Department of Education

GOVERNMENT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

SmartSteps

A ROAD SAFETY PROGRAM FOR EDUCATORS WORKING WITH CHILDREN IN THE EARLY YEARS

SAFETY ON WHEELS

Smart Steps: Making safer choices – Taking smarter steps

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SMART STEPS: MAKING SAFER CHOICES – TAKING SMARTER STEPS

WHY TEACH RIDER SAFETY?

Wheeled devices such as bikes, trikes and scooters offer young children an enjoyable way to stay active. However, these small wheeled devices are also among the leading causes of road-related injuries in children. Alarmingly, fewer than 5% of children injured while using these devices were reported to be wearing any form of safety equipment at the time of the incident (Waddell, McKenna, & Skarin, 2017).

To safely navigate roads, young riders need the same cognitive abilities required for pedestrian safety; skills that are still developing in children. Several additional factors contribute to their vulnerability, including:

- The fragility of their unprotected bodies
- Limited riding experience, which increases the likelihood of crashes
- Reduced ability to react to sudden or unexpected events, such as a vehicle pulling out unexpectedly, a car travelling faster than anticipated, or losing balance while riding (Hobday & Meuleners, 2018).

Additionally, children without easy access to designated play areas are more likely to play in driveways or on streets, increasing their exposure to traffic hazards. These areas with mixed uses, lead to increased risk of injury (Schwebel, Davis, & O'Neal, 2012).

ABOUT THE RESOURCE

Smart Steps explores:

- Child car restraints and general passenger safety
- Safe pedestrian practices
- Safe places to play
- Safety on wheels
- Strategies to embed road safety education into the curriculum.

Smart Steps aims to:

- Enhance educators' understanding of the developmental capabilities of young children in the traffic environment.
- Focus on the key messages to teach children so that they can remain safe in the traffic environment.
- Provide a range of teaching and learning strategies educators can use with children to build their road safety knowledge and skills.

The resource includes activities that are suitable for children in the early years. They can be used in a variety of environments including:

- Within a classroom environment
- In an Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) centre with individual children or a small group of children
- As activities for a playgroup
- By parents and carers in the home.

The activities can be adapted for age-appropriateness and to meet varying developmental needs.

Hobday, M., & Meuleners, L. (2018). Child and adolescent pedestrians and cyclists in Western Australia: How safe are they? Curtin-Monash Accident Research Centre.
Schwebel, D. C., Davis, A. L., & O'Neal, E. E. (2012). Child pedestrian injury: A review of behavioral risks and preventive strategies. University of Alabama at Birmingham, Department of Psychology.
Waddell, G., McKenna, J., & Skarin, D. (2017, June). Kidsafe WA childhood injury bulletin research report: Road injuries. Perth, WA: Kidsafe WA.

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KEY MESSAGES AND LEARNING INTENTIONS

Always ride with an adult present.

Choose safe places to ride such as shared paths and parks.

Ride on the footpath well away from traffic. Check driveways for vehicles coming or going.

Always wear a helmet when using any wheeled device.

Protect yourself and choose enclosed shoes, long sleeves, long pants, and knee and elbow pads.

Use your bell to warn other path users that you are near them.

Choose a safe place to cross the road. Remember to Stop, Look, Listen, Think.

Riders include those on bicycles, scooters, skateboards, rollerblades, rip sticks, hover boards and other wheeled devices.

LEARNING INTENTIONS

We are learning to:

- demonstrate and explain why wearing a bike helmet is the safest option when on wheeled devices
- choose appropriate clothing and footwear when riding wheeled devices
- identify safe places to ride wheeled devices and explain why these places are safe.

