

University of Miami

Miller School of Medicine

News

Miller School's BikeSafe Program Promotes National Bike to School Day

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In honor of National Bike Month this May, UM's BikeSafe team joined hundreds of students, parents, teachers, local police and Miami Dolphins mascot T.D. at Hialeah Gardens Middle School for the first National Bike to School Day on May 9.

Under the direction of Gillian Hotz, Ph.D., research professor of neurological surgery and director of the KiDZ Neuroscience Center at The Miami Project to Cure Paralysis, the BikeSafe program is promoting policies and initiatives to make it easier for people of all ages and abilities to bike safely in their communities.

"Celebrating the first National Bike to School Day, we are happy to support an event that not only raises awareness, but also stresses the need to create safer routes for bicycling and walking to school," Hotz said.

Since its inception in 2009, the UM BikeSafe program has worked to improve bicycle safety knowledge throughout the community. Among its initiatives is the development of a four-lesson, off-bike curriculum (with an optional on-bike fifth lesson), which more than 2,000 Miami-Dade County middle schoolers already have completed in their physical education classes.



Maria Sanchez, a teacher at Hialeah Gardens Middle School, leads a group of students on National Bike to School Day.

“Through instructional, modeling and creative learning modules, the curriculum is designed to guide instructors to teach students about bicycling basics, preparing to ride, rules of the road, and safe riding skills in the school setting,” said Mickey Witte, Ph.D., BikeSafe program manager.

The program has the added benefit of promoting environmentally friendly exercise.

“With obesity rates soaring, we are trying to facilitate and increase children’s daily physical activity, while also reducing traffic congestion and showing concern for the environment,” Hotz said.

For additional information on the BikeSafe program, please visit www.ibikesafe.us, or call 305-243-0349.