

FACTSHEET



This fact sheet is for education purposes only. Please consult with your doctor or other health professionals to make sure this information is right for your child. If you would like to provide feedback on this fact sheet, please visit: www.schn.health.nsw.gov.au/parents-and-carers/fact-sheets/feedback-form.

Quad bike safety

Quad bikes are 4-wheeled motorcycles which require the user to shift their body weight while riding the vehicle. People do not need a licence to ride them. While quad bikes are mainly intended for farm use, they have become popular for sports and recreation. They range in power from 49cc to 1000cc at a cost of \$699-\$22,099.



Image source: Australian Centre for Agricultural Health and Safety (2008) Factsheet: Farm vehicles, 2 and 4 wheeled motorbikes. Available from: <http://www.aghealth.org.au/index.php?id=5040>

Quad bikes are not designed to carry passengers as they add weight to the vehicle, make it harder to control and make them more likely to tip over. Quad bikes are prone to tipping and rolling when moving at speed or up hills.

How may a child be injured?

Injuries occur in a variety of settings (e.g. at home, on farms and in recreational areas). Most injuries or deaths are caused from driving uphill or at speed, causing the

vehicle to roll over. Other causes include driver inexperience, carrying passengers on the quad bike, a lack of protective equipment, falls from the vehicle or collision with another object.

Falls / crushing

- The most common cause of injury is from the child losing control and the quad bike rolling over on top of them. This may result in severe fractures, abdominal, head and chest injuries and death.

Cuts and bruises

- Children may sustain cuts and bruises, particularly when they are not wearing full body protective clothing.

Strangulation

- Children may suffer strangulation if riding under a clothesline or fence. This injury occurs during times of poor visibility or if the ground is uneven.

Struck by object

- Children may collide with objects and other riders, causing injury to themselves and others.

How common are these injuries?

Quad bikes are a major cause of death and serious injury to children on Australian farms.

Between 1999 and 2015, there were 90 children admitted to The Children's Hospital at Westmead as a result of injuries from quad bikes. Of these children;

- The largest number of children were aged between six and 12 years, with the average age being eight years.

- At least 40% were not wearing a helmet.

There were six deaths from quad bikes among children between 2003 and 2012 in NSW. Of these deaths;

- At least two children were not wearing a helmet.
- Four children were passengers and two were driving.
- Three children were passengers on a quad bike which rolled over (50%).
- Five of the six children were being supervised by an adult.

Research shows that the use of helmets reduces the risk of death by 42%.

Is there a Law or an Australian Standard for quad bikes?

There are no standards in Australia for the import or use of quad bikes. The FCAI (Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries) Members (the peak body for the Automotive Industry in Australia) have voluntarily adopted the USA ANSI/SVIA – 1 2010 Standard which is mandatory in America. This standard requires the vehicles to carry a prominent, relevant age warning, as displayed below.

Manufacturers all advise against children aged 0-16yrs being on an adult size quad bike.

Children have also sustained injuries on child sized quad bikes and there is no evidence that they are safe.

⚠ WARNING

Improper ATV use can result in SEVERE INJURY or DEATH






ALWAYS USE AN APPROVED HELMET AND PROTECTIVE GEAR

NEVER USE ON PUBLIC ROADS

NEVER CARRY PASSENGERS

NEVER USE WITH DRUGS OR ALCOHOL

NEVER operate:

- without proper training or instruction
- at speeds too fast for your skills or the conditions
- on public roads - a collision can occur with another vehicle
- with a passenger - passengers affect balance and steering and increase risk of losing control

ALWAYS:

- use proper riding techniques to avoid vehicle overturns on hills and rough terrain and in turns
- avoid paved surfaces - pavement may seriously affect handling and control

LOCATE AND READ OWNER'S MANUAL. FOLLOW ALL INSTRUCTIONS AND WARNINGS.

⚠ WARNING



NEVER ride as a passenger.

Passengers can cause a loss of control, resulting in SEVERE INJURY or DEATH.

⚠ WARNING



Operation of this ATV by children under the age of 6 increases the risk of severe injury or death.

Adult supervision required for children under age 16.

NEVER permit children under age 6 to operate this ATV.

⚠ WARNING



Operation of this ATV by children under the age of 10 increases the risk of severe injury or death.

Adult supervision required for children under age 16.

NEVER permit children under age 10 to operate this ATV.

⚠ WARNING




Operation of this ATV by children under the age of 12 increases the risk of severe injury or death.

Adult supervision required for children under age 16.

NEVER permit children under age 12 to operate this ATV.

⚠ WARNING




Operation of this ATV by children under the age of 14 increases the risk of severe injury or death.

Adult supervision required for children under age 16.

NEVER permit children under age 14 to operate this ATV.

⚠ WARNING



Operating this ATV if you are under the age of 16 increases your chance of severe injury or death.

NEVER operate this ATV if you are under age 16.

Remember:

Quad bikes should not be used by any child under the age of 16 (as a driver OR passenger). Children do not have the skills and judgment needed, to handle a powered motorcycle.

Children aged 16 years and older should consider whether a quad bike is an appropriate vehicle for the job being undertaken. If they still chose to use a quad bike, they should:

- Fit a crush protection device
- Read the owner's manual and be aware of the manufacturer's warnings.
- Inspect quad bikes each time, before riding.
- Wear a helmet and full protective clothing at all times when riding quad bikes.
- Never take passengers.
- Never ride up or down hills, on uneven surfaces or on public roads. They are NOT all-terrain vehicles.
- Ensure others know where they are riding and when they are expected home.
- Receive formal training and ride in supervised conditions.

Further information is available from the Australian Centre for Agricultural Health and Safety (2014) Safety of Quad and Side-By-Side Vehicles on Australian Farms: A Practical Management Guide.

Available from:

http://www.aghealth.org.au/tinymce_fm/uploaded/fs_docs/guidance/safe_use_of_quads_and_side_by_side_vehicles_on_australian_farms_revised_october_2014.pdf