



Twenty years of preventing accidental injury.

May 30, 2008

The Honorable Jeff Bingaman  
U.S. Senate  
Chairman, Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Bingaman:

On behalf of Safe Kids USA, a member of Safe Kids Worldwide, I want to call your attention to the dangerous practice of children riding all-terrain vehicles (ATVs). In light of your Committee's hearing on June 5<sup>th</sup> concerning off-highway vehicle management on public lands, please know that Safe Kids USA recommends that **children under the age of 16 never operate all-terrain vehicles of any size, including youth-sized ATVs.**

As you know, ATVs are motorized vehicles designed for recreation and farm, ranch and industrial work. Each year, an estimated 130 children under age 16 die and approximately 40,000 are seriously injured in ATV-related incidents. ATVs are inherently difficult to operate, and children under 16 do not have the cognitive and physical capabilities to operate these vehicles safely. In addition, ATV-related injuries tend to be serious and, while wearing a helmet can reduce the risk of head injuries, there are no safety devices to protect against other injuries commonly sustained while riding ATVs. **We urge the Committee to consider a policy, if not an outright ban, on the use of ATVs for children under age 16 on our country's public lands.**

If Safe Kids can be of any assistance to you, please do not hesitate to contact me at (202) 662-4463. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Alan Korn  
Director of Public Policy & General Counsel

*Safe Kids Worldwide is a global network of organizations whose mission is to prevent accidental childhood injury, a leading killer of children 14 and under. More than 450 coalitions in 16 countries bring together health and safety experts, educators, corporations, foundations, governments and volunteers to educate and protect families.*