

Safe Equestrian Practices: Frequently Asked Questions

May 2005

Resources* on safe equestrian practices for injury professionals.

What protective riding equipment is available?

- An editorial on equestrian safety helmets, <http://theequinejournal.com/Resources/issue45/helmetsart45.html>.
- Preventing equestrian injuries, <http://www.acc.co.nz/injury-prevention/safe-in-sport-and-recreation/sports-activities/equestrian/index.html#statistics>.

What does American Society for Testing Materials (ASTM)/Safety Equipment Institute (SEI) standard mean, and why should a helmet meet those standards?

- A description of what the ASTM SEI standard means, why it is in place, and where you can find approved helmets, http://www.canr.uconn.edu/ansci/equine/helmet_safety/astm.htm.
- Information on helmets, <http://www.braininjuryoklahoma.org/intro/Recreation/Equestrian%20Info/equihelmetsafety.htm>.

How can I promote helmet use in my local equestrian club?

- A guide to promotion of helmet use for riding clubs and communities, <http://cru.cahe.wsu.edu/CEPublications/em4849/em4849.pdf>.
- Every Time...Every Ride—An educational video on head injury prevention. Order forms available through Washington State 4-H, <http://4-h.wsu.edu/foundation/merchandise.htm>.

What are some rules and guidelines to follow when riding or working around horses?

- Safety tips on working around a horse, http://www.oznet.ksu.edu/pr_eyas/safety.htm.
- Basic horse safety tips, <http://www.ca.uky.edu/agc/pubs/4af/4af05ma/4af05ma.htm>.
- The North American Guidelines for Children's Agricultural Tasks were developed by the [National Children's Center for Rural and Agricultural Health and Safety](#) to assist adults in assigning farm jobs to youth 7 to 16 who live or work on farms. The guidelines, "Animal Care Feeding hay to horses," and "Animal Care Working with large animals" are available at www.nagcat.org/poster/animal/feedhorse.htm and www.nagcat.org/poster/pdf/animals/large.pdf respectively.

In collaboration with private and public organizations, state health departments could encourage child safety advocates to:

Obtain Data and Evaluate programs

- Collect, monitor, and publish horse-related injury data including type of injury, helmet use, time of day, surface type, surface conditions, location, how injury occurred, adult supervision, level of training and rider experience.

Continued

- Evaluate the effectiveness of current equestrian safety programs and policies.


Be Proactive

- Encourage interventions that are community-based, on-going, and incorporate education, enforcement, and engineering strategies.
- Develop and promote safe horse riding opportunities.
- Provide horse-related injury data to local and state horse clubs, media, and equestrian organizations.
- Promote state and local policy that requires youth to wear an ASTM/SEI approved helmet while mounted or dismounted.

Work with Professionals

- Establish and maintain a trauma system equipped to respond to equestrian injuries.
- Encourage health care providers to engage in anticipatory guidance about equestrian safety.
- Work with manufacturers to ensure the design of equestrian equipment suitable for youth
- Work with the insurance industry to reduce liability and maximize safety.

* The Children's Safety Network does not endorse specific resources, but offers these as examples.

 This document can be downloaded from the Internet, www.childrenssafetynetwork.org.

Equestrian safety materials also available are the: Equestrian Safety Fact Sheet, Equestrian Safety Programs: Best Practices, and Organizations Promoting Equestrian Safety.

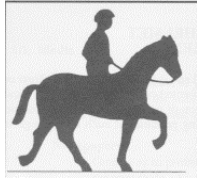
For more information:

Children's Safety Network

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www.childrenssafetynetwork.org



Equestrian Safety Fact Sheet

May 2005

Background

In the United States an estimated 30 million people are involved in equestrian activities annually.¹ Youth ride horses for occupational, recreational, and competitive purposes.⁶ Horses can weigh up to 1100 pounds and travel up to 40 MPH.³

INJURY EXPERIENCE

Fatal Injuries

- The most frequent cause of death and serious injury for mounted and dismounted horse activities is head injury.^{2,4,5,6}
- In the United States from 1999-2002 there were 76 fatal injuries to youth under 20 years involving riding an animal or an animal drawn vehicle.⁷

