

Life, Work & Family

Monthly work/life news for UAW-Represented DaimlerChrysler Workers

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Brought to you by Circle of Life Committee

1-800-809-4996

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GETTING 'TWEENS TO WEAR BIKE HELMETS

Most parents with 'tweens, kids ages 8-12, understand the importance of having their kids wear bike helmets. At this age, the novelty of wearing a bike helmet has worn off. Maybe their friends have stopped wearing them, saying they're old enough or in control enough to ride without them, or maybe helmets just aren't cool any more.

Here are the hard cold facts on bike helmet safety that you and your kids need to understand before you make the decision to let them ride without helmets.

- Brain injury is the leading killer and disabler of children.
- 51% of kids ages 10-14 that suffered from a serious bike injury were diagnosed with traumatic brain injury.



- This percentage is *higher* than any other age group because kids this age wear helmets less and take *more* chances on their bikes.
- Damage to the brain from an external blow can affect a child's ability to walk, talk and think.
- Wearing a helmet can reduce the risk of brain injury by 88%.

More than 75% of 'tweens surveyed by the National Safe Kids Campaign said that they realized a brain injury could occur as a result of a bike crash and 65% of kids understood that brain injury could last a lifetime. But, less than 50% said they wore bike helmets on every bike ride and less than 33% wore them while

riding scooters, skateboards and inline skates.

So... if kids understand the risks, why are they so reluctant to wear helmets?

- 50% of the kids surveyed said they only ride near home, so they don't feel the need to wear a helmet
- 43% said helmets are uncomfortable



- 29% said they have control when they ride, so they don't need a helmet
- 28% said they don't feel cool wearing a helmet
- 27% said their parents don't make them wear one.

Here's the good news.... 53% of kids admitted they would wear their helmet if their parents made them. Aha! We still have control. Further, 49% said they would wear a helmet if it was a law, and in over 25 states it is!

As parents there are so many things we can't protect our kids from, but we can protect them from head injuries as a result of bike accidents. Dr. Martin Eichelberger, director of trauma and burn services at Children's National Medical Center says "Most parents and kids don't understand just how fragile the brain is, and that a fall from as little as two feet and at surprisingly low speeds can be so serious. No parent or child should have to learn such a painful lesson." If the majority of parents require their kids to wear helmets, it will be cool again, and the only issue will be choosing the coolest helmet around!

*Statistics taken from a major study and survey conducted by the National SAFE KIDS Campaign, and data from the National Pediatric Trauma Registry.

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BALANCE AND STRETCHING EXERCISES FOR OLDER ADULTS

Balance and flexibility are two areas that often cause problems among inactive older adults but that are important for staying healthy and independent. For the most part, when older people lose their ability to do things on their own, it's not just because they've aged but because they've become inactive.

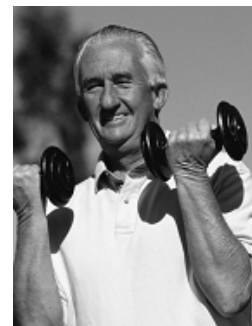


Fortunately, research suggests that you can maintain or at least partly restore your balance and flexibility through exercise. Before you begin, keep these tips in mind:

- Build up to all exercises and activities gradually, especially if you have been inactive for a long time.
- If you have to stop exercising for more than a few weeks, start out at half the effort when you resume, then build back up to where you were.
- When bending forward, always keep back and shoulders straight to ensure that you are bending from the hips, not the waist.
- If you have had a hip replacement, check with your surgeon before doing lower-body exercises.

Balance Exercises

- To improve your balance, add balance modifications to your regular lower-body strength exercises. As you progress with your exercises, hold on to the table or chair with just one hand, then one finger, then no hands. If you are steady on your feet, progress to using no hands with eyes closed. Ask someone to watch you the first few times in case you lose your balance.
- Another way to improve your balance is through "anytime, anywhere" balance exercises. One example: Balance on one foot, then the other, while waiting for the bus. Do as often as desired.



Stretching Exercises

- Stretching exercises can help keep you limber.
- Stretching exercises alone will not improve endurance or strength.
- Do stretching exercises after endurance and strength exercises, when your

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muscles are warm.

- If stretching is the only kind of exercise you are able to do, do it at least three times a week and up to every day. Always warm up your muscles first.
- A total session should last 15 to 30 minutes.
- Do each exercise three to five times at each session.
- Hold the stretched position for 10 to 30 seconds.
- Move slowly into position; never jerk into position.
- Stretching may cause mild discomfort but should not cause pain.

*Adapted from: Exercise - A Guide From the National Institute on Aging and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.
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WHAT'S NEW

For the eighth consecutive year, DaimlerChrysler has been listed by Working Mother magazine as one of America's "100 Best Companies for Working Mothers"- in large part because of support programs established by DaimlerChrysler with the UAW. The annual honor roll recognizes companies that have work/family initiatives, child care assistance programs and efforts to advance women in the workplace. On October 7, 2004, the Circle of Life Committee will attend the Worklife Congress Gala Awards Dinner in New York City to be a part of this momentous celebration. Congratulations to all of them for their hard work and contributions to this outstanding achievement!