

Parent's Expectations and Beliefs toward the Relative Safety of their Children Riding Bicycles at Night

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Abstract

The expectations, attitudes, and perceptions of parents toward the relative safety of their children riding bicycles at night with and without lights and reflectors were examined. One hundred and ninety-four parents were surveyed in the Los Angeles, CA area. About 36% of the parents reported that their children ride bicycles at night at least once in a while. However, 67% reported that their children's bicycles do not have a headlight. About 28% believed that it was not dangerous to ride a bicycle at night with only reflectors and no lights. Similarly, about 28% believed that it was not difficult to see a bicycle at night with only reflectors and no lights. The results offer mixed encouragement. On the one hand the majority of participants reported believing it was not safe for children to ride at night without lights because it is not easy for vehicle operators to see them. On the other hand, the majority of participants reported allowing their children to ride their bicycles without lights. Continuing education along with adequate warning and instruction is necessary to ensure parents understand the limitations of bicycle reflectors and the need to provide bicycles with lights anytime a child rides at night.

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