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PLAY SAFETY

Activity	Resources
MUSIC AND MOVEMENT **Safety songs** ▪ Listen to *A safe place to play*. ▪ Start the song again and encourage children to mime different ways to play in safer areas while listening to the song e.g. shake their head when the lyrics say 'No!', 'A–ah!' and 'No way!' and do the actions wiggle, shake, crouch down low and jump so high. ▪ Sing the *Kids in the park* song with children. ▪ Remind children that playing in parks away from roads and traffic is a safe thing to do. ***Kids in the park*** (To the tune of *The wheels on the bus*) *The kids in the park play hide and seek,* *Hide and seek, hide and seek,* *The kids in the park play hide and seek,* *But never near the road.* *The kids in the park throw their balls,* *Throw their balls, throw their balls,* *The kids in the park throw their balls,* *But never near the road.* *The kids in the park ride round and round,* *Round and round, round and round,* *The kids in the park ride round and round,* *But never near the road.*	Safety on wheels song: ▪ A safe place to play (p.g. 12)

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PLAY SAFETY

Activity	Resources
INDOOR PLAY	
Game ▪ Use coloured blocks or cones to mark out a 'safer' area. ▪ Ask children to sit in a circle and roll several balls to each other within this area. As soon as a ball goes out of the 'safer' area the children must ask an adult to retrieve it and bring it back so the game can recommence. Children must remain seated during the game. ▪ Make the boundary smaller and smaller as the game progresses. **Questions to ask** *In the game, why did the adults collect the ball?* *At home who could collect the ball if it ran onto the road?*	▪ Coloured blocks or cones ▪ Several soft balls
OUTDOOR PLAY	
Sandpit ▪ Include plastic fences, animals, houses, cars and trucks in the sandpit. ▪ Encourage children to make a town or city. ▪ Talk about 'visible' (fences, barriers) and 'invisible' boundaries (edge of road, edge of driveway). **Questions to ask** *How can you keep safe when playing or riding your bike or scooter outside?* *What visible/invisible barriers help you to play/ride safely outside?*	▪ Sand pit toys such as houses, cars, trucks, animals and fences

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PLAY SAFETY

Activity	Resources
LANGUAGE AND LITERACY	
Safe boundaries ▪ Talk to the children about places they have been or seen where people and danger are separated (e.g. animals at the zoo, swimming pools, boom gates at railway crossings, electricity towers). ▪ Point out that it is not possible to put a fence around all traffic. ▪ Explain to children that they should play well away from traffic including their own front yards unless it is fenced. ▪ Discuss safe places to ride or play outside. ▪ Give each child a copy of Activity sheet 1: Play safe Izzy ▪ Children can colour in the activity sheet. **Questions to ask** *Tell me some places where you can play safely.* *Is it always safe to play in your front yard? (Not near the driveway when cars are coming in or out.)* *What could you do to get your ball back if it rolled onto the road? (Don't go and get it, ask an adult to help; leave it there.)*	▪ Activity sheet 1: Play safe Izzy (p.g.13) ▪ Drawing materials (e.g. textas, crayons and pencils)
Izzy in the Park ▪ Read the storybook, Izzy in the Park. ▪ Use the questions in the back of the book to discuss key road safety messages.	▪ Izzy in the Park Hard copy – order through rsde.rfa@education.wa.edu.au
Picture talk ▪ Use Discussion photo: *Safe places to ride* to talk to children about what makes a location safe to play in. **Questions to ask** *Why is it dangerous to ride on the road?* *Where else can your ride your bicycle or scooter?*	▪ Discussion photo: Safe places to ride

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SAFETY ON WHEELS

Activity	Resources
MUSIC AND MOVEMENT	
Polly put your helmet on ▪ Sit children (and parents) in a circle with a bicycle helmet in the middle. ▪ Sing the *Polly put your helmet on* song substituting the children's name in each verse. ▪ While others are singing, the child whose name is called takes the helmet and skips around the outside of the circle with the helmet under their arm. ▪ When the child returns to their place in the circle they should put the helmet back in the middle. ▪ Younger children can do it with their parent by being held in their arms. *Polly put your helmet on* *(To the tune of Polly put the kettle on)* *Polly put your helmet on* *Polly put your helmet on* *Polly put your helmet on* *So you can have a ride.*	▪ Bicycle helmet
My helmet ▪ Encourage children to mime putting on a helmet while singing *My helmet*. *My helmet* *(To the tune of Pop goes the weasel)* *Round and round the path I go* *Riding my bike* *I put my helmet on my head* *Nice and tight!*	

