



Now we've got the kids hooked on cycling here's a few tips to help you! Phew this will give you something to think about!

Leave some of it to us at HHYCC. Remember sessions every Saturday. 10 am – 1pm

How can you help your child?

Cycle Maintenance

Check the cycle before it is used and highlight main points:

- ? Brakes - adjusted so brakes can be applied with small amount of pressure.
- ? Tyres - inflated to correct pressure. (Harder than you may imagine!)
- ? Chain - tension checked, clean and oiled.
- ? Steering - headset correctly adjusted.
- ? Reflector(s) - clean and ensure they are on view to other road users.

Buying a bike

When buying a bicycle, whether for a child or for yourself, you should run through the following checklist:

- ? How much are you willing to pay?
- ? Would you choose new or second-hand?
- ? What kind of cycling will be done? (on-road, off-road, combination of both)
- ? What is the correct frame size? ? Security?

Cost

Decide how much you want to pay and what you expect for your money. Visit as many bicycle shops as you can, and try to get an idea of what is available. Compare prices and types of bike. How often are you likely to use the bicycle? If you or your child is just about to take up cycling for the first time ever, it may be better to borrow a suitable bike, until you can see how much you enjoy cycling. Choose a bike shop you feel is friendly and makes you feel like you can ask questions and are friendly. High street chains won't give you such one to one care.

Type of bike

There is a range of bicycle types available. You will have some idea of whether the bike would be used only on the road, for off the road purposes (such as trail riding) or a combination of both. The type of cycling to be done will determine the type of bike that you should choose. Again, visit bicycle shops and ask about which type of bike would be best for the cycling that you or you child intend to do. Remember that self-assembly packed bicycles may require time and some technical expertise to build them.

Second hand

A good second hand bike might be bought for the same price as a less sophisticated new bicycle. Look in cycle magazines or ask at your local cycle centre.(Here at Herne Hill Velodrome)

Choosing Childrens Bikes...

They generally fall into age categories based on the average size of a child of a specific age. There is no hard and fast rule that says that you must buy a bike of a particular size for a child of a specific age. If the child is comfortable and not too stretched on the bike, and they can manage all the controls ie turn the handlebars safely, reach the brake levers and operate them AND touch the floor with the ball of their foot, then there is nothing to prevent you from selecting a bike in a bigger age category.

12" Wheel Cycles - Suitable for ages 2 1/2 to 5

16" Wheel Cycles - Suitable for ages 5 to 7

20" Wheel Cycles - Suitable for ages 7 to 9

24" Wheel Cycles - Suitable for ages 9 to 11

26" Wheel Cycles - Suitable for ages 11+ (These are classed as adult cycles.)



First Bikes: 12" wheels, suitable for average ages 3 to 5. Larger children may benefit from a 14" wheel cycle BUT these are generally made by toy manufacturers rather than genuine cycle manufacturers and tend not to last very long and are virtually impossible to get spare parts for.

Instead of a bike with stabilisers try a scoot along. Much better for stability. Once your child has learnt to ride without stabilisers or with a scoot along (generally about age 5) they will move up to a 16" wheel cycle.

Once you get into the realms of 20" wheel bikes and above, you may be offered multiple frame sizes. This has the benefit of being able to fit a younger child onto a bigger wheeled bike if they are confident riders. Although you will find that size options are generally not offered on a particular model, rather that different models have different frame sizes.

It is a very tempting thing to do, but don't buy a bike which is too big for your child in the hope that they will grow into it. They will, but in the meantime they will be riding a bike that is not easy for them to control, which can be very dangerous. It does not really save money anyway, because if you change bikes more often, the outgrown ones will have a higher resale value.

A bike should be chosen with the child present, so that child size can be matched against the size of the frame. The ball or toes of a child cyclist's foot should be able to touch the ground while the child is sitting in the saddle at its lowest setting. A bicycle saddle and its handlebars have scope for adjustment, so the seat may be raised as the child grows.

Another big tip is - Can the child wheel and pick up the bike? Is it too heavy?

Security

Once you have your bicycle, there are ways to make sure that, if it is stolen, it can be easily identified. You can mark a code or ID number on it. Make a note of this. If the bike is left outside, then you should use a padlock and chain and secure it to something

Cycle Training

Most local councils now have a cycle officer. Through them you may get a free (please check) Cycle Training Course. There are usually free courses during bike week. (17-25 June in 2007)

Ask at your school about cycle training or contact your local council and ask to speak to the Road Safety/Cycling Officer.

Useful websites

www.safetymatters.renault.co.uk/

Bicycle safety for children, parents and teachers, complete with games to play. Also includes a complete educational kit, which teachers can use to raise awareness among 7-11 year olds.

www.hedgehogs.gov.uk

Site aimed at bicycle and road safety for children, packed with games, downloads, info and loads more. Also contains the Arrive Alive site.

www.rosipa.com

Lots of downloads on bicycle training, the effectiveness of safety helmets, carrying children on bicycles, etc.

www.saferoutestoschools.org.uk

Safe Routes to Schools is a community approach to encourage more people to walk or use their bicycle to school safely, improve road safety, reduce child casualties, improve children's health and

Herne Hill Youth Cycling Club www.hhycc.com

Club contact: **Judith Bonner Tel: 07837718040**

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development, and reduce traffic congestion and pollution

www.sustrans.org.uk

Founders of the national cycle route network. They're a sustainable transport charity who work on practical projects to encourage people to walk, cycle and use public transport.

www.bikeweek.org.uk

A government sponsored site whose aim is to promote local events and rides that appeal to new or 'returning' adult cyclists. 'Returning' cyclists are the 10 million or so people who already own bikes but don't use them much, or at all!

The nationwide Bike to School Week launch will be 24-28 April 2006 (subject to confirmation of funding). Bike to School Week is a Bike Week proposal to encourage more children to cycle to school.

www.whycycle.co.uk

Are you interested in getting into cycling? Why Cycle offers sound, impartial advice on most aspects of bicycle purchasing

www.databases.dft.gov.uk/secondary/

Department for Transport road safety teaching resources, lesson plans, and downloads.

www.roadcode.co.uk/

A highway code for young people and children, with online quizzes.

<http://www.brixtoncycles.co.uk>

One of several local shops and much loved by the younger crew for their caring manner and endless free advice and time. Their "No manners No spanners" policy ensures they spread politeness and respect.