

ATV Safety

“9-year old boy killed in ATV accident”, “Teen Dies in Four-Wheeler Accident.” You may have missed the headlines, the stories were short, but their cause of death is a growing concern for youth across the nation. ATV (All-Terrain Vehicle) sales are rising, but so is the number of injuries or deaths resulting from ATV use.

The Facts

- Thirty-six percent of farm youth operate ATVs. Farm youth are more likely to operate an ATV than a tractor.
- Males account for 69% of the estimated 2,246 nonfatal youth ATV-related injuries each year.
- Nearly half of youth ATV related fatalities involve head and neck injuries. Most ATV-related injuries involve youth not wearing a helmet.
- Almost 90% of children under 16 that were injured in an ATV incident were riding an adult-sized ATV, vehicles weighing up to 1,000 pounds.
- Less than 4% of injured ATV riders participated in formal safety training.
- ATV operators under the age of 16 are 4.5 times more likely than older operators to receive injuries requiring emergency room treatment.

“Parents or guardians should not permit youngsters to ride an ATV that is not recommended for their age group. Additionally, while a youth may be of the recommended age to ride a particular size of ATV, not all youngsters have the strength, skill or judgment necessary to operate an ATV.” — ATV Safety Institute

All-terrain vehicles, whether you call them four-wheelers or ATVs demand respect. “If young people are using ATVs, they must have proper training, proper protective equipment, and be able to fully comprehend the machine they are operating. No matter what function the ATV is performing, remember that it is only as capable as the operator,” says Shari Burgus, Education Director for Farm Safety 4 Just Kids.

Research has indicated major factors that lead to injuries include driver misuse and inappropriate rider behavior. Additional risk factors include: Driving at excessive speeds; not wearing protective gear, such as helmets; accepting unnecessary risks; accepting passengers; and improper supervision or training.

Remember to make every ride a safe ride.

- Properly train and supervise drivers.
- Restrict the use of ATVs by children.
- Always wear personal protective equipment.
- Do not operate on paved roads.
- Refrain from unnecessary risks such as performing stunts, using alcohol or drugs, excessive speeding, and accepting riders.
- Do not operate an ATV in adverse weather conditions, insufficient light, hazardous terrain, or an ATV in need of repair.
- Keep ATV in good condition.

Each year, more and more children are being killed and injured on ATVs.

For additional information on ATV safety, see FS4JK's “Ride Smart!”
ATV educational packet available through our catalog or at www.fs4jk.org.



Farm Safety



Just Kids