

# Safe Driving Teen Monthly Bulletin

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## 13-year-old girl killed in ATV wreck

A 13-year-old Cedartown girl died in an all-terrain vehicle wreck Sunday night, according to officials. According to Georgia State Patrol officials: She was a passenger on the ATV. She and the driver, were traveling north on Garmon Road in the Akes Station Road area south of Cedartown around 7:30 p.m. when the driver lost control in a curve. The ATV struck a ditch and ejected both of them.

Source: <http://www.RN-T.com> ♦

## Lessons Learned

This was just one of eight deaths and multiple injuries of children

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For Teens and their Parents



under the age of 20 on All Terrain Vehicles (ATVs) in the past month alone.

The problem is that too many people are riding ATVs with little or no training and are sometimes riding vehicles that are too powerful for them to control safely.

Between 2000 and 2006 an average of 640 people were killed and 123,014 people were treated in emergency rooms every year as a result of ATV crashes. Forty percent of the deaths involved children. Between 2000 and 2008, an average of 277 children under the age of 16 were killed and 38,233 were treated in emergency rooms every year as a result of ATV crashes.

Off-road vehicles encompass two wheeled mini-bikes, and motor-bikes along with three and four wheeled ATVs. All of these vehicles share common attributes which make them dangerous; powerful engines and a high center of gravity. While the three and four wheeled ATVs, with their fat balloon tires, may look stable, their high center of gravity, little or no suspension, and the ability to attain speeds of 30 to 50 mph easily allows them to tip or roll over in uneven terrain. The powerful engines are often too powerful for young riders to control and they can easily "get away" from their operators. Many of the deaths occur when the vehicle, going too fast, flips over pinning or crushing the rider beneath them. Another common problem leading to serious injury and death of riders is lack of helmet use. Even at speeds as low as 25 mph, the crash forces exerted on a rider who has been ejected from a vehicle are tremendous.

At least two of the ATV deaths in the past month involved children who were riding on or crossing a roadway. ATVs are considered to be off-road vehicles, meaning, under the law, they are not allowed on any public roadways.

[The ATV Safety Institute](#), created by the ATV industry has suggested basic safety rules for ATVs. They also provide safety training. Unfortunately, not all states require safety training so it is up to the parents of those riders to seek out an ATV safety training program on their own.

## Teens Don't See Texting As Dangerous As Driving Under The Influence

A new State Farm® survey, conducted by Harris Interactive, shows that despite academic research indicating the consequences of texting while driving can be as severe as drunk driving, some teens still don't see it that way.

A Source: <http://www.prnewswire.com>

## Lessons Learned

This new study on teen driving attitudes shows that teens are still not getting the word that texting can be, in many cases, more dangerous than driving under the influence.

The survey of 14 to 17 year olds who already have or will soon get a driver's license shows that while 55 percent agree that they could be killed if they drink and drive, only 36 percent feel that if they regularly texting behind the wheel could be fatal.

As far as their chances of being involved in a collision, 78 percent felt the chances of being involved in a collision were greater if they drink and drive but only 63 percent feel their chances of being involved in a collision were greater if they were texting while driving.

Several studies over the past few years have shown that texting while driving can be even more dangerous than

driving under the influence. A recent study conducted in Great Britain showed that, for 17 to 24 year old drivers, reaction time was reduced by 35 percent while typing a text message compared to a reduction of 12 percent after consuming alcohol at the legal limit.

Another University of Utah study showed that 20 year old drivers using a cell phone had the same reaction times as a 70 year old.

A study by the Virginia Tech Driving institute showed that most collisions or near collisions take place within three seconds of a driving distraction.

**Parents need to talk with their teens** - Parents don't hesitate to talk with their teens about the dangers of drinking and driving but they also need to start a dialogue about the dangers of texting and cell phone use in general. Parents also need to look at their own driving behaviors. A study by the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia revealed that many teens are following their parent's driving example when it comes to the use of cell phones and texting behind the wheel. If their parents do it, it must not be all that dangerous.

