



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James Tedisco

Sen. Tedisco, Sheriff Zurlo, County Clerk Hayner, Stewarts Shops, Harding Mazzotti, Supervisor Ostrander & Mayor Rossi Kick-off 26th Annual Safe Summer Program for Kids to Wear Bike Helmets

TEDISCO 26TH ANNUAL SAFE SUMMER PROGRAM July 17, 2024

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



Tedisco 26th Annual Safe Summer Program

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 (R,C-Ballston Lake) innovative Safe Summer Bike Helmet program which is celebrating its 26th 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 14 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.

"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 26th 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.



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 26 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.

“What a fun way to teach our children the importance of bicycle safety, while heightening awareness in the community,” said Chad Kiesow, chief operating officer of Stewart’s Shops. “Senator Tedisco has impacted a generation of young bike riders and Stewart’s is honored to have been a part of it from the beginning.”



"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." – Paul Harding, Managing Partner at Harding Mazzotti, LLP.

"It's been a privilege being a part of Senator Tedisco's bicycle helmet safety campaign for the past 26 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.

Participating police departments that will distribute free ice cream coupons and bike helmets to kids include: **Saratoga County Sheriff, Schenectady County Sheriff, Fulton County Sheriff, Ballston Spa Police, Clifton Park Town Security, Gloversville Police, 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.

