

Teens and all-terrain vehicles is a dangerous combo

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(HealthDay)—Adult all-terrain vehicle (ATV) use is common in children younger than 16 in rural areas, and is linked with heightened risk of injury and death, according to a study published in the July/August issue of the *Annals of Internal Medicine*.

Charles Jennissen, M.D., of the University of Iowa Carver College of Medicine in Iowa City, and colleagues focused on almost 5,000 [kids](#) between the ages of 11 and 16, surveyed at 30 schools across Iowa from November 2010 to April 2013. About 77 percent of the students reported they had been on an ATV. Of those kids, 38 percent said they rode an ATV daily or weekly and 57 percent of young ATV riders said they had been in a crash.

The young riders also are more likely to do things that could get them into a wreck. About 92 percent had ridden with a passenger, 81 percent

had driven on [public roads](#), and 64 percent always or almost always rode without a helmet. Three out of five kids said they had engaged in all three behaviors.

"More kids younger than 16 are dying from ATV crashes than from bicycle crashes. We talk a lot about bicycle safety, but there isn't enough discussed with kids and families about safety when riding an ATV," Jennissen told *HealthDay*. "Kids are not developmentally ready to handle a vehicle like this," he added. "It's a lot of decision making that goes into driving an ATV. It's not hard to push the throttle and make it go, but there's a lot more that goes into it than pushing that throttle."

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