

News Release

For immediate release

May 21, 2009



Hard Hats for Little Heads

Physicians Caring for Texans

LOCAL PHYSICIANS TO GIVE AWAY BICYCLE HELMETS TO CHILDREN

The physicians of Lone Star County want to help ensure the safety of local children by giving away free bicycle helmets Saturday, May 30, from 9 a.m. to noon in the emergency room of Lone Star County General Hospital.

The Lone Star bicycle helmet giveaway is part of a statewide effort — Hard Hats for Little Heads — launched by the Texas Medical Association in 1994. The program is designed to educate Texas children and their parents about how to prevent head injuries by wearing a helmet when bicycling, in-line skating, skateboarding, and when riding scooters. The event is sponsored by the Lone Star County Medical Society, in conjunction with the Texas Medical Association.

On average, 250 children in the United States under the age of 14 die each year because of a bicycle crash. Another 300,000 children are treated in emergency rooms for severe head injuries. Many of these accidents could have been prevented if the children had worn bicycle helmets.

“Wearing a bicycle helmet is such a simple way to help ensure a child’s health and safety,” said Dr. Joe Smith, president of Lone Star County Medical Society. “We physicians wanted to start summer vacation right (and commemorate Bicycle Safety Month in May — see note below) by putting a helmet on our children’s heads.”

Any child can receive a free helmet. Local physicians (or local police department or whoever is providing this service) will be on hand to properly fit the helmets. Safety presentations will occur every half hour (or other activities at your event, such as bicycle inspections or a bicycle rodeo).

Head injury is the most common cause of death and serious disability from bike crashes. Bicycle helmets can reduce the risk of head injury by as much as 85 percent, yet only about 40 percent of cyclists wear one when they ride.

Since TMA’s Hard Hats for Little Heads program began, physicians have given away more than 55,000 free helmets to Texas children. Funding for TMA’s Hard Hats for Little Heads is provided by TMA Foundation thanks to a generous donation from Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas and gifts from physicians and their families.

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Note: If you’re planning an event during Bicycle Month in May or Brain Injury Awareness Month in October, you could include that in your release.