

Helmets for Winter Sports

When child skiers and snowboarders wear properly fitting helmets, they reduce their risk of head injuries by nearly half. Helmets can also reduce the chance of head injuries for sledders and ice skaters. Along with keeping children safer during winter sports, helmets provide warmth.

Choosing and fitting a helmet

For skiing and snowboarding:

Choose a certified helmet made just for snow sports. Look for a helmet that meets ASTM F2040, Snell RS-98, S-98 or CEN 1077 standards.

Proper fit is a must. If you can, have a sales person help you choose and fit a helmet for your child. Bring the goggles that your child will wear on the slopes to make sure they work with the helmet you choose.

Before you buy or borrow a helmet, make sure:

- The pads are flush against your child's cheeks and forehead.
- The back of the helmet does not touch the nape of your child's neck.
- It is snug, but not tight, with the chinstrap fastened.
- The helmet sits level, with the front edge being no more than 1 inch above your child's eyebrows.
- The helmet does not roll forwards or backwards.
- It does not shift when your child shakes their head from side to side.
- Replace a helmet if it had been involved in a crash or hit hard. Even though you may not see any signs of damage, the helmet may not be able to absorb the impact of a future crash.



For sledding and ice-skating:

Although there are not helmets designed specifically for these sports, the Consumer Product Safety Commission advises that wearing a helmet is better than not wearing one at all. Choose from these helmets that meet the following safety standards:

- Bike helmet: CPSC, ASTM F1447, Snell B-90/95 or N-94*
- Skateboard helmet: ASTM F1492*, Snell N-94*
- Ski helmet: ASTM F2040, CEN 1077, Snell RS-98 or S-98

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**These helmets are designed to withstand more than one moderate impact, but protection is provided for only a limited number of impacts. Replace the helmet if it has visible damage.*

For snowmobiling:

Choose a snowmobile helmet that meets DOT FMVSS 218 or Snell M-2000 standards.

Before you head out

- Make sure your child's other equipment fits and is adjusted properly.
- Consider putting your child in lessons or giving them the proper ski or snowboard training. Note: The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that children under age 7 do not snowboard.
- Avoid loose clothing or cords that can get caught in lifts, towropes and ski poles.
- If your child wears glasses or contacts for everyday use make sure to use them while on the slopes. Use yellow or red colored filters for goggles when the light is flat.
- Children look to you for how to be safe. Parents should wear helmets, too.

Safety on the slopes

No helmet can protect against all types of impacts and injuries. Wearing a helmet is not a license for your child to ski faster. Talk about safety rules for the slopes with your child:

- Stay with an adult at all times while on the slopes. This may change for older children depending on their maturity and skill level.

- Never ski or snowboard alone. Make sure someone is there to help you if you get hurt.
- Stay in control and follow the rules of the slopes.
- Make sure landing areas are clear prior to jumping.
- Don't stop in the middle of a ski run or beyond the crest of a hill.
- Be extra careful where trails meet.
- Stay in bounds and away from trees. Out-of-bound areas are higher risk and may have cliffs and avalanches.

To Learn More

- www.safekids.org/safety-basics/safety-spotlight/winter-sports-safety
- www.MakeSureTheHelmetFits.org
- Your child's healthcare provider
- www.seattlechildrens.org

Seattle Children's will make this information available in alternate formats upon request. Call Marketing Communications at 206-987-5205 or 206-987-2280 (TTY).

This handout has been reviewed by clinical staff at Seattle Children's. However, your child's needs are unique. Before you act or rely upon this information, please talk with your child's healthcare provider.

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