

# Austin/Travis County Injury Prevention Program

## Bicycle Rodeo Instructions

Thank you for your interest in conducting a bicycle safety rodeo. The Travis County Injury Prevention Program developed this guide to help you have a successful rodeo. If we can not provide staff for your event, we can at a minimum provide you with instruction and most of the materials needed.

### **Audience**

Most bike rodeos conducted for the community draw children ages 8 and under. For this age group, we recommend teaching them general handling skills. Remind parents that children age 8 and under should not ride in the street, but instead on sidewalks, hike and bike trails, parks, etc.

The Bike Handling Skills stations are for children of all ages. These stations provide children with practice on bike-handling skills that are important for young cyclists to develop and offer a review for older children.

**Materials needed:** Line marker machine, line marker (powdered chalk available at Callahans General Store), stop sign, cardboard "drain grate" (to represent obstacle), car posters, cones to mark course and block off motor vehicle traffic. Certificates of Completion.

**Volunteers:** For a rodeo with up to 100 children participating, at least 10 volunteers are needed; however 3 - 4 volunteers can run a smaller rodeo.

**Space:** A clean, flat surface (preferably paved) is needed at least 100' x 150'.

### **Managing the Rodeo**

The rodeo should begin with each child completing a helmet check and a bike check. Once they have finished Stations 1 - 3, place children in groups of 4 - 6 with children of similar ages.

Assign a timekeeper. After 7 minutes, blow a whistle and instruct each group to rotate to the next station. At this rate you will be able to put 20 - 30 children through the course in about 30 minutes. If you have additional children waiting, have them start at each station just as you did at the beginning.

When children reach a station, have a volunteer demonstrate by riding the station. Another method to introduce children to the station is to have them walk through the station while following the volunteer. While the exercise may seem

simple, without seeing someone do it first, some children will not know what they are supposed to do.

If Certificates of Completion are available, provide them to children after they have completed the course.

### **Station 1 - Registration**

1 - 2 volunteers

While registration is not absolutely necessary, its a good idea to have some sort of registration. That way, you can at least get an idea of how many people attended and their ages. Some groups also like to have parents sign a release of liability.

### **Station 2 - Bike Check**

1 volunteer for every 25 children attending

The bike check station is important as most children's bikes are neglected as far as maintenance goes. A bike in bad shape can pose a hazard to the child. You'll need a volunteer (or 2 or 3) from a local bike shop or a knowledgeable, mechanically inclined individual to do this. Make sure they have at the very minimum a tire pump and a few wrenches. A checklist is enclosed so that you can make copies. Provide each child's parents with a completed checklist. Bikes that are unsafe (no brakes, loose seat or handlebars, etc.) should not be allowed on the course. The bike checker should only perform very minor adjustments or repairs. Because this is the time consuming portion of the course, it is likely that a line will back up at this station.

### **Station 3 - Helmet Check**

1 volunteer for every 25 children attending

Every child is required to wear a helmet while riding the course. If you are interested in arranging a group helmet purchase in advance, let us know. We also have a limited number of free helmets available.

It helps if your helmet checker (or checkers) has some knowledge about bike helmets. The helmet should be worn level on the head, not tilted back. The chinstrap should be adjusted so that only one finger fits between the chinstrap and the chin. If the helmet has been crashed or is more than 3 years old, recommend replacement to the parents. The A/TC Youth Traffic Safety Project can provide a helmet fitting video for checkers to view in advance of the event. A flyer showing proper helmet fit is included in the packet and can also be copied to give to parents.

If free helmets are available, provide them only to children who need them. If the child does not own a helmet, or if their own helmet doesn't fit correctly, is damaged, or just worn out, then provide a helmet.

While children are waiting to get their bikes and helmets checked, this is a good opportunity to give a brief talk to them and their parents. Here are some talking points:

- ◆ Discuss why helmets are important. Points:
  - ◆ What is your brain responsible for?
  - ◆ Your brain is the worst part of your body that you could injure.
- ◆ Concentrate
- ◆ When riding on the sidewalk, warn pedestrians. A pedestrian usually can't hear you approaching from behind. Pass pedestrians on the left. Also, be very cautious when crossing driveways - cars could be pulling in or out.
- ◆ Ride in a straight line without swerving - motorists will be better able to tell what you're going to do.
- ◆ Ride with traffic (children under the age of 9 should not ride in the street). Never ride against traffic on the wrong side of the street. Younger children should ride on the sidewalk, playground, hike and bike trail, etc.
- ◆ Stop and look both ways before leaving your driveway or anytime you are crossing the street. **(Very important!)**
- ◆ Stop at stop signs, even when riding on the sidewalk.
- ◆ Always check out your bike before you ride - check tires because they will leak slowly, check brakes. Make sure everything is tight. If you have a problem with your bike, tell your parents, older brother or sister or someone else who could help.
- ◆ Make sure that pants and shoestrings or anything else that might be dangling are tucked in away from spokes and chain.
- ◆ Don't ride with 2 on a bike - a bike is made for one person. This can damage your bike and is also illegal.