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SAFETY ON WHEELS

Activity	Resources
OUTDOOR PLAY	
Bicycle path ▪ Set up a designated trike/wheeled toy path at the service with a stop sign and pedestrian crossing signs. Use chalk to draw ticks or smiley faces on the left hand side of the path. ▪ Explain to children that the adult on the path is the 'Helmet Inspector'. As each child rides past this adult, they must have their helmets checked for correct fit. ▪ Take children for a walk around the path. Explain that this is where the children should ride. ▪ Point out the road signs on the path and explain what each sign means. ▪ Encourage children to ride around the path obeying the signs, staying to the left and ringing their bell when near another cyclist or pedestrian.	▪ Trike/wheeled toys and bicycle helmets ▪ Safe riding area ▪ Chalk ▪ Traffic sign pack – order through rsde.rfa@education.wa.edu.au OR ▪ Print relevant road safety signs
LANGUAGE AND LITERACY	
Picture talk ▪ Use Discussion photo: *Helmets and other safety equipment* to talk to children about wearing a correctly fitted helmet and closed shoes when riding a wheeled device. **Questions to ask** *Why is it dangerous to ride on the road?* *Where else can you ride your bicycle or scooter?* *What should you do when other people are walking or riding on the path that you are on?* (Ride in single file, keep to the left, ring the bell, do what an adult tells you to do.)	▪ Discussion photo: Helmets and other safety equipment

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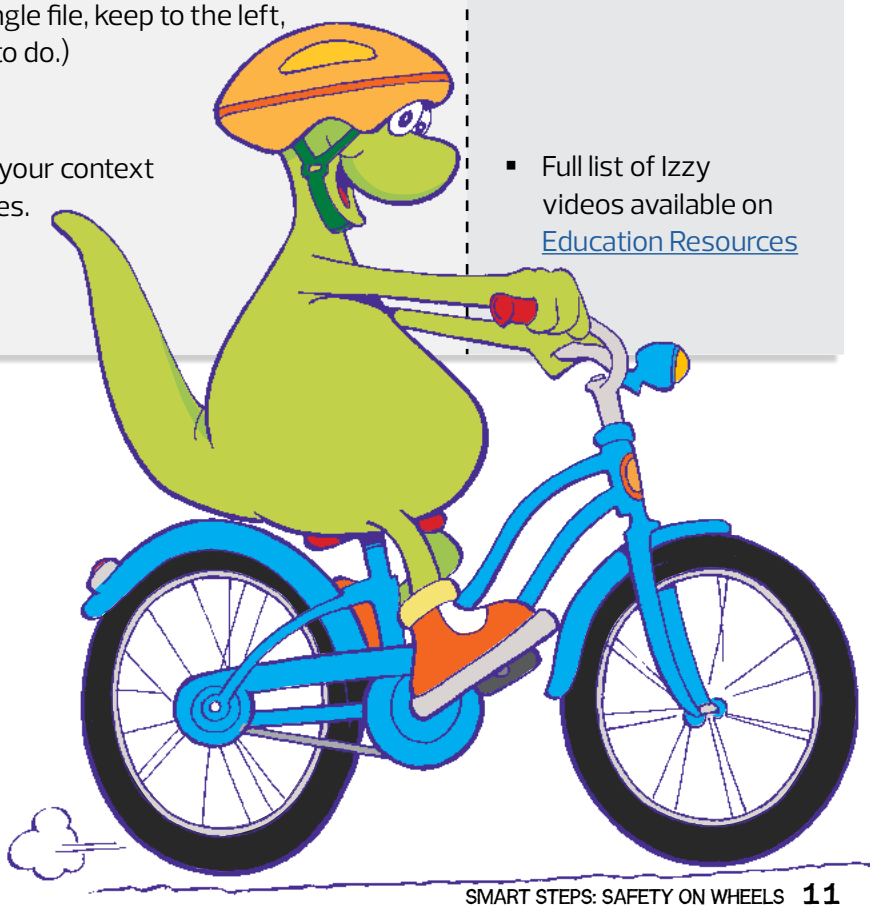
SAFETY ON WHEELS

