

## Personal Safety

Month: Mar.

Week #: 27

Day: d. Thur. Time: 30 min.

# Lucas Malik Story

Life Tree Learning Systems ©

### Objectives/Aims

The students will: recognize the importance of wearing protective gear when biking, skateboarding, etc.; gain empathy for a child who suffered head trauma as a result of a bicycle accident.

### Materials

note cards, pencils, pictures of Lucas found in 'Computer Generated'

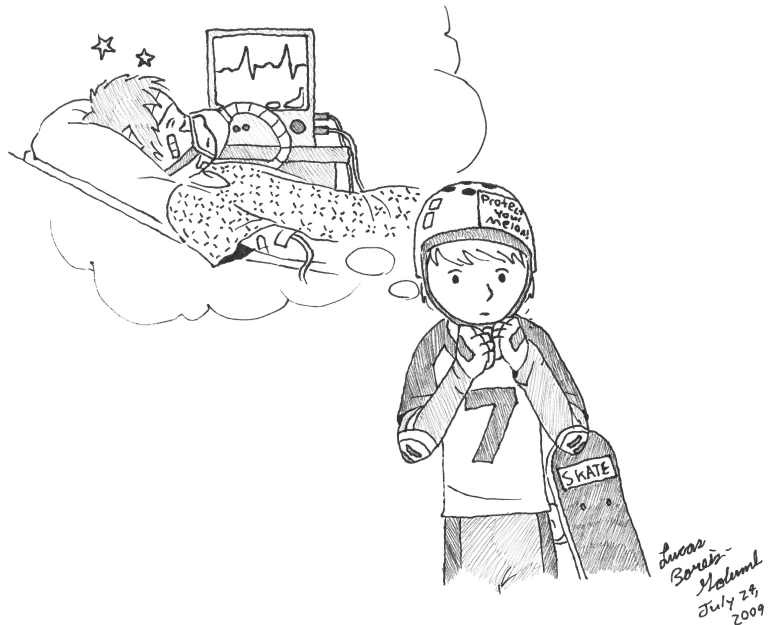
### Illustration

As Number 7 puts on his helmet, he thinks about a boy who forgot to wear his helmet. His name is Lucas.

### Background

What follows is the story of Lucas Malik taken from his web page at: <http://www.caringbridge.org/cb/visitAPage.do> (Type in his name in the indicated space, 'lucasmalik'. This story doesn't include all of the background information.

Lucas Malik, who was 12 or 13 at the time of his accident, was attending a friend's birthday party on Friday, September 23, 2005. He and his friends set up a small jump in the street to ride over on their bicycles. When Lucas attempted to go over the



jump, he fell backwards and hit his head on the pavement. He was not wearing a helmet. Included in the 'Computer Generated' section are two pictures of Lucas. One, I assume, is a class picture taken prior to the accident. The other is after the accident and shows that he is barely able to hold his head up on his own but that the rest of his torso needs support. There are also several YouTube videos of him undergoing physical therapy, including: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B09drLJoYII> Lucas passed away on Tuesday, June 8, 2010 from complications associated with his injuries. He was just 18 years old.

I included this personal story of Lucas because students often aren't impressed by statistics and facts. From this story of a young boy, they can infer that this could happen to them. In addition, the story gives some positive meaning to this terrible tragedy. I think Lucas would be happy if he knew that the sharing of his story prevented another child from sharing a similar fate.

### Written October 10, 2005.

Lucas had a bicycle accident on Friday September 23, 2005. He was rushed to the emergency room. Test results showed a blood clot in the brain that required brain surgery. The surgery began about 11:00 p.m. and lasted until 4:00 a.m. The hospital waiting room was filled with many of Luke's friends and their parents in addition to extended family members. All were in prayer for a successful surgery. Saturday was a tense day as we all waited to hear how Lucas was progressing. A CAT scan was done on Saturday night that showed a bit of bleeding.

On Sunday a.m. it became evident that there was more bleeding in the brain and another surgery was necessary. This surgery began at 11:00 a.m. and lasted until 3:00 p.m. All weekend

### **Background (continued)**

many people came to support the family and offer their prayers. The first 24 hours are very critical after brain surgery. We watched and waited and Lucas did well. He also passed the "three day" mark. At some point he had a bit of infection and was started on antibiotics to ward off lung infections.

Lucas gave us great pleasure as he moved his limbs upon request. We thought we saw him try to open his eyes. A week later, on Saturday, Oct. 1, a tracheotomy was performed so the respirator tube could be removed from Lucas's mouth. On Sunday, Oct. 2 a PEG line was implanted so he could be fed directly - once again removing a line from his mouth. A decision was made to start weaning him off the respirator.

On Saturday, October 8, the bandage was removed from his head. The view of the incision indicated good news - the swelling continues to go down.

As we begin this site two stressful weeks have passed - but each day has had its blessings. The status as of October 10 is that Lucas has stable vital signs. He still is in a coma (not induced). He no longer needs antibiotics. He no longer needs the respirator much although it is still hooked up. He has started some limited movement. Abrasions on his face are healing beautifully. He responded well to the physical therapist today. Now he is occasionally positioned in a sitting position.

