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ATV Injuries and Deaths Among Children Decrease *Numbers Trending Downward But Still High*

Washington, DC – According to data released by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, child deaths and serious injuries caused by all-terrain vehicles appear to have decreased in 2008. Tragically, however, at least 74 children lost their lives and more than 37,000 were injured seriously enough to require treatment in a hospital emergency department.

“The latest data from the CPSC appears to indicate that the numbers of deaths and injuries caused by ATVs declined in 2008 as compared to 2007,” stated Rachel Weintraub, Director of Product Safety for Consumer Federation of America. “ATVs are still causing hundreds of death and well over a hundred thousand injuries a year, which make them one of the most dangerous products that CPSC oversees.”

“We need to understand why these numbers have declined: is it because incidents with recreational off-highway vehicles (ROVs) were taken out of the report; is it because fewer children are riding ATVs that are too large for them; is it because of higher gas prices; or is it because educational efforts are becoming effective?” continued Weintraub. “We need to replicate what is going right and do more to reduce these numbers significantly.”

"ATVs continue to represent a significant risk of injury and death for children," said H. Garry Gardner, MD FAAP, chair of the American Academy of Pediatrics Committee on Injury, Violence, and Poison Prevention. "Children under the age of 16 should not operate or ride ATVs."

The CPSC released its 2008 Annual Report of ATV-Related Deaths and Injuries on January 22. Major findings include:

- Estimates of serious injuries requiring emergency room treatment among people of all ages decreased by a statistically significant 10.5 percent, from 150,900 in 2007 to 135,100 in 2008. The 2008 estimate is roughly the same as those for the years 2004 and 2005.
- The estimated number of ATV-related fatalities for all ages decreased from 699 in 2007 to 410 in 2008. The agency notes, however, that the 2008 data is not considered complete.
- In 2008, ATVs killed at least 74 children younger than 16, accounting for 18 percent of fatalities.

- Children under 16 suffered an estimated 37,700 serious injuries in 2008 – or 28 percent of all injuries. The 2008 emergency department-treated injury estimate for children younger than 16 years of age represents a 6 percent decrease, which is not a statistically significant decrease, over the 2007 estimate.

It is important to note that there is always a lag with death reports making their way to CPSC and therefore the 2008 statistics should not be considered complete. For example, when child death statistics for the year 2006 were first reported in 2007, the number stood at 111; since that time, additional data collection has increased that number to 143

In 2006, consumer groups filed a petition with the CPSC calling for CPSC to ban the sale of adult-size ATVs for use for children. While the agency under the leadership of Chairman Hal Stratton denied the petition, the CPSC began a rulemaking process to create new ATV safety standards. New CPSC Chairman Inez Tenenbaum has reinvigorated the rulemaking process and directed staff to follow the mandate of the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act and pass new federal safety rules. Both Consumer Federation of America and AAP continue to call upon the agency to reject the manufacture of a transitional, “youth model” ATV for 14- to 16-year-olds capable of traveling at speeds up to 38 miles per hour.

The CPSC, industry and many consumer advocates recommend that children ages 12 through 15 not ride ATVs with engines larger than 90 cc’s. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that no child under age 16 ride an ATV of any size.

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Consumer Federation of America is a non-profit association of 300 consumer groups, with a combined membership of more than 50 million people. CFA was founded in 1968 to advance the consumers' interest through advocacy and education. www.consumerfed.org

American Academy of Pediatrics is an organization of 60,000 primary care pediatricians, pediatric medical subspecialists and pediatric surgical specialists dedicated to the health, safety and well being of infants, children, adolescents and young adults. www.aap.org