

# Helmets for Kids

By Amy Bentley



**Dr. Sharief Taraman**  
CHOC Pediatric Neurologist

A recognized leader in neurology, Dr. Taraman is a member of the International Child Neurology Association. Dr. Taraman directs the Concussion Program at CHOC. He completed his pediatrics residency and pediatric neurology residency training at Children's Hospital of Michigan. With expertise in technology as well, Dr. Taraman also serves as a medical informaticist at CHOC, helping to integrate technology into the services, medical care teaching and health care CHOC provides.

Dr. Taraman's philosophy of care: "I try to take care of every patient as if they were my own children. In addition to helping individual patients, I try to use my abilities to help groups of patients through technology and research, to impact medicine as a whole."

#### EDUCATION:

Wayne State University School of Medicine, Detroit, Michigan

#### BOARD CERTIFICATIONS:

Neurology with special qualification in Child Neurology

## 85-90%

PERCENTAGE BY WHICH HELMET USE IS ESTIMATED TO REDUCE THE RISK OF HEAD INJURY

## 515,000

# OF BICYCLISTS WHO SUSTAINED BIKE-RELATED INJURIES THAT REQUIRED EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT CARE IN 2010 IN THE U.S.



### KEEP YOUR CHILD'S HEAD SAFE

"Helmets came about as a result of trying to prevent skull fractures, from football to bike riding," says Dr. Sharief Taraman, CHOC pediatric neurologist. "They also prevent moderate to more serious injuries, like bruising of the brain tissue itself. Helmets cushion the brain to prevent a more serious and possibly permanent brain injury." Most moderate-to-severe head injuries can be prevented by wearing a helmet that absorbs much of the force of the impact that would otherwise be directed to the head, Taraman explains.

### CHILDREN AND BRAIN INJURIES

A traumatic brain injury can range from a mild injury like a concussion to a very severe injury that can kill or lead to long-term disability. The brain's chemicals can be disrupted, brain cells and neurons can be injured, and brain tissue can bleed and swell, Taraman says. "A concussion you will get over,



## 26,000

OF THESE INJURIES TO KIDS AND ADOLESCENTS WERE TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURIES

#### TEACH BY EXAMPLE

- Parents should set an example by wearing a helmet when riding a bike, for example, and explaining to their children why it's important to wear a helmet. "Kids are more likely to wear their helmets if they understand the importance of wearing helmets and see mom and dad wearing theirs too," Lubahn says.
- Your children are more likely to wear a helmet if they like the way it looks and can select the color or decorate it. Helmets come in many colors and varieties, so let your children pick the ones they like as long as the helmet fits properly, is the right kind for the activity and meets federal standards.

but anything more severe to the brain will be permanent. If brain tissue dies, there is no way to bring that back." Young children are particularly vulnerable. "Because they have a developing brain, the recovery from head injuries takes longer the younger the child is," says Dr. Taraman.



## Emergency Care Just for Kids

The Julia and George Argyros Emergency Department at CHOC Children's Hospital is exclusively dedicated to the treatment of pediatric patients. Our 22,000-square-foot, full-service emergency department is designed to meet the unique medical and emotional needs of children from fragile newborns to sturdy teens. Our board-certified emergency medicine physicians and our specially trained nurses provide the very best patient- and family-centered care 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Learn more at [choc.org/emergency](http://choc.org/emergency)

