

Pointers For Parents

ATV Safety: Is Your Child Ready?

(NAPSA)—All Terrain Vehicles, or ATVs, have become popular with families across the country—and riders have helped the sport remain a safe one by taking a safety course and by following the “golden safety rules.” They include always wearing a helmet, and other protective gear, never carrying passengers, riding an ATV right for your age, always supervising youngsters, never riding while intoxicated and not riding on public roads.

However, there are other safety precautions parents should take into account when deciding if their child is ready to ride. Not all youngsters have the strength, judgment or skills to operate an ATV. Here are some points to consider:

Visual Perception And Motor Development

Children should be able to:

- Perceive depth or distance.
- Rely on peripheral or side vision.
- Judge speed and follow the movement of objects.
- Follow a moving object while using their hands.
- Maintain their attention while taking in a lot of sights, sounds and instructions.

Physical Development

Children should be able to sit comfortably on the ATV and reach the controls safely. They should also have enough strength and familiarity to operate the controls with ease. In addition, children need to be coordinated (at least enough to ride a bicycle, skateboard or roller-skate) and have sufficient endurance to maintain strength over time.

Emotional Development

Parents should ask themselves if their child can:

- Understand and follow rules and obey parents and supervisors.
- Control behavior according to expectations.
- Understand that other youngsters may be permitted to



Safe Rides—There are a number of points to consider before letting your child ride an ATV.

do what he or she may not be allowed to do.

- Give reasons and solutions to problems they encounter.
- Make decisions based on reality, not fantasy.

Decision Making

Child riders need to know that bad decisions they make can result in injury. They also need a basic understanding of what being careful means, as well as an understanding that rules are made to increase safety and lead to long-term enjoyment of ATVs.

Children should not be allowed to ride if:

- They do not have a basic understanding of the physical limitations of stopping and turning.
- They cannot describe cause-and-effect experiences.
- They cannot concentrate on more than one element at a time in solving a puzzle or problem.

“Parents, Youngsters and All-Terrain Vehicles” was developed especially for parents to help determine whether their youngsters are ready to ride an ATV. This booklet provides important safety information and tips on learning to ride an ATV. To obtain a copy of the booklet or for information on training, please visit www.atvsafety.org or call 1-800-887-2887.