

ALL ABOARD! CYCLING WITH KIDS (ON THEIR BIKES)



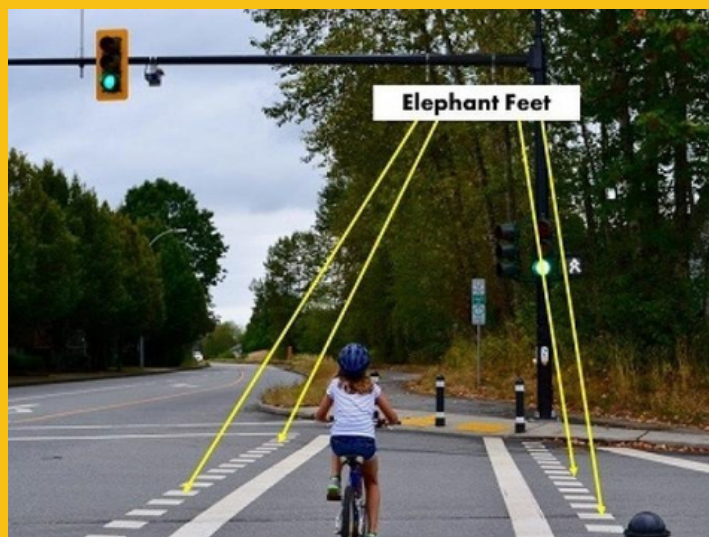
Children and youth **gain personal independence and mobility** when they learn that they can get somewhere on their own power. When kids learn that bikes are a transportation option at an early age, they might consider using bikes as they get older. This **builds support for cycling as transportation in the general population**, amplifying the benefits of cycling (health, economic, environmental) for our communities.

Going for a group ride?

- **Good routes for kids** usually means:
 - low volume traffic (or no traffic),
 - low speed traffic
 - separated lanes & multi-use paths
 - good crossing / intersection infrastructure
 - fun way points and destinations
- **Pre-plan your route** using [bike maps](#), using Google street view to check out local conditions and environments before you go
- Check for **local paths and cut throughs** to link streets and routes together
- **Ask other families who bike** - Victoria has a great Family Cycling Facebook group, listed in the resources below
- **Focus on fun.** Speed is not usually the goal or desirable when riding with kids.
- **Have a back up plan** and be prepared to shorten your trip (be flexible).
- **Take snacks and a drink, always.** Almost everything can be fixed with a snack, drink, and a rest.

Discuss ahead of time **what you will do at intersections or at crossings.**

- Practice red light/green light type **games in a park, quiet street or parking lot**
- Some crossings have **“Elephants’ Feet”** (squares lining a crossing). This means you can stay on your bike and ride across the road when it is safe to do so.
- Remind kids if they are ever feeling uncomfortable or unsafe on a bike, they have their **“cyclist superpower” to turn into a pedestrian!** This can make it easier to cross busy roads or use the sidewalk.



Riding side by side on a road is illegal in BC; **we are required to ride in single file** which can make it harder to ride with children who are learning to ride on roads. Here are some ideas:

- **Use a mirror** so you can see your children following you.
- **An adult should lead as they are making decisions** at intersections and about the route.
- **Talk about bike spacing** - not too much space; not too little space
- **Talk about communication** with hand signals and with voices

Discuss what to do on multi-use trails

- **Passing others** (leave space, slow down, pass in the other lane when there are no oncoming people, signal, shoulder check, use bell or voice to warn the person you are passing)
- **Don't stop unexpectedly** (use your hand signal and voice, pull over to the side of the trail to stop).
- **These trails are busiest on weekends.** New riders may want to practice riding during weekdays before other trail-users zoom by.

Resources to check out

- FB family cycling group - [Family Cycling Victoria](#) (ask to join)
- [HUB Cycling offers free web-based courses on bike safety. Learn2Ride for 9-12 year olds and Streetwise Cycling for Adults](#)
- Cycling Toronto's [Family Cycling Handbook](#), p.9-15

Some Great Routes in the CRD:

- **Cecelia Ravine Bike Park**; features a pump track (a continuous loop that can be ridden on a bike without pedalling), a skills practice area, and three separate skill level trails with a variety of technical terrain. It's also accessible from the Galloping Goose Trail, so you can easily get there from downtown!
- **Lochside Trail**; try going from Mattick's Farm up to see the Pigs at Stanhope farm!
- **Portage park to View Royal Park**; via the E&N trail. Beaches and playgrounds at Portage, and a bike park at View Royal! A full day of fun, all powered by bike!



Special thank you to Cindy Marven for her contributions to this info-sheet!