet safety is being discussed during 5 to 14-year-old well-child visits and to assess pediatricians own practices related to bicycle helmet use for themselves and their children. We found that 63.3% of pediatricians responding reported counseling more than 75% of 5-14-year-olds about bike helmet use in the past year; 41% provided this information in handouts. However, in the office setting, 88.9% of those surveyed do not provide families with helmets in the office and 88.6% don't offer a list of where to purchase them. Pediatricians responded that providing them with: a safety brochure to distribute to families, internet links for free downloadable patient materials and safety products for distribution would help make injury prevention education easier in the primary care setting. Almost all of the pediatricians surveyed (98.6%) were in favor of a statewide bike helmet law.

This is very helpful information and we hope to be able to provide you with more resources to help educate families on the importance of bicycle helmet use. A free downloadable patient handout is available at <http://injuryresearch.net/resourcelibrary.aspx>.

In addition, the Ohio AAP is working with legislators to pass a statewide bicycle helmet law. HB 90 had made it out of committee in the House of Representatives, but with the change in the legislature, it will be back to the drawing board in January. We are hoping to engage the media, our local politicians and our regional injury prevention partners around Ohio as we try to move this bill forward in the coming months.

As the Injury and Violence Prevention Committee continues to work to make injury prevention easier for you, we welcome your comments and feedback at Mike.Gittelman@cchmc.org or sarah.denny@nationwidechildrens.org

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Howell CA, Nelson NG, McKenzie LB. Pediatric and Adolescent sledding-related injuries treated in US emergency departments in 1997-2007. Pediatrics. 2010 Sep;126(3):517-24. Epub 2010 Aug 23