Parents need to set the example of not using their cell phones while they drive. While driving, they should allow the cell phone to take a message and not answer the phone unless they have pulled off the road and come to a complete stop.

There are also products such as "Textecution" on the market that uses the cell phone's GPS to determine that the vehicle is in motion and kills the texting feature. Parents may want to consider getting that feature for their teen's phone.

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## Tips for Parents: FDA looks to curb "robotripping"

An FDA panel met earlier this month to consider whether or not to require that common over-the-counter cough medications such as Robitussin or Nyquil be listed as prescription drugs.

The need for the review has come about due to the abuse of these drugs, primarily by teenagers, who are looking for a cheap "legal" way to get high. When taken as directed, in small doses, these drugs are safe and effective but, when taken in high doses, up to 25 times the recommended dose, they can cause hallucinations and mimic the effects of psychoactive drugs.

The practice of abusing these drugs is known as "robotripping", referring to Robitussin, one of the most commonly abused drugs. The high comes from the effects of the drug's active ingredient dextromethorphan (DXM) which is used in up to 100 common over-the-counter medications. DXM is chemically similar to codeine and the side effects from large doses can be very dangerous.

According to the website [www.dxmstories.com](http://www.dxmstories.com) common side effects can include:

- Confusion
- Dizziness
- Double or blurred vision
- Slurred speech
- Impaired physical coordination
- Abdominal pain
- Nausea and vomiting
- Rapid heart beat
- Drowsiness
- Numbness of fingers and toes
- Disorientation

DXM abusers describe different "plateaus" ranging from mild distortions of color and sound to visual hallucinations and "out-of-body," feelings of detachment from the environment and self, sensations, and loss of motor control.

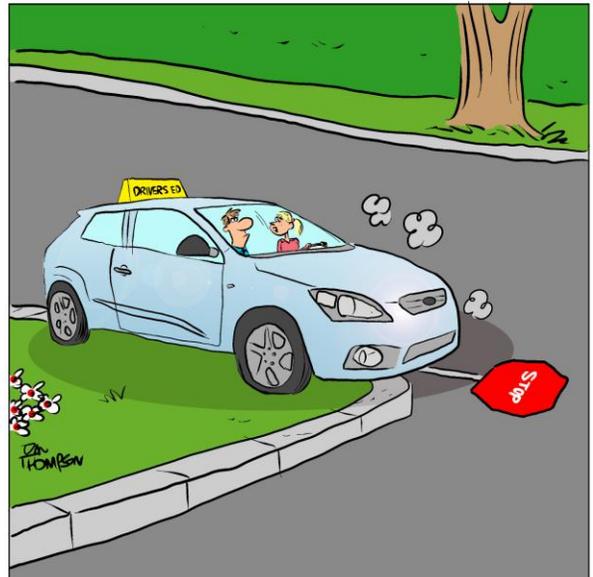
When taken in very high doses, DXM can cause respiratory arrest leading to death. According to the FDA, DXM abuse resulted in approximately 8,000 emergency room visits in 2008.

Abuse of this drug can be hard to detect because parents may forget how much of this medication they had on hand and not notice how quickly it is disappearing. Parents need

to be aware of this danger and look for warning signs in their children such as:

- Changes in mood or behavior
- Sudden drop in grades
- Sudden loss of friends
- Sleeping much more -- or much less,
- Loss of appetite
- Frequent nausea
- Becoming unusually secretive, or lying

Parents should also inventory the drugs in their medicine cabinets and throw out any that are old or expired. While convenient to have on hand, parents may want to consider purchasing these drugs only when needed for an illness and then throwing out the remainder after the illness has passed.



"I SAW THE STOP SIGN...THAT'S WHY I STOPPED...I DON'T NEED TO WEAR MY UGLY GLASSES WHEN I DRIVE."

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