

Natural curiosity can lead children into dangerous situations. This can be especially true on a farm. Research suggests that an estimated 27,000 children under the age of 20 years who reside on our nation's farms and ranches are injured each year. This estimate does not include children who work on farms/ranches but do not reside on them. Therefore, the injury toll is actually higher.

<sup>1</sup>North Dakota Farm Bureau



## FARM & SUMMER SAFETY

As a parent, some of the questions you should keep in mind when discussing farm and summer safety with your children include<sup>1</sup>:


1. Are your chemicals stored in locked and posted storage areas?
2. Do you have designated play areas for family, children and visitors? Do you forbid children to play where farm machinery is moving about?
3. Do all family members know where to find the "Shut-Off" mechanism on each piece of equipment?
4. Are there large, visible numbers on the outside of each "out" building for easy explanation should it be necessary to call an ambulance or the fire department?
5. Are there up to date first aid kits in your house, shop, trucks and tractors?
6. Is there easy access to a fire extinguisher in the house, farm buildings and implements?
7. Are emergency telephone numbers posted by each telephone on your farm/ranch?
8. Are safety belts accessible in the cars, trucks, pickups and on tractors? Are family members and employees encouraged to use safety belts?
9. Are protective shields in place on farm machinery?
10. Are your slow moving vehicle (SMV) signs in place and still reflective?
11. Do you forbid riders on tractors and other farm machinery?
12. When friends and family visit, are they made aware of hazardous areas on your farm? List them here as your reminder to do so.

We often use words, which children may not understand. All-terrain vehicle (ATV), rollover protective structures (ROPs), slow moving vehicle (SMV) and power take off (PTO) are all acronyms, which may not make sense to kids. Explain the words and machinery. **The PTO rotates (turns) at least nine times per second. It moves so fast that you could not get out of the way if you or your clothing were to get caught.**

 **TRACTORS**

Pages 6-7

One of the biggest hazards for children is the tractor. Being an extra rider on any tractor is dangerous, even if the tractor has a cab. Children can be injured or killed by falling from the tractor and being run over. The same could happen if they were riding in the back end of a pickup truck. A good rule of thumb is **No Seat, No Rider!** Also, playing around tractors is dangerous because drivers cannot see or hear nearby children.

 **GRAIN & GRAIN BINS**

Page 8

Children do not understand that piles of grain are not big sandboxes and that they can become trapped in just 3-4 seconds. Each year children suffocate in gravity flow wagons. Explain what suffocation means and the importance of not playing on the grain in a wagon, bin or truck. Stress that it only takes a few seconds to get trapped.

 **CHEMICAL SAFETY**

Page 9

Chemicals should be placed out of reach of children. "Danger! Never Play Here" decals should be placed on chemical storage areas to remind children of the potential danger of chemicals. In addition to educating children on pesticide safety, steps that adults can take to help avoid accidental poisoning include:

- When using pesticides always read the entire label, follow the directions and precautionary statement and use proper amounts.
- When applying pesticides around the home, remove children and their toys, along with pets and their toys from the area. Keep everyone away from the area that had been treated for at least the recommended length of time on the pesticide label.
- After using a pesticide, clean equipment, clothing and yourself carefully.
- Properly dispose of empty pesticide containers (follow the disposal section on the label).

- Store pesticides out of children's reach, in a locked area.
- Never store pesticides in cabinets with or near food, animal feed or medical supplies.
- If interrupted while applying a pesticide, be sure to close the container properly and put it out of reach of any children who may come to the area while you are gone.
- Never remove labels from containers, and never transfer pesticides to other containers. Children may mistake them for food or drink.
- Never put rodent or insect baits where children can find them, pick them up and put them in their mouths.
- Teach children that pesticides are poisons, something they should never touch or eat.
- Keep the telephone number of the poison control center near each phone<sup>2</sup> (1-800-222-1222). Have the pesticide container available when you call.  
<sup>2</sup>(Farm Safety 4 Just Kids)

 **ELECTRICAL SAFETY**

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It only takes several hundred milliamps (1/1000 of an amp) to cause the heart to stop beating and still the muscle around the lungs. This can cause cardiac arrest or suffocation to occur. Electrical safety on the farm is important. Parents should follow these basic rules:

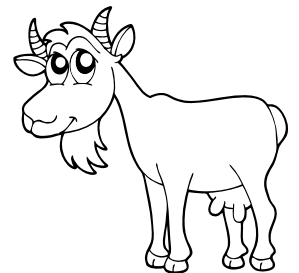
- Inspect all tools, equipment and appliances for faulty plugs, frayed cords and improperly connected stationary equipment.
- Electrical appliances and tools should be turned off, disengaged and kept inaccessible to young children.
- Fire protection should be available around electrical equipment.