Activity	Resources
Helmets ▪ Give each child a copy of *Activity Sheet 2: Helmets*. ▪ Talk about the picture. Ask children which of the three items at the bottom of the sheet will keep Izzy safe while riding the bicycle. ▪ Help children cut out the helmet and stick it onto Izzy's head. ▪ Create a story or poster about wearing a helmet when riding a bike or another wheeled device. Children may like to use the Izzy image in *Activity sheet 2* for their story or poster.	▪ Activity sheet 2: Helmets (p.g. 14)
▪ Optional activity: Give each child a copy of *Activity sheet 3: Helmets hug your head* for children to take home and colour. ▪ Encourage children to talk with their family about why it is important for helmets to fit properly.	▪ Activity sheet 3: Helmets hug your head (p.g.15)
Questions to ask *Why is it dangerous to ride on the road?* *Where else can your ride your bicycle or scooter?* *What should you do when other people are walking or riding on the path that you are on?* (Ride in single file, keep to the left, ring the bell, do what an adult tells you to do.)	
Izzy videos (all ages) ▪ Watch the Izzy videos that relate to your context and discuss key bike safety messages. ▪ Izzy's tips for riding your bike safely ▪ Let's learn bike safety with Izzy	▪ Full list of Izzy videos available on Education Resources



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A safe place to play

Words and music by
MELISSA PERRIN

With energy (swung quavers) ♩ = 152

D
Do you play on the street? (No!) Do you play on the foot - path? (A-ah!)

G E A
Do you play on the drive-way? (No way!) So where, tell me where is a safe place to play?

E A D G
We play in the back - yard and some-times we go to the park.

Em A D/A
We have lots of fun 'cause we've found a place, a

Adim A7 𝄋 G7 D7
safe place to play! Let's wig-gle, whoa, ___ and let's shake!

E7 Em7
Let's crouch down low, then jump so high that we

A7 1. 2. D.S. 3. D
touch the sky! ___ Wee! Wee! Let's Wee!

