ATVs and Children

Pre-reading

What do you know about the topic of this reading? What questions do you have?

Definitions:
- Asphyxia – a condition of extreme decrease in oxygen in the body; similar to suffocation
- CPR – Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation – an emergency procedure involving chest compressions to restore oxygenated blood to the brain
- Pediatrics – study and care of infants, children, and adolescents

Reading

A 10 year-old boy was riding his father’s All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV) and attempted to make a jump on a small hill. The front of the ATV came up and rolled back over the child. The father attempted CPR until emergency personnel arrived and rushed his son to the hospital. The cause of death was asphyxia.

A female, age 14, was riding her brother’s adult size ATV on a neighbor’s field. The teenager had ridden the ATV only once before. A neighbor later found the overturned ATV. It was lying on the unresponsive girl’s back. The cause of death was asphyxia.

A male, age 11, was riding on an ATV near his home. After about an hour, his mother could not hear the ATV. She called the police and a search was organized. The boy was found with the ATV lying on top of him. He was taken to the hospital where he died. The cause of death was multiple traumas.

A 12 year-old boy was found dead under his family’s large ATV. The child lost control of the ATV while ascending a small hill, and the ATV landed on top of him. The cause of death was asphyxia.

A young male, age 3, was riding on an ATV with his grandfather. His grandfather turned off the ATV to open a gate, leaving the key in the ignition. As he was opening the gate, his grandson turned the key and put the ATV in motion. The grandfather grabbed the ATV and hung on for 60 to 80 feet until the ATV ran over a hill and flipped. It landed on the child. CPR was administered, but emergency medical personnel pronounced the child dead at the scene. The cause of death was blunt trauma to the abdomen and chest.

These reports are real. They are from medical examiners across the country. In 2004, there were 767 estimated deaths from ATVs. In 2005, there were 136,700 ATV emergency room treated injuries. 40,400 or 30% of those injured were children under 16 years of age. ATVs are not toys. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that no child under age 16 ride an ATV of any size.

Understanding

1. Why did these children die?

2. How old were the victims?

3. Besides the ATV, what other common elements are found in these cases?

4. Who has stated an age minimum on ATV use? What is the age?

5. What does the word trauma mean in this reading?

6. What data supports children using ATVs as a concern?

7. What difficult lesson did the grandfather learn?

Writing

Option A: Summarize the reading in your own words.

Option B: Have you driven or ridden on an ATV? If yes, write about it. Were you concerned about your safety? Why or why not?

Option C: What are your thoughts about kids and ATVs? Should they be allowed to drive or ride them?