

OHIO ATV SAFETY



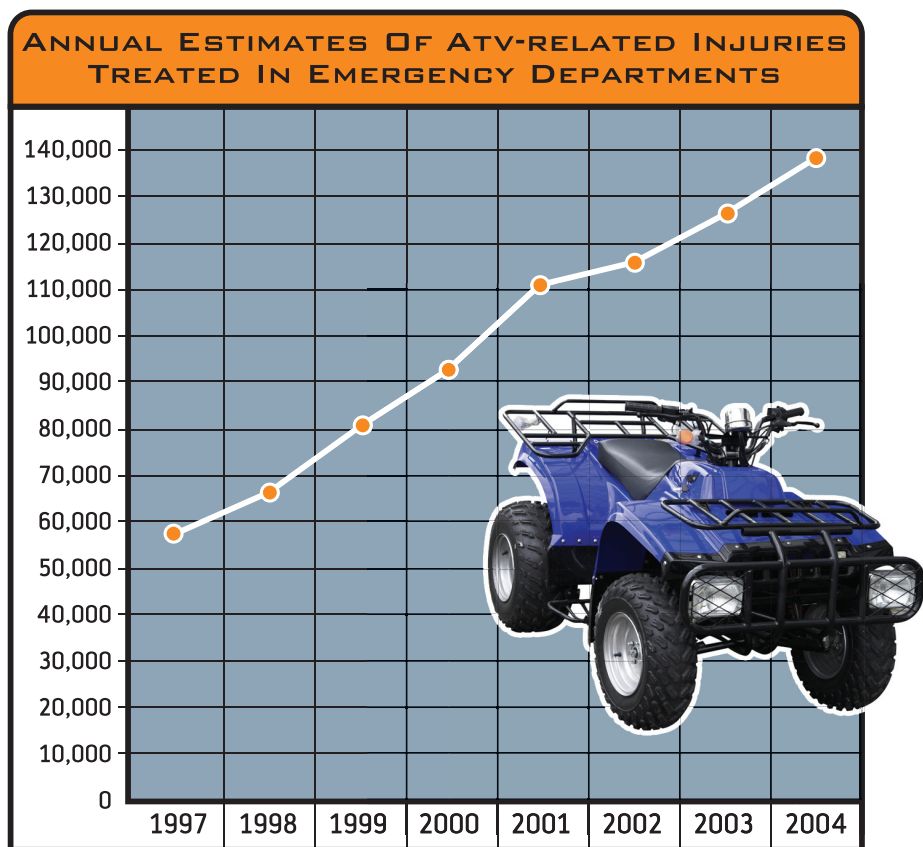
A REPORT FROM

THE CENTER FOR INJURY RESEARCH AND POLICY
AT THE COLUMBUS CHILDREN'S RESEARCH INSTITUTE

In the state of Ohio there were more than 10,000 hospital visits for All-Terrain Vehicle related injuries in 2003.

THE PROBLEM:

Nationally, the number of All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV)-related emergency department visits has more than doubled in recent years – from 52,800 a year in 1997 to 136,100 in 2004.



Ohio ranks in the top one-third nationally in the number of deaths caused by ATVs.

**Children under 16 years of age
account for roughly one-third of all
ATV-related deaths and injuries.**

RECOMMENDED LEGISLATIVE ACTION

Given the rapidly increasing injury rates, disproportionately affecting children under 16 years of age, action needs to be taken to protect Ohioans and their children. The following recommendations will decrease death and injury related to the use of ATVs in Ohio.

PUBLIC OPINION	LEGISLATIVE ACTION
Ohio ATV users reported that helmet use would double with the introduction of a helmet law. In addition, 78% of registered Ohio voters would support this type of law.	Institute a mandatory helmet law requiring use of a helmet at all times while operating and riding ATVs.
Three-quarters of ATV users polled admitted to carrying a passenger on their ATV. A majority of both Ohio registered voters (81%) and ATV users (68%) would support legislation designed to ban this unsafe practice.	Prohibit passengers on all ATVs unless they are specifically designed to carry more than one person.
Over 81% of registered Ohio voters and 74% of ATV users are in favor of restricting operation of ATVs by children under the age of 16. While operation of ATVs is safest for those 16 years of age or older, there is a greater likelihood of voter support for restricting engine size.	Limit the use of ATVs by children under 16 years of age to ATVs with engine sizes of 90 cc or less.
In a statewide poll, 77% of registered Ohio voters and 65% of ATV users said they would support a law requiring ATV safety classes.	Require all ATV owners and operators to take a safety class prior to operating an ATV.

