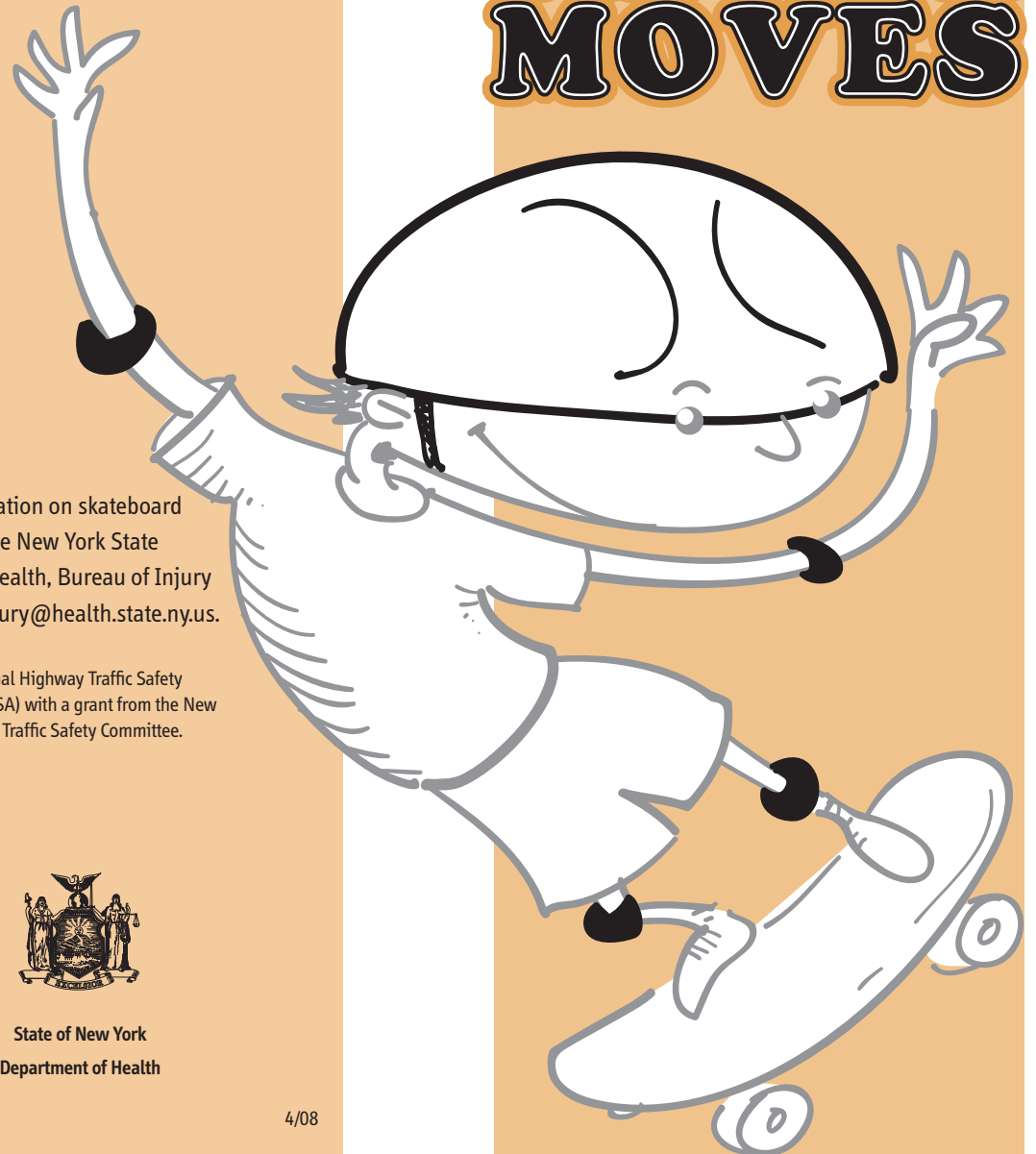


Smooth MOVES



For more information on skateboard safety, contact the New York State Department of Health, Bureau of Injury Prevention at injury@health.state.ny.us.

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State of New York
Department of Health

About 26,000 people are treated for skateboard-related injuries in hospital emergency departments each year, according to the United States Consumer Product Safety Commission. Most of them are children.

In New York State, about 150 people are hospitalized due to skateboard-related injuries each year. Nearly three-quarters of those hospitalized are children and teens 5- to 19-years-old. More than half are under the age of 10. More than 80 percent of those hospitalized for skateboard-related injuries are males.

Falls cause most of these injuries, which usually occur to the wrists, arms and hands. They include fractures, dislocations, contusions and abrasions. However, many skateboarders suffer traumatic brain injuries, the most serious type of head injury, which can result in lifelong disability.

Skateboarders can also be injured when they are attempting risky stunts and riding on irregular surfaces, such as stairs, railings and ramps. Some falls and collisions with automobiles have also resulted in deaths.

Many young riders do not have the necessary skills of good balance and body control and do not react quickly enough to avoid injury. However, there are many things that can be done to prevent injuries from skateboarding.

Here are some great tips for safe riding! Make sure your children know them too.

Children Should Ride on a Skateboard That's Right for Them:

- Make sure the skateboard fits the type of riding your child intends to perform. Some skateboards are intended for slalom, freestyle or speed.
- Make sure the skateboard is appropriate for their size and weight.
- Make sure the skateboard is properly maintained. Check for and fix loose or broken parts, sharp edges, wheel damage or a slippery surface.

Ride in a Safe Place:

- Skateboarders should never ride in the street. Use bicycle paths or skate parks separated from motor vehicle traffic.
- Skateboard on smooth, paved surfaces. Avoid skating on streets, driveways or other surfaces with water, sand, gravel or dirt. Check for holes, rocks, bumps and other obstacles or debris.

Ride at a Safe Time:

- Avoid skateboarding at dusk or at night.
- If riding at dawn or dusk, wear reflective clothing, not just light or bright-colored clothing.

Ride in a Safe Manner:

- Always wear safety gear including a helmet, wrist guards and elbow and knee pads.
- New York State Law requires that all children under the age of 14 wear an approved helmet while skateboarding. The maximum penalty for an offense is a \$50 fine. The fine will be waived if a helmet has been obtained.
- Multi-sport helmets, which offer more protection to the back of the head, can be used for a variety of sports, including skateboarding.
- The helmet should fit properly, have a chin strap, be comfortable, and not obstruct vision.
- Never use helmets designed for other uses, such as motorcycling or snowmobiling. These helmets may cause the user to be off balance or may disrupt their vision, causing a fall.
- Padded jackets and shorts, padding for hips, knees and elbows and wrist braces and special gloves are available and can reduce the impact of a fall.
- Be sure that padding is not too tight where it may restrict movement or too loose where it may move out of position.
- Learn to stop safely.
- Learn to fall safely from your skateboard and reduce your chance of being hurt by:
 - crouching down so you fall from a shorter distance
 - trying to land on the fleshy part of your body such as your thighs or buttocks
 - rolling to absorb the force with your arms
 - relaxing your body when falling. Don't stiffen up.
- Ride one person per skateboard.
- Never hold on to a car, truck or bicycle.