Emergency Department (ED) Treated Injuries

- In the United States, an estimated 23,000 youth under 20 years are treated from equestrian-related injuries in an ED annually.⁸
- Female equestrians 10-19 years represent 57 % of the cases treated in an ED annually.⁸
- Contusions, fractures, sprains/strains, lacerations, internal injury and concussions are the most common horse-related injuries to youth seen in an ED.⁶
- The most frequent body parts injured, in order, include head/neck/face, arms and legs include arms, and legs.^{4,9-13}

Injury Statistics

- A study of U.S. equestrian-related pediatric trauma events revealed incidents occurred at home (36%), at a recreational area (23%), on a farm (19%), and at school (5%).⁹
- The severity of youth equestrian-related injuries is greater compared to other sports-related injuries.^{1,4}
- A population-based report in rural Wisconsin revealed the equestrian-related injury rate for youth under 16 years to be 5.6 injuries per 10,000 person-years compared to 3.9 per 10,000 for adults.¹³
- Studies indicate 20-30% of equestrian-related injury occur while dismounted such as leading, grooming, or playing around a horse.^{9,10}
- Dismounted injuries most often involve a youth being kicked or trodden by a horse.^{9,10}
- Mounted injuries most often involve a youth falling off or being thrown from a horse.^{9,10}
- Studies suggest helmet use is more common among females; those riding English style; and recreational riders.¹⁴⁻¹⁶

Cost Data

- The average cost of animal riding deaths is \$89.7 million annually.¹⁷
- Nonfatal equestrian-related injuries to youth 0-19 years treated in an ED cost an average of \$945.6 million per year.⁸
- Females 10-19 years seen in an ED due to equestrian-related injuries cost an average of \$433.7 million per year.⁸

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ASSOCIATED FACTORS

Factors associated with equestrian-related injuries

- Female gender^{1,2,4,5,9}
- 10-19 years of age^{1,2}
- No helmet use^{2,11,13,18,19}
- Immature judgment, risk taking, motor skills or technique¹⁰
- More experienced riders (5+ years)¹¹⁻¹³
- Riding English style²⁰
- Riding 15-24 hours per month²⁰
- Horse being “spooked” by people, noises, or traffic¹

Youth who are physically or mentally disabled should be evaluated by appropriate medical personnel to determine if therapeutic riding is a suitable and appropriate activity.

RECOMMENDATIONS/REQUIREMENTS FOR PROMOTING SAFE PARTICIPATION IN EQUESTRIAN-RELATED ACTIVITIES

- Evidence demonstrates that consistent use of a secured equestrian helmet that meets the ASTM* standard and is SEI† certified will prevent head injury.^{18,21-23}
- The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)²⁴ recommends young riders:
 - Wear a helmet that meets the ASTM standard and is SEI certified while riding horses
 - Be supervised based on skill level
 - Ride horses appropriate for their levels of cognitive development and riding ability
- New York state and Plantation, FL have enacted legislation requiring helmet use for youth under 14 and 16 years (respectively) mounted on a horse. Organizations such as the United States Pony Club, National Hunter/Jumper Council Board of Governors, the USA Equestrian Board of Directors and some state and local 4-H club require youth to wear an approved helmet in equestrian events and on the horse show grounds. The effectiveness of these laws in preventing equestrian-related injuries is unknown.

*American Society of Testing Materials, ASTM F-1163-04a

†Safety Equipment Institute, SEI

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For more information:

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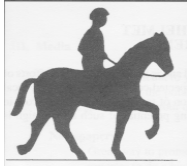
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Equestrian Safety Programs: Best Practices

May 2005

Selected* Program Descriptions

American Association for Horsemanship Safety (AAHS)

Phone: 512-488-2220

Fax: 512-488-2319

jzdawson@aol.com

www.horsemanshipssafety.com/

The AAHS provides services such as rider instructor certification clinics, expert witness, and seminars on horsemanship and horse safety. A document describing how to enact a helmet ordinance is available on their website.

