

Organizing Bike Rides for Kids

Family bike rides can be a great way to introduce kids to biking and get parents involved and supportive of your advocacy efforts to improve the safety of biking in your community.

Family rides work best if they are 2 to 4 miles long and on quiet, residential streets. Plan for the ride to last no more than one hour, including stops. Rides can be geared towards kids riding with or without training wheels, as well as younger children riding on trail-a-bikes, child trailers, and child seats of their parent's bikes.

If you're interested in organizing regular rides for kids in your community, consider getting involved in Kidical Mass, a national movement to encourage families to ride bicycles for transportation, exercise, and fun. In Chicago, Kidical Mass rides are led by volunteer ride organizers in multiple neighborhoods - visit their website at chicagokidicalmass.org to learn more.



Family Bike Ride Event Tips

- Start the ride at a park or other open space so the kids can play while families gather.
- A weekend morning is the best time for family rides.
- The route should be mostly on quiet, residential streets. Ride the route before the actual event to make sure it is safe. For example, if there is construction on one of the streets, it is best to avoid it.
- Only cross major streets at stoplights.
- The ride will be slow! Kids on their own bikes just can't go that fast. It will probably go slower than you think.
- If the group gets separated, slow down, and perhaps stop so that everyone catches up.
- Recruit other parents on the ride to serve as bike marshals. They can help cork intersections, so cars stop and let the ride through. They can also alert the group if cars are approaching.
- End the ride at another park, a local, kid-friendly shop, or a kid-friendly event happening in the neighborhood. When the ride ends, the kids can play around or get a treat! Ideally, the ending location has bathrooms available to the public.

Image Courtesy of Chicago Department of Transportation