

The Danger of Roller Shoes

“Heeling” has become popular with school-aged kids. Heeling involves wearing roller-shoes. Heelys are a popular brand. These kid’s shoes have wheels in the heels. Kids can walk and run normally in these shoes. However, they can also use the wheels on the back of their shoes to roll around. Just by shifting their weight, kids can go from walking to heeling.

These shoes seem like fun, but recent reports show that they can pose a danger. Injuries occur when kids use the wheels. Balancing on the wheels can be tricky. Most of the injuries involve hands, wrists, arms and elbows. Elbow injuries can be serious and involve nerve damage. Head injuries are also a possibility if children fall backward.

Most of the injuries do not occur because kids are doing

stunts. Children just fall when trying to use the wheels on their shoes. Over 50% of the injuries occur with kids who are using

Heelys for the first time or are still learning how to master this skill.

Children who use skateboards and roller blades usually

wear safety equipment such as helmets, wrist guards, knee pads, and elbow pads. This protective gear helps to keep them safe and free from injury. Because kids can quickly go from walking to rolling without changing shoes, they often are not wearing protective gear while heeling.

Injuries from roller shoes can be painful, serious and costly. Exercise caution, and follow rules. Make one rule that an adult helps the child until he has mastered the skill of heeling.



Parents can help prevent injuries to their children who wear roller-shoes.

- Tell your kids about injuries that can happen while heeling.
- Supervise your children closely while they learn to use these shoes.
- Do not leave wheels in the shoes all the time.
- Make your kids use safety gear when heeling.
- Never let children use the wheels inside buildings such as the house or stores. They are more likely to hit their head on something hard.
- Never allow kids to use the wheels in or near traffic, on stairs or on uneven surfaces.

Call the Parent Help Line. We listen. We can find you help.
1-217-544-5808 or 1-888-727-5889 from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., 7 days a week
or log onto www.parenthelpline.org