So slowly Lucas is improving. The prayers and actions of many people have helped his family through this difficult time.

### **Group Activity**

1. Say, "Today I'm going to tell you the story of Lucas Malik, who was 12 or 13 years old at the time, which is fairly close in age to many of you. On September 23rd, 2005, he was attending a friend's birthday party. He and his friends set up a small jump in the street to ride over on their bicycles. When Lucas attempted to go over the jump, he fell backwards and hit his head on the pavement. He was not wearing a helmet.

What I'm going to read next is the report posted on his web site by his hospital." (Read 'Written October 10, 2005' in the 'Background' section.)

2. (Show the before picture of Lucas.) Say, "This is a class picture of Luke before his accident. He looks like a typical happy student, just like any of you." (Show the after picture.) "This is Lucas, at the rehabilitation hospital, where he is able to hold his head up but the rest of his torso still needs support."

### **Group Discussion Questions**

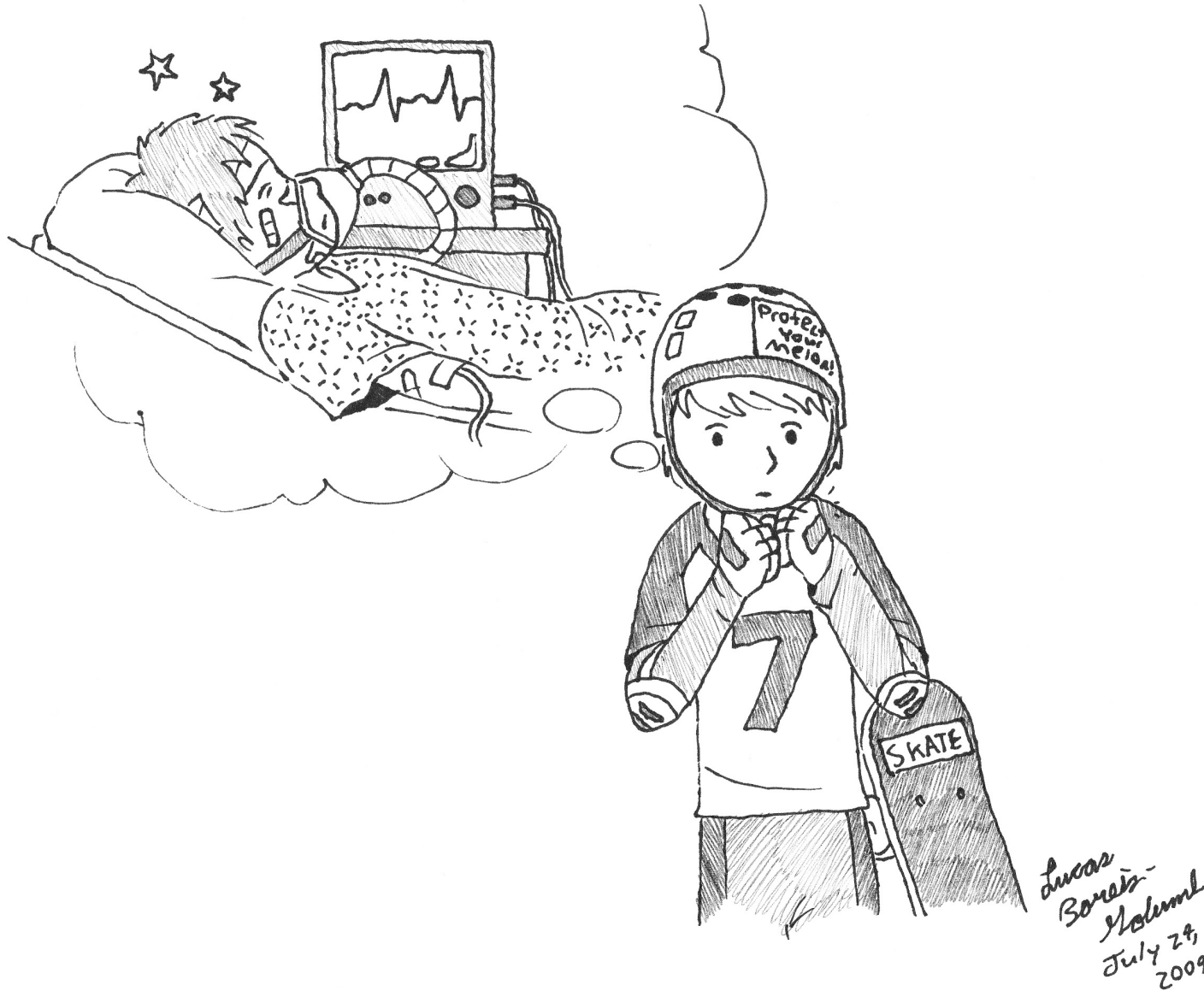
1. What happened to Lucas?  
A: Paraphrase of above story.
2. If you were Lucas's brother, sister or friend, how would you feel?  
A: Sad.
3. What could have prevented this tragedy?  
A: Wearing a helmet.
4. How is Lucas doing now?  
A: Unknown. Perhaps we can research this on his web site.

