

February 20, 2019
Stanford Parking and Transportation Bicycle Program
Bike Safety Program & Stanford Joint Efforts



Stanford Athletics

In 2015, free helmets were given to all first-year athletes at their Athletic Orientation Events sponsored by Stanford Athletics. The intent was that athletes modeling bike helmets may encourage other students to wear them. Some of the coaches even mandated that their athletes wear helmets, including Men's Volleyball, Soccer and [Women's Swim Coach Greg Meehan](#) who was the first to create a team policy.

Lesson Learned: Give free helmets to seniors first so they can be the influencers and set the trend.

Free Helmets to the Class of 2020 Freshmen

Russell Siegelman, a Stanford parent who also lectures in the Graduate School of Business [provided helmets for free](#) to all freshmen students in the fall of 2016 to determine if the free helmets could change the use of bike helmets in the undergraduate populations. Over 1800 helmets were distributed at New Student Orientation. Helmet use was monitored in 2016/2017 by Stanford Public Safety collaborating with the Bill Lane Center for the American West on the research study. Unfortunately, the study concluded helmet use dropped over time. Yet, despite the disappointing outcome, our efforts continue to promote all aspects of bike safety, including wearing bike helmets, following the rules of the road and bike laws and being courteous and respectful bicycles as we all share the same roads and pathways.

Lessons Learned: Give free helmets to seniors first so they can be the influencers. Have the students design the graphics so they are more invested in wearing them. Get permission for helmets to be sold aftermarket, note this is a challenge due to resale of merchandise with the Stanford logo and trademark registration and non-profit status of Stanford.

Love your Brain Symposium

Last year, we partnered with the student group [Stanford Synapse](#) on promoting the use of bike helmets. In February 2018, Synapse [hosted](#) its first ever brain injury awareness symposium, "I Love My Brain," for students and members of the public. The event revolved around the dual themes of bike safety and neuroscience research, and was co-sponsored by Parking & Transportation Services. President Marc Tessier-Lavigne, was one of the speakers at the symposium, used the opportunity to address groundbreaking discoveries in neuroscience that could minimize brain damage and even accelerate recovery after the fact. This year's event is scheduled for Friday, March 1st, 3:30 pm to 6:00 pm to be held at the Shriram Center for Bioengineering and Chemical Engineering, Room 104.

Lessons Learned: Share the powerful helmet testimonies more broadly. Expand event promotion to get more students to attend.

California Law and Bike Helmets

One of the biggest issues and challenge we face is the lack of a legal requirement for an 18 year old and above to wear a helmet or a campus policy that requires bike helmet use. Currently, in California the state law is bike helmets are required for those under 18 years of age. California Vehicle Code, [CVC 21212](#). Stanford Public Safety does enforcement on bike lights and stopping at stop signs (required by law). But there's no equivalent for helmets.

Challenge: How would Public Safety enforce the law for all riders on the campus as well as riders riding through the campus en route to another destination.

Graduate School of Business and d.school

Graduate School of Business Professors Bob Sutton and Huggy Rao and Debra Dunn from the d.school invited P&TS to join their class on Scaling up Excellence. The class project was Scaling up Helmet Use on campus and teams tackled the challenge of finding and testing [Cool Solutions to Hot Causes](#), as described in Bob's and Huggy's book. [Forbes Magazine](#) details the "smashed watermelon test".

Lessons Learned: You can easily change behavior on a short-term basis but we need solutions for long-term behavior change. Powerful helmet testimonies were shared by students in the class who crashed but there is a stigma being a "bike crash victim" and testimonies were requested to remain confidential. Visual elements such as dropping a watermelon to show the fragile shell of the brain are impactful, in a good way.

Stanford Law School

Paul Brest, Former Dean and Professor Emeritus (active) at the *Stanford* Law School to join his class, "Problem Solving and Decision Making for Public Policy and Social Change." Over the past two years, his students have come up with brilliant and innovative strategies to improve bicycle safety on the campus, ranging from improved signage on campus and circulation for the built environment, to an online bike safety course for all bicyclists on campus, bike share, and creative ideas to spark increased helmet use.

Lessons Learned: Bike helmet use is just one component of a comprehensive bike safety plan. Helmet promotions combined with other programs, e.g., responsible riding, built environment may have better long term results.

Vaden Health Center

Catherine Crawford-Swent, Vaden Health Center, Continuity of Care Nurse has been offering free bike helmets to students who have crashed when visiting Vaden for treatment for the past two years. P&TS is providing the helmets in partnership with the Campus Bike Shop.

Lessons Learned: The timing is effective in seizing the moment of the bike crash impact and consequences as a teachable moment.

Campus Bike Shop at Stanford University

Offers bike helmets for the Stanford community at a 40% discount. Over 3,000 helmets sold in the past 5 years to date. Joins our New Student Orientation Event to support on site helmet sales.

Lessons Learned: convenience for students is a high priority and we seize the opportunity at NSO on an annual basis.

Stanford Health Care, Community Outreach and Injury Prevention and Stanford Trauma

We have an active partnership in promoting helmet use, especially during NSO and our annual bike skills training. David Spain, chief of trauma and critical care surgery at Stanford University Medical Center provided a powerful testimony on wearing a bike helmet sharing how to reduce your risk of head injury by 85 percent

Lessons Learned: Both New Student Orientation and the Approaching Stanford web portal is the ideal venue and time to introduce bike safety and the importance of bike helmet use.

Stanford School of Medicine

For the past 7 years, we have joined the new orientation program for first year medical school students to promote helmet use. Helmets are provided for free for students who pledge helmet use and are surveyed annually by their administration.

Lessons Learned: Data indicates on average 85% helmet use for this population.