



# Doernbecher Children's Safety Center

## ATV SAFETY

Riding an all-terrain vehicle (ATV) can be very dangerous because it combines high speeds, rough terrain, and heavy machinery. Three-wheeled ATVs are much less stable than 2- or 4-wheeled ATVs and should not be used.

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends that children under age 16 should not be allowed to drive or ride all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) due to immature judgment and coordination. If you choose to ride an ATV or allow your children to do so, follow these safety tips:

### GET TRAINED

- Take a hands-on safety course to learn how to control your ATV in various situations.
- Drivers with formal ATV training have a lower risk of injury than drivers with no formal training.
- A list of training sessions from the ATV Safety Institute can be found at <https://online.svia.org/Training>.



### WEAR A HELMET

- Oregon State Law requires helmets for riders under age 18.
- Most ATV injuries affect the head. Wearing a helmet can reduce the risk of major head injury by more than half.
- Select a motorcycle or motorized sports helmet certified by the U.S. Department of Transportation and/or the Snell Memorial Foundation.
- Other protective gear is also highly recommended, including boots, goggles, gloves, long pants, and a long-sleeved shirt.

### CHOOSE THE RIGHT SIZE

- Children under 16 are twice as likely to be injured if they are riding an adult-sized ATV instead of a youth-sized ATV.

### ONE AT A TIME

- Most ATVs are designed to carry only one person at a time.
- Passengers can make it difficult for drivers to maintain control.
- Many ATV-related deaths and injuries occur when an adult allows a child to ride as a passenger on their ATV.

### AVOID PAVEMENT

- ATVs are difficult to control on paved roads.
- Many ATV-related deaths are caused by collisions with cars.
- It is against the law in Oregon to use ATVs on highways, except when crossing or when the highway has been closed to traffic. Riders under age 12 may not cross highways unless accompanied by someone 18 or older.

### RIDE SOBER

- Reaction time and judgment are important for safe ATV use. Don't impair your senses with alcohol or drugs.

#### Sources:

Consumer Product Safety Commission on ATV Safety  
[www.atvsafety.gov](http://www.atvsafety.gov)  
American Academy of Pediatrics - [www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org)  
Children's Safety Network - [www.childrenssafetynetwork.org](http://www.childrenssafetynetwork.org)

Doernbecher Children's Safety Center  
(503) 418-5666 – [safety@ohsu.edu](mailto:safety@ohsu.edu)  
[www.ohsu.edu/childssafety](http://www.ohsu.edu/childssafety)