### **Conclusion**

As you hand out a pencil and note card to each student say, "When I ask you this question, please don't raise your hands: the next time you go bike riding or skateboarding or do any other risky activity, are you going to wear a helmet? I didn't want you to raise your hands because I don't want you to say "yes" just to please your friends or me. I want you to write either, 'I promise to wear a helmet when riding a bike, skateboarding, skiing, etc.' (they can list the types of risky activities they engage in) or 'I choose not to wear a helmet, realizing I could be injured.' on your note card, fold it and put it in your pocket. It's up to you if you want to show this promise to

Mar. 27 d. Thur.

## Personal Safety: Lucas Malik Story



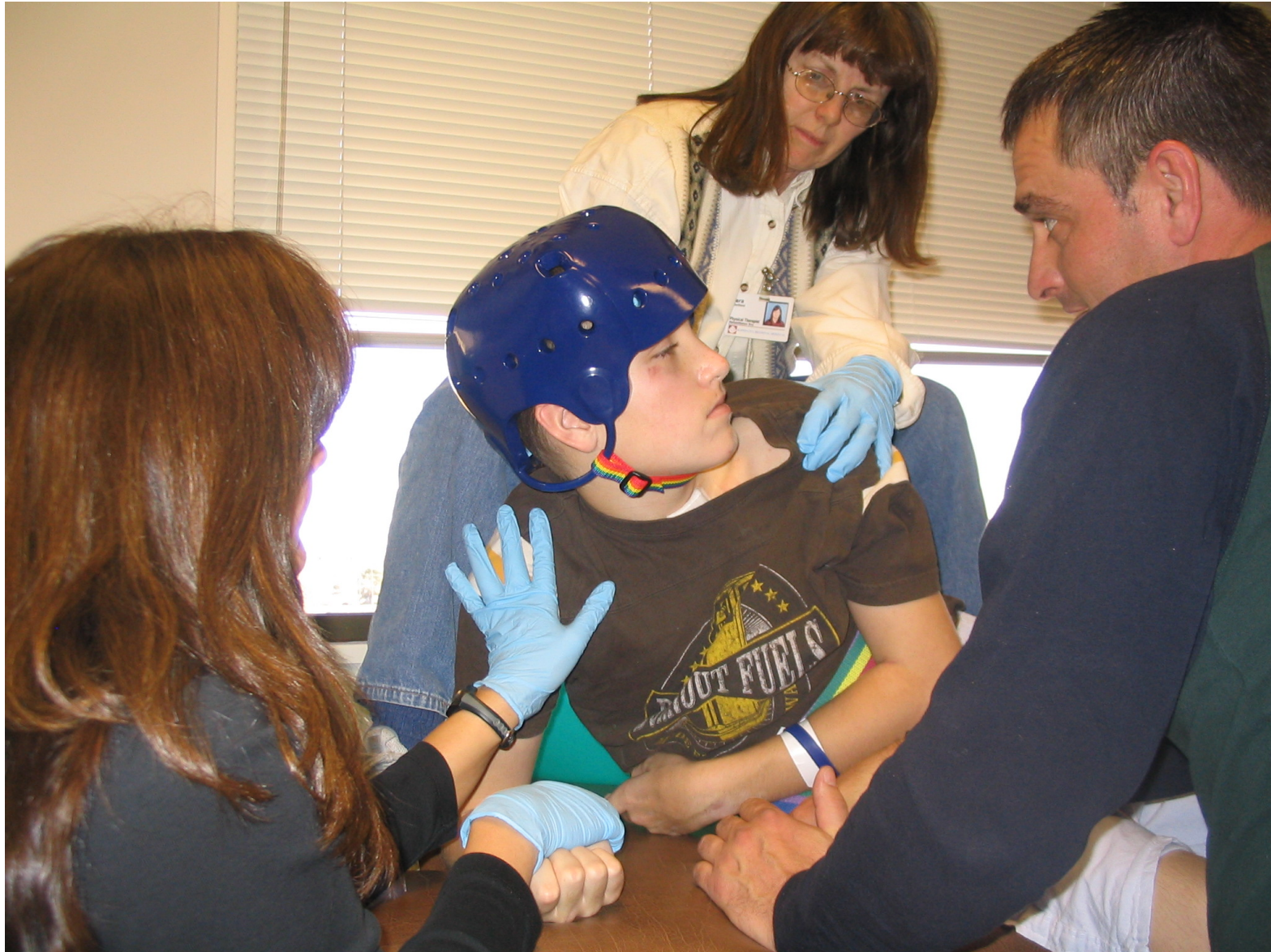
**As Number 7 puts on his helmet, he thinks about a boy who forgot to wear his helmet.  
His name is Lucas.**

## Lucas Malik Story



**Lucas Malik's school picture taken prior to the accident.**





**Lucas Malik in rehabilitation after the accident.**