### Station 4 - Slalom Course and Turns

2 volunteers (1 at start of station, 1 at end of station)

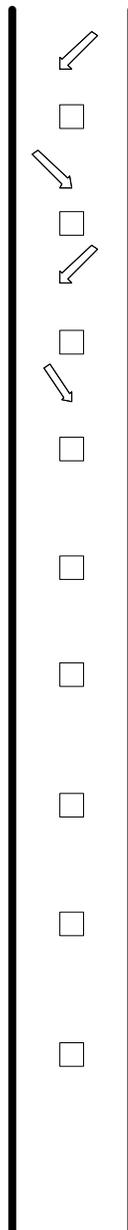
For the slalom course, children maneuver between the lines swerving to the left and right to avoid cones laid 6' apart. Have one cyclist at a time start at the slalom course. Start the next cyclist in the group when the one in front of them has reached the end of the slalom course. Have children repeat until they rotate to the next station.

**Skills Addressed:**

Starting: have children place one pedal in a position that allows them to get a good first pedal stroke.

Avoiding obstacles: Remind children that the bike is easier to maneuver if they have a little speed and momentum. Encourage children to make small moves of the handlebar and lean through the "S" turns to maneuver through the cones while staying inside the lines.

Start



Parallel lines 3 feet apart,  
75- 100 feet long  
Small cones placed 6' apart

## Station 5 - Turns

2 - 3 volunteers-1 starter, 1 at turns, 1 at stop sign

For children ages 8 and under: Have children ride through station one at a time without using turn signals.

For children ages 9 and up: Have children ride through station one at a time while practicing using turn signals.

Start the next cyclist in the group when the one in front of them has reached the end of the stop sign. Have children repeat until they rotate to the next station.

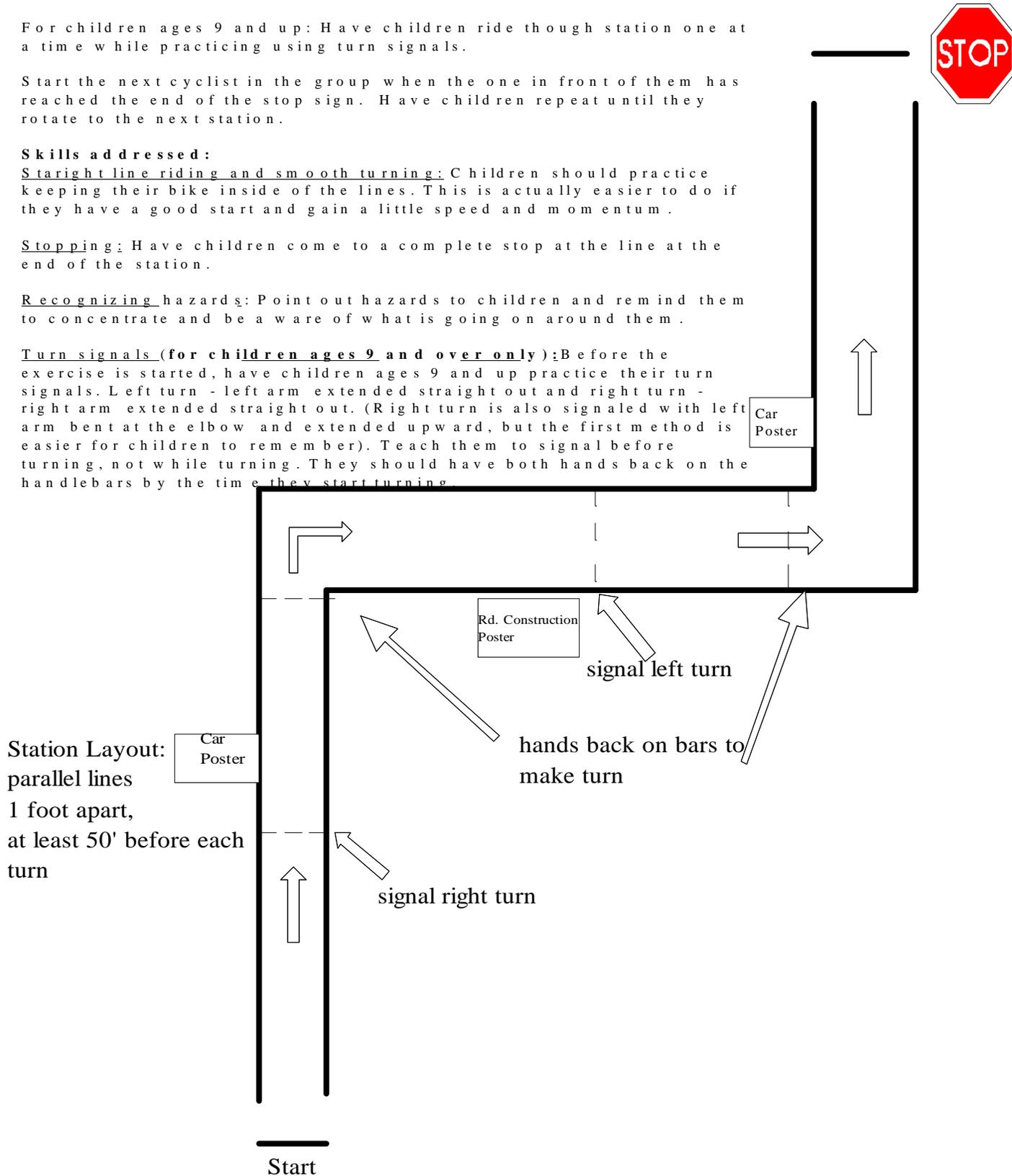
### Skills addressed:

