

**Anderson County Sheriff's Office
School Resource Officer
Parent and Student Education Program (PASEP)**

Bicycle Safety: Things Every Rider Should Know

Parents, please take some time and sit down with your children and discuss this information with them. After all, they will be the ones who benefit the most from it. This information also applies to adults who ride bikes.

Make sure the bike is in good condition before riding it. Inspect it regularly. Make sure the seat is secure. Adjust its height so that your knees are slightly bent when the pedals are in the lowest position. Make sure the handlebars are tight. Use grips or tape on the handlebars for better control. Make sure the wheels are locked in tightly to prevent them from popping out. Check for loose or broken spokes. These cause the wheel to wobble and should be repaired. Tires should be firm to the touch. Check the air pressure. Examine tires for cuts, cracks, or bulges. Breaks should tighten and release smoothly and quickly. To test them, squeeze the levers as you push the bike forward. Your wheels should not move. Your chain should be well oiled. It's a good idea to oil it once a month. If the chain comes off, it can be easily adjusted. Ask your bike dealer to show you how. Your bike should have front and rear reflectors. Check to make sure they are secured tightly and are clean.

When riding, wear appropriate clothing. Your helmet is your most important piece of biking equipment. Wear it at all times, even for short trips. It can save your life. Always wear bright or highly visible clothing. Avoid clothing that can get caught in the bike chain. Use a strap or band to secure pant legs if necessary. Make sure shoelaces are securely tied. A reflective vest or arm reflector is recommended at all times.

Ride your bike as though you were driving a car. For your own safety and others, be sure to stop at all red lights, yield to oncoming traffic and obey street signs. Keep to the right and ride single file in the same direction as traffic. Never carry passengers and avoid overloading baskets so you can't see. Keep both hands on the handlebars, unless you must signal. Use hand signals when you stop or make a turn. This lets drivers and other bicycle riders know what you are going to do. Always use your left hand to signal. Stop, look left, right, and left again before leaving a sidewalk, driveway, alley, or parking lot. Enter traffic only when the road is clear. Walk your bike through busy intersections.

Watch for road hazards such as potholes, glass, and loose objects like gravel or sand. Also watch for parked vehicles, vehicles entering traffic, doors opening unexpectedly, or cars pulling out of driveways. Dusk or night riding is extremely dangerous, even with reflective clothing, front and rear reflectors, and front and rear lights. If necessary, walk your bike home at night or call for someone to pick you up. When you ride (especially long distances), always carry the following: tube or patch kit; tire irons; mini screwdriver; coins for emergency phone calls; and identification in case of an accident.

The following is a list of Tennessee State Laws found in Tennessee Code Annotated pertaining to Bicycles and Bicycle Riding. The general public has access to Michie Law and can view these laws at that web site.

- TCA 55-8-171...Bicycle and Play Vehicles
- TCA 55-8-172...Bicycle-Traffic Laws Apply To
- TCA 55-8-173...Bicycle-Riding on, Use of Play Vehicles
- TCA 55-8-174...Clinging to Vehicles
- TCA 55-8-175...Bicycle-Riding on Roads & Bicycle Paths
- TCA 55-8-176...Bicycle-Carrying Articles On
- TCA 55-8-177...Bicycle Lamps and Breaks

Besides the state laws listed above, most cities and towns have ordinances that also address this topic.

This information is furnished as a part of the Anderson County Sheriff's Office-School Resource Officer-Parent and Student Education Program (PASEP). Questions concerning this article or other topics may be referred to any SRO or by calling 457-2414 and leaving a message for the SRO Supervisor.