



YOUR ATV

FORTIS INTERNATIONAL AUTOMOTIVE, INC. / "Fortis ATV" NEWSLETTER

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Keeping Your Child Safe on an ATV

From an article on www.phoenixchildrens.org

When deciding whether to let your child drive an ATV, it's best to think about his or her level of development.

Grade School Children— The American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons says children under the age of 12 "generally possess neither the body size and strength, nor the motor skills and coordination necessary, for the safe handling of an ATV." If you do choose to let your child drive an ATV, make sure you carefully follow the safety tips below.

Young Teens— Young teens can recognize hazards, but usually take more time than older teens to react to them. While young teens are generally more coordinated than children, they still are developing their motor skills and balance, and their visual perception is less defined. This puts them at a greater risk in areas that may be visually confusing. While some children in this age group may be ready for an ATV, the American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons warns that children under age 16 "generally have not yet developed the perceptual abilities or the judgment required for the safe use of highly powered vehicles."

Older Teens— Older teens are better able to react to hazards quickly. They generally have better coordination and visual perception than younger teens. However, it's worth remembering that most youths are still vulnerable to risk-taking behavior, especially under peer pressure. You may want to consider your teen-ager's maturity level when deciding whether to let him or her drive an ATV.

Safety Tips for ATVs

The American Academy of Pediatrics, American College of Surgeons and many physicians nationwide recommend not letting children under age 16 drive an ATV. Regardless of when your child starts driving an ATV, you can help protect him or her by following these safety tips:

- Keep children off adult-sized ATVs. If the driver is under age 18, use an ATV that is appropriate to his or her age and size.
- Your child should always attend an ATV driver's safety course before handling an ATV. To find safety classes near you, call the ATV Safety Institute at (800) 887-2887.
- Provide your child with a helmet, eye protection, long pants, a long-sleeved shirt and non-skid, closed-toe shoes.
- Do not allow your child to ride his or her ATV on public roads, on paved surfaces, or at night.
- Flags, reflectors, and lights should be used to make vehicles more visible.
- Do not allow your child to use a three-wheeler. Those vehicles are unsafe and are no longer manufactured.
- Most ATVs are made for one driver. Never let your child carry a passenger on a youth ATV or a single-passenger adult ATV.

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- Before allowing your child to carry a passenger on a tandem (two-seater) ATV, consider your child's coordination, skill level, maturity, size, and ability to focus and concentrate. A passenger may be too distracting. Also, drivers need to shift their weight freely in order to control the ATV, and a passenger may make this more difficult.
- Passengers on tandem (two-seater) ATVs should be at least 12 years old.
- Set an example for your child and drive your ATV only when you are not under the influence of alcohol or drugs, or prescription medications that affect your coordination or judgment.

ATVs can weigh up to 600 pounds and reach speeds of up to 60 miles per hour. Rollovers and collisions can happen quickly. It's important for youths to operate ATVs safely so that those days on the back roads can be happy memories later.

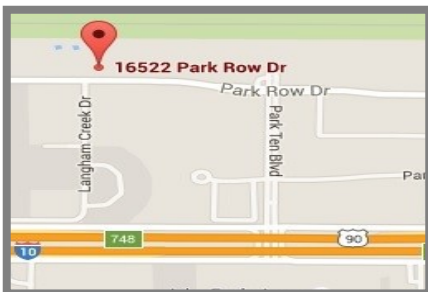
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