



NATURE OF THE WORK CAN PUT CHILDREN AT RISK WORKING ON FARM OR RANCH

Large animals, large equipment, youth wanting to emulate adults can lead to accidents but there are ways to reduce risk of injuries, deaths

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Every three days a child dies and every day 33 children are injured in agricultural-related incidents in the United States.

Not all accidents can be prevented. There are recommendations that can help avoid tragedies.

Tractors were the leading source of fatalities in 2014 followed by All Terrain Vehicles (ATVs) for working youth. Animals were the leading source of injury for non-working youth and those visiting farms and ranches.

Many children are involved in

the daily care of animals and acreage alongside parents and problems can arise when they are asked to do tasks not scaled for their age and development.

Youths Learn by Watching

Children learn a job by watching parents and grandparents. Be sure to use good safety procedures and model how to do a task safely each time. Children 7 to 9 years of age may not easily remember job skills from day to day and may have to be shown several times how to do a job.

Children this age still do not have

the hand-eye coordination of an adult and lack the finger and hand strength required to perform some jobs. Give youth short, easily completed jobs. They may be given a 5-gallon bucket to carry when they can only confidently handle a 1-gallon ice cream bucket.

When working around animals, keep in mind children have a slower reaction time. Teach children about animal flight zones. A flight zone is similar to your personal space – the distance from an animal a handler must maintain for the animal to feel comfortable. Just because an animal

Think about establishing a play area away from all equipment, animals, and water if children are visiting. This gives kids a designated play area where they are safe, reducing injury risks.



is comfortable with your family doesn't mean it will like everyone, especially dogs. Young children often don't understand that a dog inside may not behave the same outside.

Basic safety training includes how to bend, lift, and climb safely. Loose fitting clothing, clothes with strings, or having long hair not tied back can result in an accident in the blink of an eye.

Cautious Around Equipment

Be sure children know to stay away from running equipment. Many landowners have a tractor or mower equipped with a power take off (PTO). A PTO can spin 1,000 times per minute – that is 16 times per second! Imagine a shoelace or sweatshirt string getting caught in the PTO. How fast could you react? You would need nearly a second to realize you'd been caught.

Seeing everything out of the windows of a tractor or hearing cries for help over tractor engine noise is difficult. If a young child is standing behind a tractor, there is a greater

chance of being run over. Don't assume because the tractor isn't in gear a curious child can't get into trouble. There are lots of levers and knobs of interest to a young child. It is best not to let them get in the habit of playing with these levers and knobs. Shut the equipment down completely if an adult is not on the tractor with the child.

Follow all recommendations for restricting access to chemicals and pesticides.

Make Location Known for Emergency Personnel

Ensure your address is clearly displayed at the road access point so emergency responders can find your place. Let responders know ahead of time if your main access happens to be impassible during certain times of year, such as winter or summer where there may be snow or standing water.

All farms and ranches should have an emergency plan everyone knows. Such things to include are where the main power shut off is, where fuel may be stored, or if there

are pesticides stored on site.

We need to ensure children are kept safe and unharmed while either living on or visiting a farm or ranch. Be sure they are given age and development appropriate tasks.

To see more agricultural safety stories

Read one agricultural producer's brush with death while driving his tractor (texting and driving don't mix when operating a vehicle and they don't when operating equipment, either) and read about how youth can be protected from farm and ranch accidents (which include lawn mower accidents). See these subjects and many more at bit.ly/agsafetyfirst.

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