



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James Tedisco

Sen. Tedisco, Under Sheriff Brown, County Clerk Hayner, Stewart's Shops, Harding Mazzotti, YMCA & Supervisors Barrett and Tollison Kick-off 27th Annual Safe Summer Program for Kids to Wear Bike Helmets

JAMES TEDISCO July 9, 2025

| ISSUE: **BICYCLE SAFETY, HELMET GIVEAWAY, TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY, LAW ENFORCEMENT, SARATOGA COUNTY**



Senator scoops free ice cream to launch Safe Summer Bike Helmet Program at Southern Saratoga YMCA Summer Camp in Clifton Park 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

Clifton Park -- 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 27th anniversary of keeping Saratoga County and Schenectady County kids safe.

Senator Tedisco joined with Saratoga County Under Sheriff Jeff Brown, Saratoga County Clerk and owner of Hayner's Ice Cream and Country Store in Halfmoon Craig Hayner, and Clifton Park Town Supervisor Phil Barrett to lead the Southern Saratoga County YMCA 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 Mazzotti LLP** is donating hundreds of new bike helmets to police departments in Saratoga and Schenectady Counties to distribute to children who need them.

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*"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 27th year, reminds kids every year 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.

(click image for additional video)



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.

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*“The safety of our children is a top priority for the Saratoga County Sheriff’s Office. The Safe Summer Bike Helmet Program allows us to encourage kids to safely ride their bicycles, scooters and skateboards in a fun atmosphere while wearing a helmet. I want to thank Senator Tedisco for his leadership these past 27 years in helping to protect our kids and encouraging them to have positive interactions with law enforcement,” said **Saratoga County Under Sheriff Jeff Brown**.*

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*“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.*

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*“The senator has been teaching children the importance of bike safety for decades. Stewart’s Shops is honored to support those efforts and what better way to reward children than with a little ice cream,” said **Stewart’s president Chad Kiesow**.*

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*“At Harding Mazzotti, we're thrilled to keep supporting Senator Tedisco's Safe Summer program year after year. This program has become a local tradition, combining fun with important bike safety education, providing free helmets to kids in need, and fostering a sense of community by connecting residents with local law enforcement. We want everyone to have a safe and enjoyable summer, and Harding Mazzotti is proud to do its part,” said **Paul Harding, Managing Partner at Harding Mazzotti, LLP.***

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*“We’re proud to continue our partnership with Senator Tedisco’s administration to once again host the Safe Summer Bike Helmet event at the Southern Saratoga YMCA. At the Capital District YMCA, we’re dedicated to supporting safe, healthy summer activities for kids. Promoting proper bike and helmet use is one way we demonstrate our commitment to the well-being of young people in our community. Many of us remember spending long summer days riding bikes with friends — it’s a great way for kids to stay active and gain a sense of independence. We just want to make sure kids can venture out safely, with the right protection in place,” said **David Brown, President & CEO, Capital District YMCA***

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*“Clifton Park is proud to participate in Senator Tedisco’s program to highlight the importance of bike safety in our community,” said **Phil Barrett, Clifton Park Town Supervisor** and Chairman of the Saratoga County Board of Supervisors. “Town Security Officers will be presenting children with certificates for ice cream or helmets to promote safety and positive relationships with public safety personnel.”*

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“I wish to thank Senator Tedisco for spearheading the Safe Summer Bike Helmet safety program once again for our community. This project is an example of the Senator's

*commitment to improve the lives of the children and families that he serves, and I am proud to support Senator Tedisco in his vision,” said **Halfmoon Town Supervisor Kevin Tollison.***

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.