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Bicycle safety tips

Now that spring is well under way and warmer temperatures are the norm, bicycle riders of all ages are returning to streets and sidewalks around town.

With this in mind, officers with the Caledon Detachment of the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) would like to remind parents, children and motorists of some simple but very important safety tips in the hopes of preventing unnecessary accidents and injuries. Motorists are asked to slow down and to pay extra attention when travelling near parks and schools.

Children at play often forget to look out for cars which can lead to mishaps. Focusing on driving and avoiding distractions, could be the difference between a close call or a trip to the hospital. All cyclists under 18 years of age must wear an approved helmet or risk being fined $80 according to the Highway Traffic Act of Ontario. If the person is under the age of sixteen, their parents can be fined. Even though there is no law stipulating adults to wear a helmet, wearing one just makes good sense.

Parents are encouraged to set a good example and to be a role model for their children by wearing their helmets too. Caledon OPP is reminding bicycle riders to use a lock when leaving bikes unattended in public places and to keep garage doors at home locked overnight. The best protection is prevention, please ?Lock it or Lose it?.

Other Safety Tips: ? Be a responsible cyclist and obey the rules of the road ? Helmets should fit snugly and sit level and square on your head ? Have a bell or horn on your bike and ensure it is in good working order ? Make sure the tires are properly inflated and that the brakes work ? Night riders need a white light on the front and red light or reflector on the back ? Dress brightly to be seen at night ? Passengers are not allowed on a bicycle designed for one person ? Ride about 1 metre from the curb, in a straight line ? Avoid pot holes, sewer grates or debris ? Keep a record of your bikes serial number in case it is ever stolen ? Cyclists must stop and identify themselves if requested by a police officer ? Don't ride and text or talk on the phone

For additional information on bicycle safety please visit the Ministry of Transportation website at www.mto.gov.on.ca/english/pubs/cycling-guide