

Spring is here! The warmer weather and longer days result in more time outdoors for the many activities we like to do. For some, one of those activities involves riding all-terrain vehicles or ATVs.

Riding ATVs is a lot of fun and popular among youth and adults for recreation and utility use. They can be useful for work and fun to ride, but they can also be dangerous if the rider doesn't operate the ATV safely. Understanding the right way to safely ride the right-sized ATV for you is important before you ride.

The 4-H ATV Safety Program in conjunction with the ATV Safety Institute (ASI) helps youth and adults ride their ATVs safely by teaching them safe riding techniques and practices and choosing when not to ride. It also helps the rider build their critical thinking and life skills so that they make good decisions.

ASI shares some pointers regarding ATV safety with their Golden Rules. They are:

- Always wear a helmet and other protective gear.
- Never ride on public roads – another vehicle could hit you.
- Never ride under the influence of alcohol or other drugs.
- Never carry a passenger on a single-rider vehicle.
- Ride an ATV that's right for your age.
- Supervise riders younger than 16; ATVs are not toys.
- Ride only on designated trails and at a safe speed.

The 4-H ATV Safety program is not accessible in every state, you may visit their website at www.atv-youth.org to learn more about ATVs by watching videos, playing games, and taking quizzes to test your current knowledge. As well as, a link to ASI providing three age specific e-learning courses to address basic ATV safety principles. After taking the course, users can take an ATV safety exam and receive a certificate of completion.

For more information, contact Jennifer K. Terrell, District 4-H Youth Development Agent for K-State Research and Extension – Southwind District at 620-223-3720 or jkterrell@ksu.edu

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