Certified Horsemanship Association (CHA)

Phone : (800) 399-0138

office@cha-ahse.org

www.cha-ahse.org

The CHA is dedicated to improving the safety and quality of group riding programs in camps, stables, private schools, universities, and other locations. CHA publishes standards and manuals for riding students and instructors. CHA also offers safety products, instructor certification clinics, and an association magazine.

National SAFE KIDS Campaign

Lakeshore SAFE KIDS Coalition

Equestrian Safety Team Coordinator:

Kristi Potts

Phone: 616-394-3681

kristip@lakeshoresafekids.org

www.lakeshoresafekids.org/equestrian_safety.htm

The Lakeshore SAFE KIDS chapter has created a toolkit to conduct a community equestrian helmet promotion campaign. The kit includes the "Every Time, Every Ride" video, a brochure on horse-related injuries, three helmets, an evaluation tool, a poster, in addition to other items. The kit costs approximately \$90.

American Youth Horse Council

National Youth Horse Leaders

Symposium

Phone: 800-879-2942

info@ayhc.com

www.ayhc.com

The American Youth Horse Council holds annual symposiums that offer youth leaders take-home tools to teach youth about safe and effective horsemanship. From classroom to the tack-room, attendees will find resources, referrals, and networking to improve their ability to help kids connect through horses

National 4-H Council

Phone: 301-961-2800

www.fourhcouncil.edu/index.aspx

Many state and local 4-H clubs offer a variety of equestrian activities for youth. For more information on a locating a local club go to www.4husa.org/.

*The CSN National Children's Center for Rural and Agricultural Health and Safety does not endorse a specific program or curriculum, but offers these as examples. You may contact each organization for information to initiate or strengthen a youth equestrian program in your community.

Contact the staff of your state or local Cooperative Extension, SAFE KIDS chapter, horse club, or state maternal and child health injury prevention program to obtain local data, resources, and information.

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Continued

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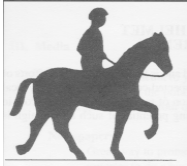
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Organizations Promoting Equestrian Safety

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Selected* Program Descriptions

American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)

Phone: 800-433-9016 or 847-228-5005

Fax: 847-228-5097

kidsdocs@aap.org

www.aap.org

The AAP provides resources and guidance for promoting the health, safety, and well being of infants, children, adolescents, and young adults. Abstracts from articles on equestrian-related injury are available on the AAP website.

American Medical Equestrian Association (AMEA)

(AMEA)

Phone: 866-441-2632

ameasrf@equestriansafety.com

www.ameaonline.org

The AMEA is dedicated to promoting safety in equestrian activities through injury prevention education and research. AMEA produces a newsletter and other equestrian safety publications.

Children's Safety Network (CSN)

Phone: 800-662-6900

Fax: 715-389-4996

nccrahs@mcrf.mfldclin.edu

www.childrenssafetynetwork.org

The CSN, composed of three centers, is dedicated to enhancing the health and safety of youth. CSN's Economics and Data Analysis Resource Center provides accurate data on the incidence and costs of equestrian-related injuries on a state-by-state and national level.

North American Riding for the Handicapped Association (NARHA)

Phone: 800-369-RIDE (7433)

Fax: 303-252-4610

narha@narha.org

www.narha.org/

NARHA accredits therapeutic riding programs, certifies riding instructors, and produces guidelines on how to create a safe therapeutic riding environment and how to select suitable youth for a therapeutic riding program.

U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC)

Phone: 301-504-0990

Fax: 301-504-0051

info@cpsc.gov

www.cpsc.gov

The CPSC is an independent regulatory agency of the federal government. The CPSC conducts hazard assessment and reduction programs to prevent injury. The National Injury Information Clearinghouse offers data summaries and studies of product-related injury.

United States Pony Clubs, Inc. (USPC)

Phone: 859-254-7669

Fax: 859-233-4652

www.ponyclub.org/

The USPC is dedicated to equestrian riders under age 21. USPC stresses safety by requiring members to wear a ASTM/SEI approved riding helmet when attending mounted events, encouraging parent participation/supervision, and educating members about potential safety risks.

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