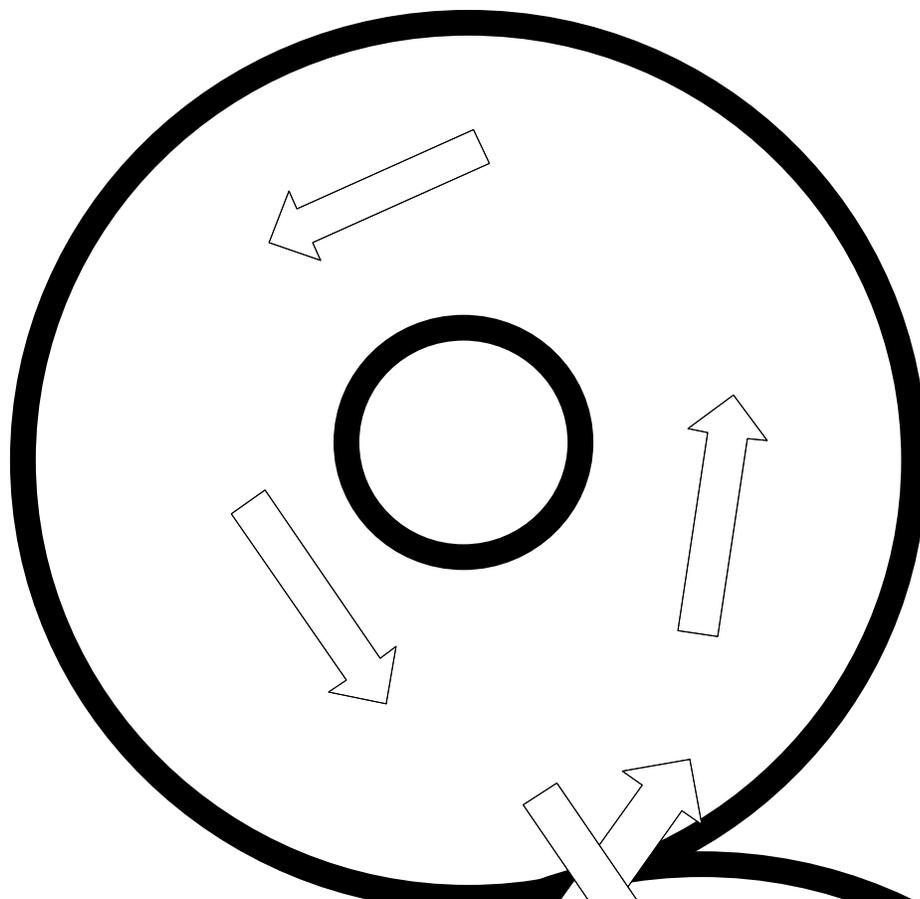
Staright line riding and smooth turning: Children should practice keeping their bike inside of the lines. This is actually easier to do if they have a good start and gain a little speed and momentum.

Stopping: Have children come to a complete stop at the line at the end of the station.

Recognizing hazards: Point out hazards to children and remind them to concentrate and be aware of what is going on around them.

Turn signals (for children ages 9 and over only): Before the exercise is started, have children ages 9 and up practice their turn signals. Left turn - left arm extended straight out and right turn - right arm extended straight out. (Right turn is also signaled with left arm bent at the elbow and extended upward, but the first method is easier for children to remember). Teach them to signal before turning, not while turning. They should have both hands back on the handlebars by the time they start turning.





