

The Benefits of Riding

Learning to ride a bike is a common milestone and is a lifelong recreational activity for many people. Bike riding provides a form of physical activity and encourages social interaction with peers, community and family members.

Bike riding has a variety of beneficial health outcomes in the physical, social-emotional and cognitive domains for people with disabilities.

Improved Health and Wellbeing

- Improved overall health
- Healthy weight maintenance [1]
- Encourages participation in physical activities
- Increased balance and agility [1, 2]
- Improves lower limb strength [1]

Improved Learning

- Develops decision-making skills [5]
- Improves road safety and danger awareness
- Increases reaction time enhancing the ability to ride safely [4]



Increase Social and Community Participation/ Improved Relationships

- Reduced reliance on others, encouraging independence [3]
- Improved confidence, self-esteem and motivation to try other physical activities [3]
- Help regulate emotions [3]
- Can be used as a coping strategy or outlet to increase concentration and focus [3]
- Increased opportunities for socialisation with family, peers and community members [3]
- Promotes inclusion and builds positive relationships [3]
- Opportunity for developing and practicing social skills [3]
- Enhanced communication skills [3]

References

- 1. Armstrong, E., Spencer, S., Kentish, M., Horan, S., Carty, C., & Boyd, R. (2019). Efficacy of cycling interventions to improve function in children and adolescents with cerebral palsy: A systematic review and meta-analysis. Clinical Rehabilitation, 33(7) 1113–1129. doi: 10.1177/0269215519837582
- Fowler, E., Knutson, L., DeMuth, S., Siebert, K., Simms, V., Sugi, M., Souzza, R., Karim, R., & Azen, S. (2010). Pediatric endurance and limb strengthening (PEDALS) for children with Cerebral Palsy using stationary cycling: A randomized controlled trial. *Physical Therapy*, 90(3), 367-381. doi: 10.2522/ptj.20080364
- 3. MacDonald, M., Jaszewski, C., Esposito, P., & Ulrich, D. (2011). The effect of learning to ride a two-wheel bicycle on the social development of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder. *Palaestra*, *25(1)*, *37-42*. Retrieved from CINAHL database
- 4. Vogt, T., Schneider, S., Anneken, V., & Struder, H. (2013). Moderate cycling exercise enhances neurocognitive processing in adolescents with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Research in Developmental Disabilities, 34(9), 2708-2716. doi: 10.1016/j.ridd.2013.05.037
- 5. Holzapfel, S., Ringenbach, S., Mulvey, G., Sandoval-Menendez, A., Cook, M., Ganger, R., & Bennett, K. (2015). Improvements in manual dexterity relate to improvements in cognitive planning after assisted cycling therapy (ACT) in adolescents with down syndrome. *Research in Developmental Disabilities*, 45–46, 261–270. doi: 10.1016/j.ridd.2015.08.003