

# Cycling with Kids

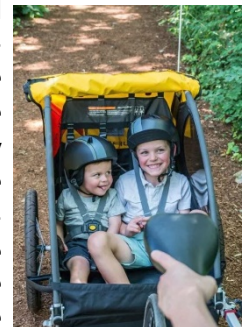
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No, this article is not about getting kids into cycling, although that'll be a later subject. This article will address getting moms (or dads) out there cycling with their kids before their kids get better at cycling than they are. Often, when there is a new addition to the family, it feels as if someone, maybe often mom, needs to stay home and "watch the kids" or if you do get out for a walk, the toddler is stopping every few feet to smell the roses or examine a pretty rock. While this is an amazing experience, it can be frustrating



for a parent who was previously physically active and now spends those exercise minutes on a walk of a few hundred feet. While your toddler or preschooler is napping, there is an opportunity to do chores or take a nap yourself, but consider this... What if you could get back out there on your bike, exercising with the kids, before they can even ride a balance bike? What if your next Mother's Day gift (remember, every day is mother's day!) was the gift of outdoor time getting real exercise and a great mental break? There are many options available to take your kids out there with you while you pedal your way back into shape and mental fitness.

One option for younger children (recommended for use after kids can hold their heads up while wearing a helmet- 9 months to a year), is the pull behind bike cart. These carts are designed to carry from 1-2 children and are optionally enclosed with a screen. Kids can nap, play games or just enjoy the ride while you travel. After kids reach the age where they want to actively participate, a trailercycle is a great way to introduce kids to the feel of the trail, teach shifting gears and get you both out there exercising. Trailercycles are recommended for kids ages 4 to 10, assuming the child is responsible enough to understand the dangers of letting go of the handlebars and can be trusted to ride responsibly. Trailercycles are fully capable of handling single track trails and provide the child with a real-feel cycling experience while



you get to take longer treks into the woods. A child on a trailer cycle has the option of assisting you by peddling or just hanging on for the ride. Always remember that whatever means you use to get out there cycling with your kids, they always need to wear an appropriately fitted helmet- safety is always priority number one! If you get them wearing a helmet before they can voice their opinion, they will never consider not wearing one later on.

Children 10 and up are fully capable traversing beginner single track trails and will quickly outpace their parents in obstacle handling if given the chance. Kids who have experienced the real-feel of a single-track on the back of a 5-7 speed trailercycle will know how to shift their weight in the corners and change gears with the terrain as soon as they are provided their own geared bike. Activities such as Zia Rides bike events are great places to introduce children to the sport of cycling and speed the process into independent riding (see companion article on Zia Rides). Cycling is one fitness activity you won't age out of- give your kids the gift of loving a fitness activity that will last them throughout their years and give yourself the gift of an active outdoor lifestyle while the



kids are still young enough that you can stay ahead of them. Enjoy your Mother's Day, whatever day that might be for you (hope that special breakfast toast isn't too burned!).

References and photos from [Burley.com](http://Burley.com) and [Bikepacking.com](http://Bikepacking.com) (Trailercycle review, Cass Gilbert)

Stop by your local bike shop for more information and product availability.