

## **Safe Routes to Schools Class Outline**

### **Class Title: Helmet Safety/ Travis's Story**

*Grade level: 4*

**Introduction:** This is the first of two, in-classroom bike and pedestrian safety lessons. In this lesson we demonstrate the importance of wearing a helmet.

**Objective:** This series of activities will allow students to make the connection between wearing a helmet and avoiding death or permanent brain damage. We will discuss how a helmet works and show the proper way to fit a helmet; hear the story of a boy who was seriously injured in a bike crash; execute the "egg drop" demonstration; and conduct a sharing activity on the topic of students' own experiences.

**Set Up:** This is a regular classroom activity.

#### **Materials:**

- Newspaper
- Cardboard box approximately 9 inches square, containing styrofoam pellets 6 inches deep
- a bicycle helmet –(preferably the one you wore to get to class)
- a bicycle helmet with plastic shell separated
- 1/2 dozen raw eggs
- Video: "Travis's Story" excerpted from *Jello in a Jar* (distributed by the National Safe Kids Coalition)
- VCR & monitor, with hookups and power source
- Multiple colored sharpie pens

#### **Preparation:**

- Spread newspaper on the floor.
- Cue video.

#### **Discussion: Introduce Safe Routes to Schools (SR2S)**

SR2S is a program that teaches kids the importance of walking and bicycling as a way to get around. SR2S programs work to increase safety by teaching kids walking and bicycling skills and etiquette.

#### **Discussion: The Four Fantastic Reasons to bike and walk to get around.**

(Ask students to provide reasons if they have previously discussed them or have ideas.)

When walking and biking, we're:

- cutting down on pollution
- getting good exercise
- cutting down on traffic
- having fun!

**Discussion: Who wears a helmet? Consequences of not wearing one**

- Aka: In 4<sup>th</sup> grade it may be cool to not listen to parents and teachers but being unsafe as high consequences
- In California, if you are under 18 years of age you must wear a helmet when riding a bike, scooter, skateboard or roller blades. The fine for failure to wear a helmet is \$50.
- It can take ATLEAST 3 years for your brain to recover from an injury.

**Activity: Show “Travis’s Story” excerpted from *Jello in a Jar*****Discussion: Helmet function**

A properly fit CPSC (Consumer Product Safety Commission)-approved bicycle helmet will reduce the risk of brain injury and death by 85%.

Bicycle helmets are composed of compressed styrofoam covered in a plastic shell. (Show the sample helmet that is missing its outer shell.) In minor impacts the helmet will cushion the head. In serious crashes the styrofoam will crack or even shatter, absorbing the force of the impact. The hard plastic shell serves as a slick surface that will allow the helmet to skid in a crash, protecting the wearer from neck injury. (Show the hard outer shell on your complete helmet.)

**Discussion: Helmet fit**

Demonstrate proper helmet fit with your stylish helmet. It works well to fit it incorrectly and have the students tell you what is wrong. The chinstrap must be attached. The helmet must fit snugly and stay level on the head. Helmet straps tend to loosen over time, so helmet fit must be re-checked frequently. The helmet must be the right size for the rider (some students may have outgrown their helmets). The sliding adjusters that form the “V” on the side straps must be between the ears and jawbone.

**Demonstration: Egg drop**

Ask students to predict the outcome if we drop an egg onto the ground. Pick students to draw friend’s face on egg. Allow a boy to drop an egg onto the newspaper on the floor. Ask if the outcome will be different for a girl; allow a girl to drop an egg. Drop an egg (draw a smiling face with a helmet) into the cardboard box containing styrofoam pellets. This egg will survive, showing that styrofoam is effective.

**Discussion: Share personal experiences.**

Ask students if they have ever had a bike crash in which wearing their helmet helped. Discuss the cause of the crash and ask students if they had not been wearing their helmet, could they have been hurt a lot worse.

**Assessment:**

Were students able to answer questions, participate in discussion and share personal experiences?

**Closing:**

Explain that next time we will be playing Safety Jeopardy, a game that tests the students’ knowledge of traffic safety.