### Station 6 - Figure 8

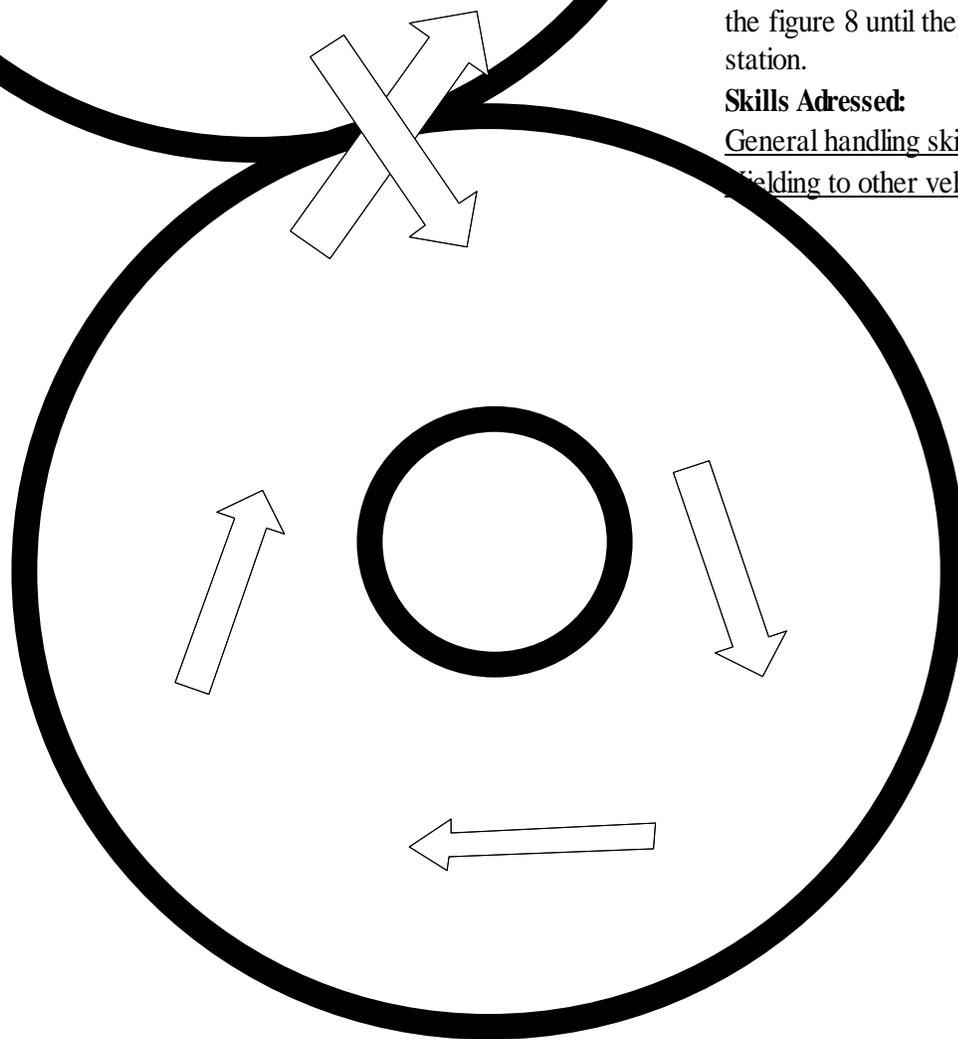
2 volunteers (1 as starter, 1 as evaluator)

One, two or three children at a time ride in figure 8. Children are encouraged to keep their feet on the pedals and to ride without stopping. Before starting, instructor should walk the figure 8 pattern and have children follow them on their bikes. When it appears that they can ride the figure 8, instructor should step out. When crossing intersection, encourage children to interact with others who may cross at the intersection at the same time. Have children repeat the figure 8 until they rotate to the next station.

#### **Skills Adressed:**

General handling skills

Yielding to other vehicles



#### Station Layout:

15' diameter  
with 2' - 3'  
diameter  
inside circle.  
Leave opening  
where 2 circles  
connect.

## Station 7 - Slow Race

2 volunteers

This is a race where the last cyclist across the finish line wins. Line up 3 - 5 children in lanes at starting line. Inform cyclists that the object is to be the last one to cross the finish line. Anyone who weaves out of his or her lane or puts a foot down is disqualified. You'll probably have to remind younger children more than once that the object is to be the last one across the finish line. When all cyclists are ready, shout "ready, set, go." Have children repeat until rotating to the next station.

**Skills Addressed:** Slow speed balance, which helps overall bicycle agility.