The best way to decrease the number of ATV-related injuries and deaths in the state of Ohio would be a combination of the above recommended legislation and education.

A total of 69% of voters surveyed indicated that they would be more likely to favor the state passing laws regulating ATV use and safety **after they were informed** that there has been a dramatic increase across the nation in deaths caused by ATV use, and that Ohio ranks in the top one-third of all states in the reported number of deaths from ATVs.



VOTER OPINIONS

In June 2006 a statewide telephone survey with 838 registered Ohio voters was conducted. The purpose of the survey was to assess Ohio voters’ attitudes toward possible laws regarding ATV use and safety.

The survey found that Ohio voters are concerned about the health and safety of Ohioans. **Over 90% of respondents agreed that it is important for elected state officials to support legislation that helps protect the public’s health and safety.**

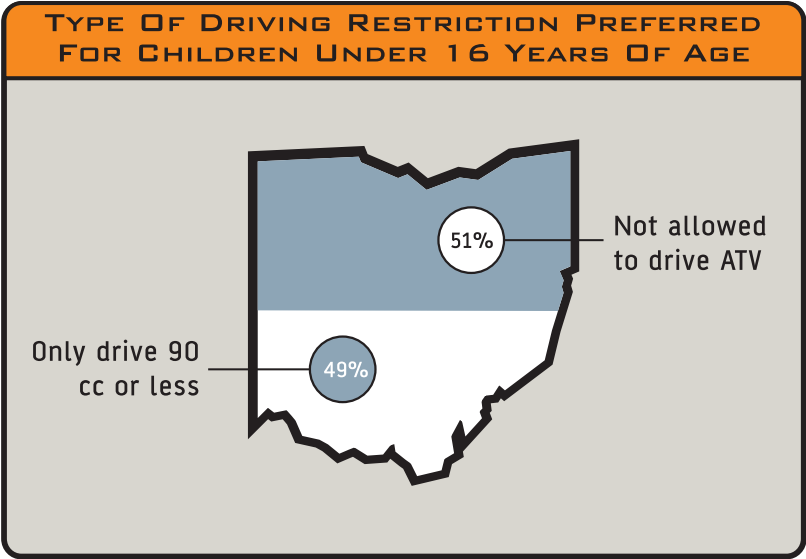
A majority of voters overall were in favor of each of the seven proposed laws regarding ATV use and safety. Support was strongest for:

- Restricting the use of ATVs by children
- Prohibiting passengers
- Instituting a mandatory safety class
- Requiring helmets

VOTERS FAVORING POSSIBLE LAWS REGARDING ATV USE AND SAFETY		
Restricting the use of ATVs by children under the age of 16	81%	
Prohibiting passengers on ATVs unless the ATV was specifically designed by the manufacturer to carry passengers	81%	
Requiring helmets to be worn at all times by all ATV riders	78%	
Requiring all ATV owners and users to take a safety class similar to drivers training for automobiles	77%	
Requiring that all ATVs be registered with the Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles	67%	
Requiring ATV drivers to carry an ATV license similar to a driver’s license for automobiles	62%	
Prohibiting the use of ATVs at night	55%	

Those who have personally ridden an ATV in the past year were less supportive of these potential laws. **However, among ATV riders, a majority supported restricting the use of ATVs by children (73%), prohibiting passengers (68%), requiring helmets (54%), and instituting a mandatory safety class (65%).**

The 81% of voters who would support restricting use of ATVs by children under 16 years of age were divided on whether children under 16 should not be allowed to drive ATVs at all (51%) or should only be allowed to drive ATVs with an engine size of 90 cc or less (49%).



Support of restrictions was high across all sub-groups. ATV riders, younger respondents (18-44 years), and those who live in rural areas favored restricting the size of the ATV. Those who do not know anyone who has ridden an ATV in the past year, urban residents, older respondents (65+ years), and Non-White voters would rather prohibit children under the age of 16 from driving ATVs.

