

## Winter Sports Helmets

As seasons change and colder weather hits the Midwest, it's time to protect children who participate in winter sports and activities. Four of the most popular winter sports and activities are skiing, snowboarding, sledding and ice skating. Although these provide great opportunities for children to stay active during the winter months, each comes with certain risks and dangers that all parents should be aware of.

According to the [Safe Kids Worldwide](#), "Each year 2.4 million Americans sustain brain injuries, including 475,000 children."<sup>1</sup> One of the best ways to prevent injury while participating in winter sports is to have a properly fitted helmet. "Approximately 2 out of 5 traumatic brain injuries among children occur while participating in sports and recreational activities, explains Deb Carpenter, childhood injury prevention coordinator at Bronson Children's Hospital. "Children should always wear a helmet during winter sports to protect themselves and reduce the risk of impact to their brain if a fall or injury were to occur."

### How to choose and properly fit a helmet

It is important to choose a helmet that fits properly and is comfortable for the child. Helmets should not be too loose or too snug. They should:

- Allow your child to see and hear clearly.
- Have pads that fit flush against your child's cheeks and forehead.
- Have an adjustable chin strap.
- Not roll forwards or backwards on your child's head.
- Not shift when your child shakes their head from side to side.
- Be replaced if your child has outgrown the helmet or been in an accident.



Each type of activity requires a different type of helmet and some activities have specific types of helmets. A helmet cannot protect your child from all types of impacts and injuries, so it's important to talk to with your child about safety rules for winter sports:

- Make sure someone is available to help if you get hurt.
- Stay in control and follow the rules of the slopes.
- Don't stop in the middle of a ski run.
- Stay in bounds and away from trees.

[Bronson Children's Hospital](#) and [Safe Kids Kalamazoo](#) hold helmet fittings/safety events throughout the year. The next winter sports helmet blitz will take place on Saturday, January 13, 2018 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Helmets are available at a reduced cost of \$25. For more information on child safety events, [click here](#).

*This article is brought to you by Bronson Children's Hospital, southwest Michigan's only children's hospital. For more information about children's health, visit [bronsonhealth.com/services/children](http://bronsonhealth.com/services/children).*

<sup>1</sup>Think About It: Safe Kids Worldwide Blog: <https://www.safekids.org/blog/think-about-it>