

CHILD SAFETY ALERT

How To Buy Helmets That Fit

(NAPSA)—Most parents are pros at purchasing shoes, pants and shirts for their kids. But when it comes to bike helmets, nearly two-thirds of parents say they don't know how to buy helmets that fit properly, according to a nationwide survey by Greenfield Online.

Each year, more than 60,000 children are treated in emergency rooms for head injuries from wheeled-sports accidents. Bike helmets can reduce the risk of brain injury by up to 88 percent, but only if parents know how to buy the right helmet for their child's activity and how to fit it properly on their child's head.

Buying helmets that fit starts before leaving home.

First, measure the diameter of the head by putting a measuring tape one inch above the eyebrows and wrapping it around the head parallel to the floor. Most helmet packaging will display a size chart that parents can use to match the proper helmet with their child's head size.

Next, pick the right helmet for the type of wheeled activity the child participates in. A bike helmet is adequate for biking, but a multisport helmet like Bell's Tony Hawk Signature Series helmet is recommended if the child likes to ride a skateboard, rollerblades and a bike. Multisport helmets provide more protective coverage on the back of the head, which is especially good for skateboarders and inline skaters, who tend to fall backward more than forward or to the side.

Try on different helmets in the right size range at the store. Make sure all parts of the inside of the helmet are comfortably



Bell's Tony Hawk multisport helmet features the X Games Champion's signature and extended protective coverage on the back of the head.

touching the head. Many helmets come with extra pads that can be placed in different locations inside the helmet to customize the comfort and fit.

Once the helmet is home, making it fit properly on a child's head requires following the simple Eyes-Ears-Mouth guide developed by Bell and the National SAFE KIDS Campaign:

- **Eyes:** The rim of the helmet should rest just above the eyebrows so that it is visible when looking up.
- **Ears:** The straps should form a "V" just below each earlobe.
- **Mouth:** The chin strap should be snug under the chin so that the helmet hugs the head when the child opens his or her mouth.

Take some of the fuss out of buying and using helmets by letting children choose the helmets that appeal to their interests. Bell helmets come in styles ranging from Batman and Barbie to NASCAR and X Games. Go to www.bellbikestuff.com to see the range of styles available and access the retail locator.