



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James Tedisco

Sen. Tedisco, Sheriff Zurlo, County Clerk Hayner, Supervisor Ostrander & Mayor Rossi Kick-off 25th Annual Safe Summer Program for Kids to Wear Bike Helmets

JAMES TEDISCO July 11, 2023

| ISSUE: **HELMET GIVEAWAY, BICYCLE SAFETY, SARATOGA COUNTY, CITY OF SCHENECTADY, CLIFTON PARK**



Senator Tedisco leading Town of Milton summer campers on a bike ride

State Senator scoops free ice cream to launch Safe Summer Bike Helmet Program at Milton Summer Camp in Ballston Spa with Harding & Mazzotti, Stewart's Shops, Hayner's Ice Cream & Country Store, Ben & Jerry's, and Friendly's to incentivize kids to wear bike helmets for safety

Ballston Spa -- Exercise safely this summer and get free ice cream to beat the heat. That's the goal of Senator Jim Tedisco's innovative Safe Summer Bike Helmet program which is celebrating its 25th anniversary of keeping Saratoga County and Schenectady County kids safe.

Senator Tedisco joined with Saratoga County Sheriff Michael Zurlo, Saratoga County Clerk and owner of Hayner's Ice Cream and Country Store in Halfmoon Craig Hayner, Milton Town Supervisor Scott Ostrander and Ballston Spa Mayor Frank Rossi, Jr., to lead the Milton summer camp attendees in a bike ride and then scooped free ice cream donated by Stewart's Shops.

This year, Senator Tedisco's Safe Summer Program will distribute 5,000 "good tickets" for free ice cream cones to 12 police departments to reward children who wear their helmets while bicycling, skateboarding, and rollerblading, and give free bike helmets to kids who need one.

Tedisco's Safe Summer program is made possible thanks to donations from participating businesses: **Stewart's Shops, Hayner's Ice Cream and Country Store in Halfmoon, Ben & Jerry's, and Friendly's**. The law firm of **Harding and Mazzotti LLP** is donating hundreds of new bike helmets to police departments in Saratoga and Schenectady Counties to distribute to children who need them.

"Summer is the season for kids to have fun but we can't ever forget that they need to keep safety in mind. I want children to enjoy the summer, but I also want them to be safe when they're riding their bicycles. My Safe Summer program, now its 25th year, reminds kids to wear their helmets while rewarding good behavior with coupons for free ice cream," said Senator Tedisco. "This program is a community partnership among businesses, law enforcement, government and parents and it's truly a model for how caring people can come together and promote a fun and safe environment for children. Safe Summer also provides positive interactions between law enforcement and kids."

It's the law in New York State that **children up to age 14 must wear a bicycle helmet** or parents could face a \$50 fine. The cost of a bicycle helmet is about \$30.00. The average charge for a hospital stay due to a bicycle related brain injury is **\$18,900** with an average length of stay of four days. According to the **Bicycle Helmet Safety Institute**, non-helmeted bike riders are 14 times more likely to be involved in a fatal crash than helmeted riders. Bicycle helmets have been shown to reduce the risk of head injury by **60 percent and brain injury by 58 percent**. It's estimated that 75 percent of bike-related fatalities among children could be prevented with a helmet. Universal use of bicycle helmets by children ages 4 to 15 could prevent between 135 and 155 deaths, between 39,000 and 45,000 head injuries, and between 18,000 and 55,000 scalp and face injuries annually.

Senator Tedisco's Safe Summer Program aims to address these alarming statistics by using positive reinforcement to get all neighborhood kids into the habit of wearing their helmets for safe biking, in-line skating, or riding a skateboard or scooter.

“The safety of our children is priority number one. The Safe Summer Bike Helmet Program allows us to pass on simple, yet effective ways to teach kids how to safely handle their bicycles, scooters and skateboards in a fun atmosphere. I want to thank Senator Tedisco for his leadership these past 25 years in helping to protect our kids and encouraging them to have positive interactions with law enforcement,” said Saratoga County Sheriff Michael Zurlo.

“Senator Tedisco's Safe Summer kickoff program is a fun event that reminds children about the importance of wearing a helmet while riding a bicycle. With school now out for summer, motorists should be especially mindful to slow down and anticipate children and adults riding their bikes along busy roadways. Many thanks to Senator Tedisco for putting together this important educational event,” said Saratoga County Clerk Craig Hayner who oversees the Saratoga County Department of Motor Vehicle Offices. He, along with his wife Carolyn are owners of Hayner’s Ice Cream and Country Store in Halfmoon, NY.

“It’s been a privilege being a part of Senator Tedisco’s bicycle helmet safety campaign for the past 25 years. Always remember to look out for each other, lights on to be seen and be safe. Don’t learn by accident. Always wear a helmet and be safe,” said Milton Town Supervisor Scott Ostrander.

“Senator Tedisco’s Safe Summer Bike Helmet Program is a perfect complement to our efforts in the Village of Ballston Spa to enhance street safety for all our residents,” said Ballston Spa Mayor Frank Rossi, Jr.

“Stewart’s Shops is very excited to be a part of this fantastic event again this year! Bike Safety is extremely important, especially for kids. We’re absolutely thrilled to be part of the fun, rewarding kids for their safe biking efforts with some delicious ice cream, Stewart’s Shops President, Gary Dake.

Harding Mazzotti is proud to continue our years-long partnership with Senator Tedisco and his Safe Summer program. For as long as it has been running, the program has been a fun way to raise awareness about bike safety in our local neighborhoods, provide helmets for children who need them, and promote positive interactions between people and local law enforcement, which is instrumental in strengthening our communities. We hope everyone can enjoy their summer to the fullest, and if Harding Mazzotti can play a small role in that, we always appreciate the opportunity to do it,” said Daniel Dagostino, Supervising Attorney at Harding Mazzotti, LLP.

Participating police departments that will distribute free ice cream coupons and bike helmets to kids include: **Saratoga County Sheriff, Schenectady County Sheriff, Ballston Spa Police, Clifton Park Town Security, Mechanicville Police, Niskayuna Police, City of Rensselaer Police, Saratoga Springs Police, City of Schenectady Police, South Glens Falls Police, Stillwater Police, and Waterford Police.**

Coupons also will be distributed to the Southern Saratoga YMCA.

Safe Summer Helmet