

## Tips for Youth ATV Safety

ATV riding can be a great pastime for a child, and if they follow the proper safety precautions, it can be a safe one as well. Many children and adults are injured every year from the result of ATV accidents, and many of these injuries are preventable if the riders had only taken the proper safety precautions. Children are especially prone to injure themselves when riding an ATV because they do not have the skills and maturity level of an adult.

ATV's are powerful machines and children can have a hard time controlling them as well. This is not to say that ATV's are not suitable for children, but children should follow some safety tips to reduce their chances of being injured while on their ATV.

Children should be taught the correct way to use an ATV before they are allowed to ride and should understand the safe way to operate one before they ride. They should know that an ATV is not a toy and can be very dangerous. Children should be taught the correct way to turn, brake, and how to control the ATV. Many places require minors to take a training course, and even if your area does not it is still a good idea. These courses will teach your child how to safely ride an ATV and will give them experience handling one.

Wearing safety gear is the best way to prevent injury. Children should always wear helmets and other safety gear whether it is required by law or not. They should also wear goggles and gloves to protect their hands and eyes. Apparel designed with durability in mind is also important as durable pants and jackets will prevent many scrapes and abrasions in the event of a fall. Children should not wear baggy clothing while riding as it can be caught or pulled in the engine and cause injury.

Children should know safe places to ride and always ride with supervision. They should not be allowed to ride near roadways, train tracks, or on paved surfaces. Riding near cars is extremely dangerous and illegal in many areas. Riding on pavement is also dangerous as ATV's are designed to run on dirt and can easily spin out of control on pavement or cement. Train tracks can also be hazardous and cause an ATV to flip over or get stuck.

You should know your child's ability and they should only ride at a speed and on terrain that is suitable to their experience level. Accidents frequently occur when a child is riding faster than they should or on terrain that is too challenging for them. Make sure your child is experienced enough to handle the terrain and speed they are traveling.

Children should not be allowed to take passengers as this is another practice

that causes accidents. Passengers can distract a child driver and make the ATV harder to maneuver. Children should also be involved in the maintenance of their ATV and should only ride their ATV if it is in safe working condition. If children follow these safety rules, they should have a safe and enjoyable time with their ATV.