



# ATV Riding Tips for Safe Summer Fun

**T**he weekend signals the start of outdoor fun for many people and a time for enjoyable activities such as riding ATVs (all-terrain vehicles). Unfortunately, national statistics indicate that ATV safety is often taken lightly. According to the United States Consumer Product Safety Commission, more than 125,500 people have been seriously injured in ATV-associated accidents since 1982, and more than 5,700 people have been killed. Children are at the highest risk, with the under-16 age group accounting for more than 31% of injuries in 2003.



The 4-H Community ATV Safety Program recommends these tips for ATV safety:



**SELECT** the right model ATV. Make sure it is right for age, size, strength and skill level. Kids under age 16 years should not be riding ATVs with an engine size over 90cc and under age 12 should not be riding an ATV with an engine size 70cc or greater.



**PROTECT** your body. At a minimum, always wear a helmet, face shield or goggles, long sleeved shirt, gloves, long pants and leather boots. The helmet should be designed for motorcycle use, properly fitted and comply with current US Department of Transportation safety standards.



**RESPECT** yourself, proper use of roads and trails, other people and laws. The top risk factors involving ATV accidents include riding double and riding on pavement. Never carry a passenger or hitch a ride. Ride only on designated trails, never on or alongside paved roads. Be courteous to hikers, bikers, cars and other ATV operators. Supervise children riding ATVs at all times. Learn and follow your state's ATV operation laws and read the manufacturer's warning label on every machine.



**INSPECT** your vehicle. Maintain recommended tire pressure, make sure your brakes are adjusted correctly, check that fuel and oil levels are sufficient, ensure that all connections and cables are secure and test your headlights and taillights.



**PERFECT** your skills. Learn proper handling of your ATV by reading the safety manual that came with your ATV when it was purchased new and taking an approved safety course from a certified instructor.