

Kids Love Bikes

Program Philosophy and Curriculum Details



Educational Philosophy

Our bike class is about more than fewer skinned knees. The Kids Love Bikes curriculum strives to provide a course that enables learners of every type and enhances youth social, emotional and physical development. We teach kids the principles they need to know to bike confidently and safely and to understand the responsibilities, risks and joys of being a bicyclist.

Our Curriculum

What we teach

Using inspiration and notes from programs and curricula utilized across the country and from the many decades of personal experiences of Bike Walk Knoxville staff, we have developed curriculum tailored for different youth age groups, from kindergarten to young adult. Our instructors are certified by the League of American Bicyclists.

We focus on bike handling, maintenance and safety, but what does that really mean?

Handling, because 80% of bike accidents involve only a bicycle. If the child is in control of their bike, they have the power to stay out of harm's way and signal to drivers that they are confident and competent cyclists.

Maintenance, because bicycles should last longer than the air in their tires. A huge barrier to consistent cycling is fear of becoming stranded due to a mechanical issue or that once a mechanical issue arises, the bike becomes no more than garage clutter or a lawn decoration. We teach kids how to maintain their bicycles and know how to identify serious problems.

Safety, because you can't follow rules you don't know. For most people, the only bike safety education they receive is informal (if at all) from parents or peers. Road sign and rules literacy is a fundamental aspect of making safe decisions and forming good habits while riding a bike.

How we teach it

Through our course, not only are participants learning bike skills and safety; they are developing healthy habits, coordination skills, and awareness of the benefits of active mobility. Students also learn to operate bikes respectfully in space with other users - people walking and biking, fast and slow. For their safety, students must understand the rules and responsibilities of riding on the road with cars (which must be approved by parents/guardians). Increased independent thinking and positive social behavior are additional expected outcomes from the program. The Kids Love Bikes program uses a combination of classroom, as well as off bike and on bike techniques to engage all learning styles.

Learning techniques

- **Written** (handouts):
 - Survey baseline and post-course knowledge
 - Ready to Ride: helmet, clothing/shoes, bike check
 - Parts of the bike and function (as a system)
 - Rules of the road: road signs, where to ride, sharing the road/path
- **Oral** (discuss, review, apply to the real world/life):
 - Student past experience/knowledge
 - Comprehension of written/visual/hands on information
 - How to navigate safely in their neighborhood
 - Where to ride - school, park, friend's house, etc.
- **Practice** (individual coaching, repetition):
 - Ready to ride checklist
 - Bike handling skills
 - Riding on sidewalks, greenways and road rules
 - Group riding

Other benefits

- Obtain pedestrian safety through learning road safety
- Experience riding for fun/adventure
- Discover opportunities for regular physical exercise
- Increase biking and walking as normal activities in communities

Skills Covered through the Kids Love Bikes Program

Safety, maintenance, handling (aka the bike things)

Personal development

- Goal setting and achievement
- Personal responsibility/Self preparation
- Planning, forward thinking
- Teamwork, Getting Along with Others
- Ability to follow rules or directions
- Develop self-confidence

STEM

- Simple mechanics
- Systems thinking
- Body physics
 - Momentum
 - Centrifugal force/center of gravity/leaning

- Laws of energy/transfer of energy inertia

Personal community awareness and safety

- Awareness and ability to deal with natural environment
- Weather preparation/awareness
- Community/landscape engagement
- Navigation skills/ geo-spatial awareness

Physical and health skills

- Hand/eye/body coordination
- Ability to learn new skills
- Understanding the connection between physical activity and health (habits)
- Understand benefits of physical activity
 - Function - transportation, cost effective, space effective (i.e. wasted parking lot space)
 - Adventure - independence/sharing adventures/fun
 - Body/health - good for your body
 - Life-long; can do it through whole life