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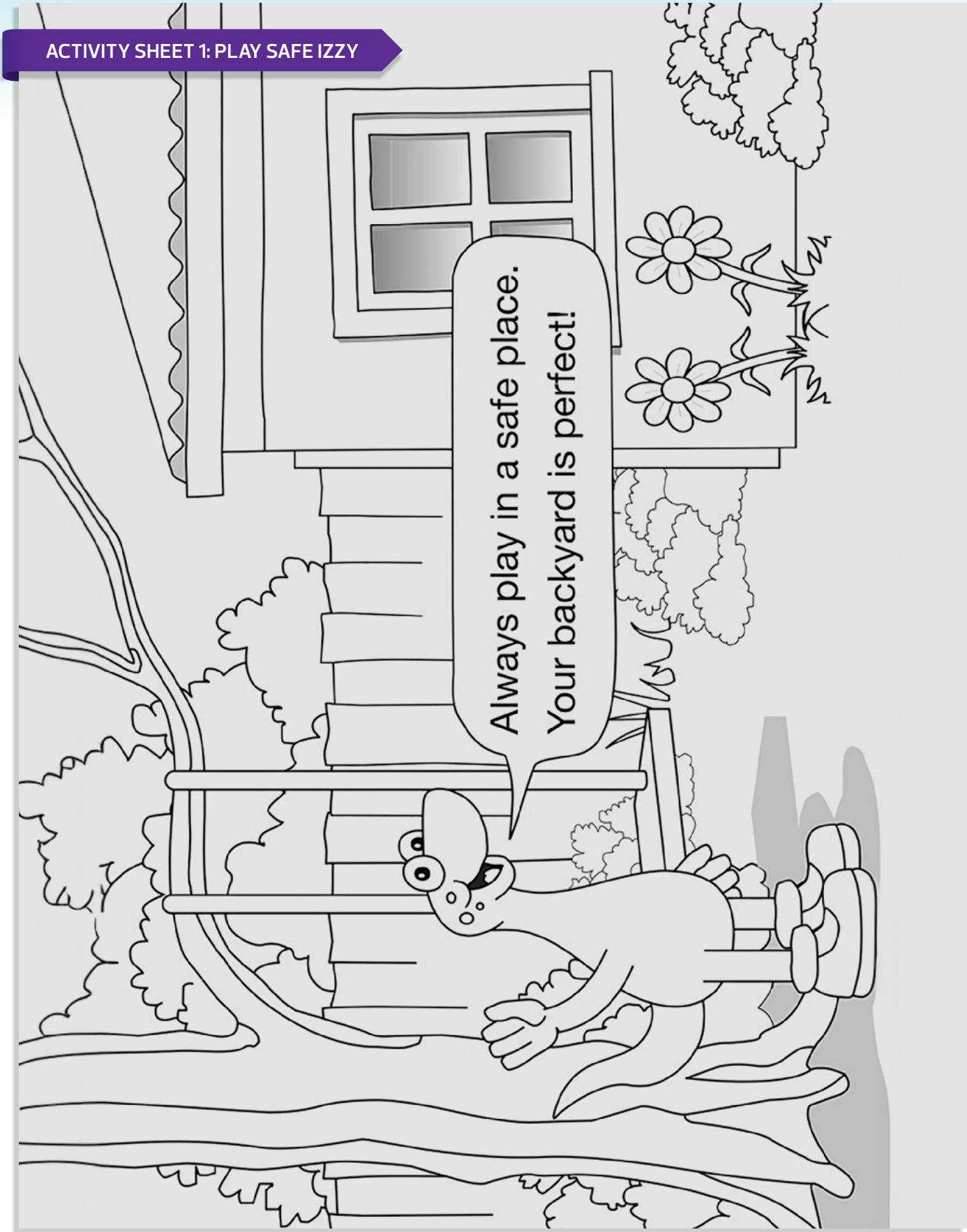
ACTIVITY SHEET 1: PLAY SAFE IZZY



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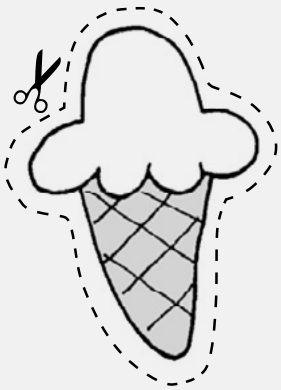
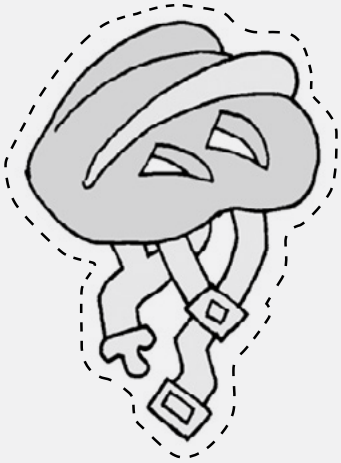
ACTIVITY SHEET 2: HELMETS

Help keep Izzy safe.
What's missing?





