

IT'S MORE FUN TO SMILE THAN SHIVER!

Playing in the snow, whether we're skiing or riding, can be a lot more fun and safe if we're warm! Here's a guide to keeping toasty:

LAYER – Wear several layers of clothing rather than one or two thick garments. Layering allows us to remove or add clothing, depending on weather conditions. Also, layering provides insulating air and warmth between layers.

BREATHE – Garments that breathe, like fleece and wool, retain warmth even when wet. On the other hand, cotton does not breathe and can get clammy and cold.

DRY – Outerwear should shed snow and rain. Look for technical parkas from quality stores like REI and Sturtevant's, or thru many websites.

PROTECT – Protect from frostbite. Goggles keep the upper part of your face warm and protect your eyes. Neck gaiters can be pulled up to keep your lower face warm and protected. They also trap heat in your parka. Neck gaiters are toasty, cheap, and come in fun colors!

SIZE – Proper sizing is essential to good performance, especially with boots. On the other hand, we should recognize that young feet and bodies are still growing. Clothing and boots passed down from siblings may not be the best fit, but most of us don't have an unlimited budget to spend on ski gear! Your Rokka ski/ride instructor is aware of common-sense realities. Only when clothing or boots are so misfit they seriously impair safety or performance will your instructor suggest changes.

HELMETS – From beginner to backcountry expert, many skiers and riders wear helmets. They recognize accidents can happen. A helmet will help protect your head from impact with hard-pack or icy snow, collision with other skiers/riders and their equipment (hard edges banging your head), trees, and other possible causes of head injury. A side benefit of helmets is they are warm and dry! Helmets require proper sizing, so buy them from a store that knows how to fit them. Helmets, pleeeez!

KIDS – Young children lack body mass, so they get chilled faster than adults. Watch for shivering and sluggish movements. Ask how they're doing and heed their complaints. White spots on cheeks are a sign of frostbite – get the child to a warm, dry place as soon as possible!

NUTRITION - It's important to eat nourishing meals and stay hydrated with sufficient liquids when playing in the snow. Stay warm and dry, eat a good breakfast and healthy lunch, drink liquids, and wear a helmet.

QUESTIONS? - Ask your Rokka Instructor at the Rokka Ski School sign-up and information meeting, Mercer Island Community Center, Dec. 4th at 7:30.