More than three-quarters (77%) of voters surveyed were in favor of imposing a \$25 fine for each ATV violation that takes place on public land.



VOTER OPINIONS

Over 50% of the reasons participants gave for supporting possible laws regarding ATV use centered on increasing safety and reducing injuries and deaths.

“Laws would increase safety.”

“They would reduce injuries, accidents and deaths.”

“Laws save lives.”

“Kids are getting killed and injured.”

When asked if there were any potential drawbacks to these possible laws for ATV use and safety, more than one-third (36%) felt there were no drawbacks or could not cite any.

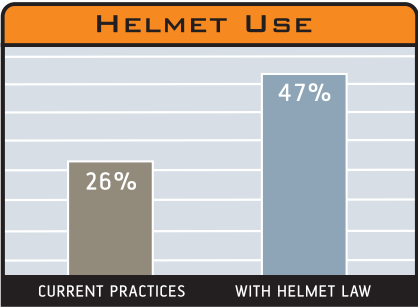
- Only 22% of respondents felt ATV laws would be “too much government.”
- A total of 21% were concerned about the government’s ability to enforce the laws and ATV users’ willingness to obey the laws. **Research has shown that laws do increase desired safety behaviors.**

POSITIVE EFFECTS

The results of the survey show that laws regulating ATV use could have a dramatic effect in reducing ATV-related deaths and injuries.

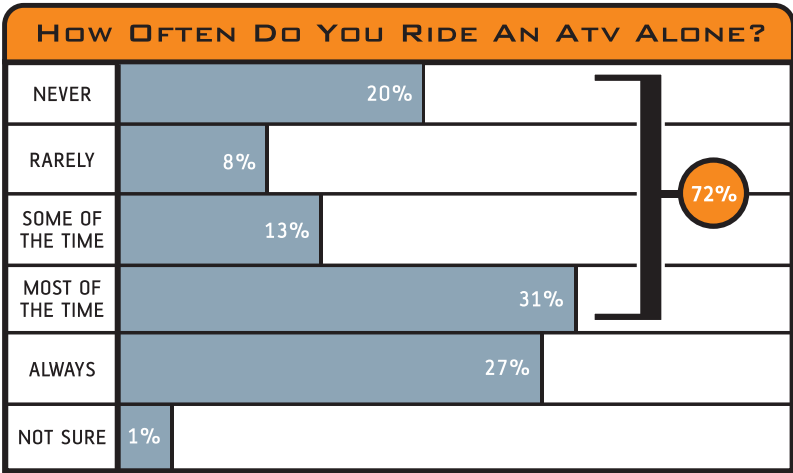
Helmet use would at least DOUBLE with a helmet law.

Only 26% of ATV users reported always wearing a helmet when they rode. This number would increase to 47% if helmets were required by law.



The practice of riding with a passenger would decrease.

Currently, 72% of respondents reported that they had ridden an ATV with a passenger.



Half of those who have driven an ATV reported their passenger was under the age of 16.

PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

	ALL RESPONDENTS	ATV USERS
AGE		
18 – 44 years	28%	52%
45 – 64 years	46%	39%
65 years and older	25%	9%
GENDER		
Male	49%	68%
Female	51%	32%
RACE		
White	85%	92%
Non-White	13%	7%
Refused	2%	< 1%
ANNUAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME		
Less than \$49,999	34%	34%
\$50 – \$74,999	17%	17%
\$75 – \$100,000+	24%	28%
Refused	25%	21%

In June 2006, the Center for Injury Research and Policy at the Columbus Children's Research Institute contracted with TRIAD Research Group to conduct a statewide telephone survey with 838 registered Ohio voters. The purpose of the survey was to assess Ohio voters' attitudes towards possible laws regarding ATV use and safety. The final survey results were weighted by region to accurately represent Ohio voters as a whole. The overall margin of error, based on 838 total respondents, was +/- 3.46% at the 95% confidence level.

To see the full report, obtain references or find out more details, contact Dr. Gary Smith at the Center for Injury Research and Policy.

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