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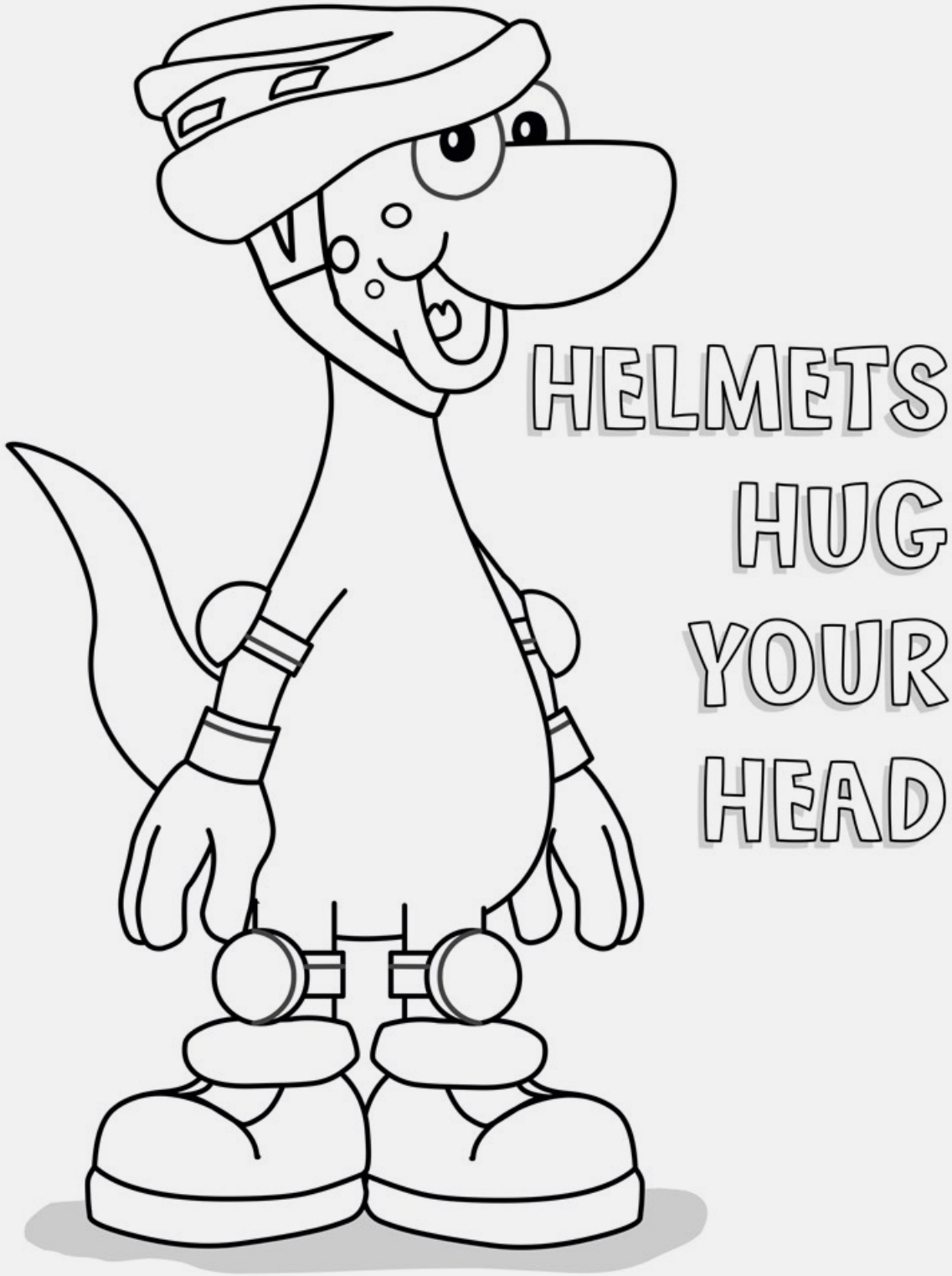
ACTIVITY SHEET 3: HELMETS HUG YOUR HEAD



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