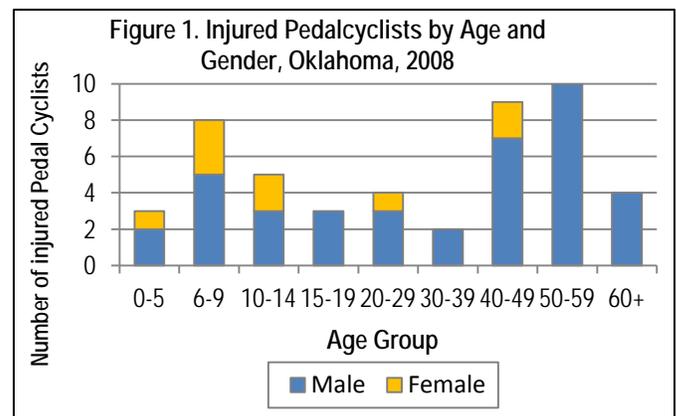


# Oklahoma Traffic Data Linkage Project

## Pedal Cyclist Crash Injuries, Oklahoma, 2008

Pedal cyclists, in this report, include riders of any nonmotorized vehicle, (uni-, bi-, or tricycles) powered by pedals. Pedal cycling has both environmental and health benefits. It is non-fuel-consuming and non-polluting, helps improve overall balance and coordination, and helps strengthen the cyclist's heart and respiratory functions. However, it is not risk free. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reported 716 pedal cyclist crash deaths in the United States in 2008. This report describes pedal cyclist crash injuries in Oklahoma using 2008 data from the Traffic Data Linkage Project.

- Fifty injured pedal cyclists were identified (Figure 1); four died.
  - Seventy-eight percent were male.
  - The highest number of injured cyclists occurred among children under 15 and adults 40-59 years of age.
  - Children under 18 years old accounted for 36%.
- Five cyclists (30-55 years of age) were alcohol impaired.
- The majority of cyclists were injured in urban areas (84%), in residential neighborhoods (48%), and at places other than intersections (59%).
- One in every six cyclist crashes was a hit-and-run incident.
- Half of crashes occurred on roadways with a posted speed limit of 25-30 miles per hour (mph).
  - Fatal crashes occurred on roadways with higher speed limits (30-55 mph).
- The most common cyclist actions at the time of the crash included crossing at non-intersection roadways (29%), cycling with the flow of traffic (22%), and crossing at an intersection (16%).
- Cyclist crashes peaked on Saturday (22%), followed by Friday and Wednesday (16%, each).
  - Three of the four fatalities occurred on a weekend (Saturday/Sunday).
- The highest number of crashes occurred in August and September (32%, each); crashes were lowest in February and November (2%, each).
- Eighty-four percent of cyclists were injured from 1:00pm to 9:00pm with peaks from 4:00pm-5:00pm and at 9:00pm.
- Only five injured cyclists wore a helmet; they were all 25 years and older. All helmeted persons survived their injuries.
- The most common types of injuries sustained included fractures (50%), bruises (17%), internal injuries (13%), and open wounds (12%). Nineteen cyclists (38%) suffered traumatic brain injuries.
- The typical hospital charge for nonfatally injured cyclists was \$30,500, with patients generally staying three days.
  - The median charge was 77% higher for non-helmeted persons (\$32,645) than for persons who were wearing a helmet (\$18,488).
- Of the hospitalized patients, 37% were on Medicaid, 15% were uninsured, and 7% were on Medicare.
- Sixty-nine percent of survivors were discharged home; the remaining required some type of longer-term care.



## TDLP Data Linkage Results

### Pedal Cyclist Crash Injuries, Oklahoma, 2008

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#### Case Briefs

- An older adult cyclist made a left turn from the right shoulder into the roadway when a school bus struck him. The driver of the bus stated that the victim turned in front of his vehicle and a witness confirmed the driver's report. The crash occurred on a rural highway where the posted speed limit was 65 mph. The victim sustained multiple injuries and was hospitalized for several days before being discharged to another facility for further treatment.
- A young boy crossing a four-way intersection on his bicycle failed to stop at a stop sign. A teenage driver swerved trying to miss the boy, but could not avoid hitting him. A witness performed CPR on the boy who was not breathing and had no pulse. He was hospitalized for more than two months before being discharged to another facility for further treatment.
- An adult male bicyclist was struck and killed by a bus when he was crossing a non-intersection roadway in a business area. Two witnesses stated that the bus' headlights were not activated when the crash occurred. The highway patrol trooper who investigated the crash confirmed that the vehicle's lights were not functioning at the time of the crash. This crash occurred around midnight and the crash scene was not lighted.
- A young boy was struck by a car on a city street. The driver of the vehicle stated that he slowed down because children were playing near the street. The cyclist darted out in front of the vehicle when he was hit. The boy suffered multiple fractures.
- An adult was riding his bicycle on a rural county roadway when a vehicle, driven by an older adult male, ran into the back of the bicycle. The driver of the vehicle stated he had looked down to adjust the air conditioner controls on the steering wheel when the crash occurred. The victim died from multiple injuries.
- A pre-teen girl was riding a bicycle with friends who had already crossed an intersection. The girl failed to yield to traffic before riding out into the street; a pickup truck struck the girl and threw her in the air. Witnesses stated that the bicycle was too big for her and she had trouble stopping it. The child suffered a skull fracture and internal injuries.
- An adult male was exiting a parking lot of a fast food restaurant on a bicycle when a vehicle, driven by an alcohol impaired male, struck him. It was reported that the car was traveling at a high rate of speed (posted speed limit of 45 mph) when it left the roadway, jumped the curb, drove through the grass median and back onto the roadway before hitting the victim. He was thrown more than 50 feet from the point of impact and died at the scene. The suspect fled the scene in his vehicle. The crash occurred on a weekday evening during rush-hour.
- A teenage boy was riding a bicycle in the outer right lane of a city street. A sport utility vehicle, driven by an older adult female, overtook the bicyclist and swerved right. The vehicle struck the boy, knocking him off the bicycle. The driver of the vehicle stated she was lost and did not remember what happened. The boy was hospitalized for a head injury.