

SAFETY SENSE

Teaching Children To Play Safely

(NAPSA)—Children across the country are jumping on their scooters, bicycles, skateboards and in-line skates, for another day of fun outdoors. Without proper safety training and equipment, however, children may be among the hundreds of thousands who find themselves in the emergency room this year.

The American Society of Plastic Surgeons (ASPS) reminds parents to teach children how to play safely.

“Every year, plastic surgeons repair injuries from accidents that happen simply as kids are playing,” says ASPS President Edward Luce, MD. “These injuries range from soft tissue injuries to lacerations and abrasions, but more extensive wounds, often on the face, are not uncommon. Most accidents can be avoided if the child wears the proper safety equipment.”

Each year 40,000 people are seen in hospital emergency rooms for injuries associated with scooters, 100,000 for in-line skates and 26,000 for skateboard-related injuries. Two hundred children are killed in bicycle-related accidents each year.

“Traumatic injuries account for a significant part of the plastic surgery performed on children every year,” explains Dr. Luce. “Facial injuries such as severe lacerations and broken noses and jawbones require special attention. Hand injuries, specifically those with cut tendons and broken bones, can require complex repair. Board-certified plastic surgeons have specialized training to treat these injuries. Choosing the proper specialist assures the most qualified care.”

The ASPS offers the following advice to keep children injury-free:

- Make sure children wear appropriate safety equipment—helmets, elbow pads, knee pads



For children, proper safety equipment is an important part of active, outdoor play.

and wrist guards;

- Remember, children grow fast. The helmet from last year may now be too small;

- Caution children to use their bicycles, scooters, in-line skates and skateboards only on smooth-paved roads;

- Teach children how to stop properly;

- Know what to do in an emergency situation. Don't panic. Have emergency phone numbers available, including the phone number of a plastic surgeon certified by The American Board of Plastic Surgery (ABPS). Make sure children know the numbers;

- Check local park districts and sports stores for classes on safety and proper equipment use; and

- If an accident occurs, consult with the emergency room physician regarding the need for a plastic surgeon. ABPS-certified plastic surgeons are uniquely qualified to perform cosmetic and reconstructive plastic surgery on the face and all areas of the body.

For more information and referrals to plastic surgeons in your area, visit www.plastic-surgery.org or call (888) 4-PLASTIC (888-475-2784).