

Binghamton 'Earn-A-Bike' classes address transportation barrier



This is a recurring recording of WBNG's 11pm Newscast.

By [Jill Croce](#)

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Binghamton (WBNG) - The two wheels of a bike can be a gateway to a better quality of life and help eliminate urban transportation issues. When it comes to the Healthy Lifestyles Coalition through the Fresh Cycles program wants folks to do so responsibly with "Earn-A-Bike" classes.

"Trying to make transportation easier for people because that can be a big barrier," said Class Instructor Jacob Rotary. "So we like to get adults in here, we like to get kids in here. Anyone who wants a bike and maybe cost is a barrier to them."

To take the seasonal Earn-A-Bike class at the Lee Barta Community Center, attendees must be at least nine years old.

"We don't charge anything," said Rotary. "We exchange time for bikes and bike parts to help the community."

Without community donations, the five-week class series offered through the Fresh Cycles program from the Healthy Lifestyles Coalition wouldn't be possible. Rotary said he has reached out to some local bike shops and there have been donations in the past from local police departments.

At the outset of the weeks-long instruction, participants pick a bike to work on. The goal at the end is to take home that bike after learning about proper use and maintenance practices.

"We like to empower people with not only the tools and the space but also the knowledge of how to fix their own bikes," said Rotary.

Over the span of five weeks, each class addresses a different topic. The first class addresses how to fix a flat tire, the second class focuses on brakes, the third class is about shifting, the next one addresses getting the bike ready to go, and the fifth class focus is on bike safety.

To donate a bike or to get involved in a weeks-long class to get access to a bike, call the Lee Barta Community Center at 607-238-1005. The offer is open to North Side residents and classes are Tuesdays 3:30 to 4:30 p.m.

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