



Cycling can be a fun recreational activity or means of transport for the entire family. There is equipment available for cycling with children of just about any age, from 1 year old and upward. Most children will enjoy cycling, as long as you keep the journeys to a reasonable length and provide interesting destinations or activities for the kids when you are stopped.

Bike North has prepared a series of 'info sheets' to outline the pros and cons of the various equipment available for cycling with children. This first sheet is intended to provide an overall introduction to family cycling.

<b>Child seat (info sheet 2)</b>	<b>Age 1-5</b>
<b>Trailer (info sheet 3)</b>	<b>Age 1-5</b>
<b>Trailer Bike (sometimes referred to as a 'tag-a-long', info sheet 4)</b>	<b>Age 4.5 - 11</b>
<b>Tandem (info sheet 5)</b>	<b>Age 4.5 - Adult</b>
<b>Teaching Children to Ride (info sheet 6)</b>	<b>Age 3+</b>
<b>Independent Cycling (info sheet 7)</b>	<b>Age &gt;10</b>

The age at which children are old enough to learn to ride a bike depends very much on the child. Bike North does not recommend independent cycling for children below the age of 10 on public roads. From 10 onwards children are old enough to start learning the road rules and cycling skills on the road under adult supervision.

Is cycling with children safe? The answer to this is yes. If you are not a competent cyclist yourself, Bike North would recommend practicing to attain a level of cycling competency prior to cycling with a child in a seat or trailer. When cycling with children it is most pleasant to search for and explore quiet streets close to your home. Busier streets, while no less safe for competent cyclists, tend to be less enjoyable for cycling. Starting children early in cycling teaches them to ride safely, under parental supervision, prior to going out on their own.

When cycling, with younger children in particular, it is best to keep trips short so that the child in a seat or a trailer does not get bored. Try to have an objective for the trip such as going to the playground or another destination that will interest the child. When children are participating such as on a trailer bike or tandem the possible length for the trip is determined by the interest / endurance of the child.

Like adults, children should always wear helmets while riding or being carried on a bike. Some manufacturers make special small-sized helmets (such as the 'Li'l Bell Shell') for infants, and most manufacturers make helmets for older children.'