**ANIMAL SAFETY**

Pages 11-12


Children need protection from animals that may attack or bite them. Parents should:

- Have rules to safeguard children from dogs that might attack or bite.
- Ensure small children cannot wander into animal pens and stockyards with confined stock.
- Help kids identify characteristics that predict the behavior of animals.
- Remind children to play away from animals and to stay outside of the fence.




Having extra riders on all terrain vehicles (ATV) is dangerous, especially for young children. The capability of an ATV to travel over rough terrain is conducive to bouncing the passenger off. Prevent children from getting hurt by not allowing them to be extra riders. Children under the age of 16 should not ride on ATVs. Children over age 16 who are allowed to ride ATVs should be taught:

- Knowledge, coordination, and body size influence your ability to ride on ATVs safely.
- If only one front or rear wheel goes over the obstacle, be prepared to shift your weight and maintain balance as the ATV tips to one side.
- ATV accidents can include body, as well as equipment damage. The most dangerous situation occurs when a person is injured and alone, miles away from help.
- If children are riding on an ATV, make sure they have all the necessary protective equipment, such as a helmet and chest protector.

 **EMERGENCIES** Page 14

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For all emergencies, fire, medical, and police – teach children about the proper use of 911 (if 911 is used in your area). If other emergency numbers are used, make sure to post them.

 **FIRST AID** Page 15-16

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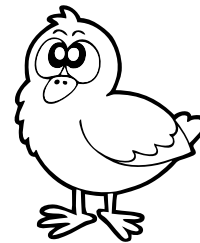
First aid should include having an emergency plan for dealing with serious injuries. First aid kits suitable for children should be kept on hand and children should be taught how to use them.

 **LAWN AND YARD SAFETY** Page 17

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Lawn and yard safety is a family effort.

- Pick up litter in the yard before mowing.
- Young children must not be allowed to play in or around areas where lawn mowers or other yard equipment are being used or stored.
- Children under age six should be kept indoors during mowing.
- Never allow children to ride with you while mowing.
- Children should not operate lawn mowers until they have displayed the necessary levels of judgment, strength, coordination and maturity.
- Children operating law mowers should also be educated in the mower's use and safety.



 **WEATHER EMERGENCIES** Pages 18-19

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Children can become anxious and fearful during bad weather. Children should be taught the differences between weather watches and weather warnings. In addition, they should know which weather station to listen to during inclement weather. Being prepared and knowing what to do could save your life.

 **RAILROAD SAFETY** Page 20

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For the sake of your child, please help to strengthen his or her understanding of the need for extreme caution around railroad tracks. This message is one you and your child should remember and benefit from throughout a lifetime. The best way to teach your child about the importance of safety at railroad crossings is by your own actions. Please set a good example, and remember, **trains can't stop quickly, you can.**

 **SEAT BELT SAFETY** Page 21

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Seat belts are the most effective means of saving lives and reducing serious injuries in traffic crashes. They're also the law. Never carry more passengers than you have safety belts for. Using seat belts consistently and correctly can significantly reduce the rate of injury in a crash. **Set an example** for your children and use your seat belt.

 **WATER SAFETY** Page 22

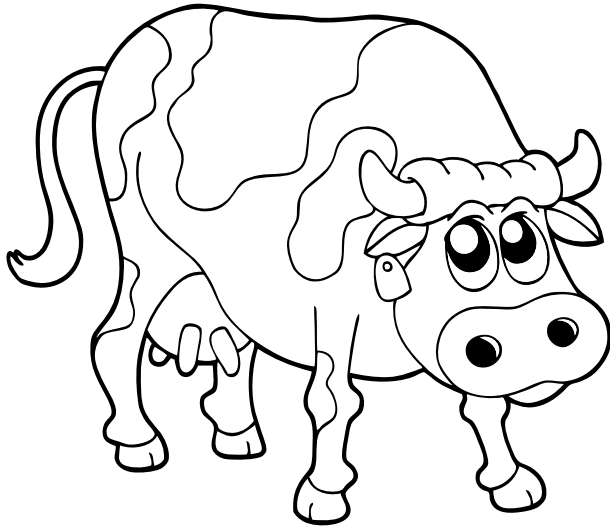
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Water safety is important both on the farm and during recreational activities. Nine out of ten drownings occur in inland waters, most within a few feet of safety. They also involved boats that were less than 20 feet in length and most of the victims owned personal flotation devices, but were not wearing them. **Set an example for your children and wear your life jacket.**

Effective fences should be placed around the septic tanks, sheep dips, seepage pits, ponds, dams, pools and creeks to prevent children from drowning in them. Also be aware of water that may collect in ditches.

Remember, you can get a sunburn on a cloudy day and should take sun safety into consideration on both sunny and cloudy days. Parents should keep these tips in mind:

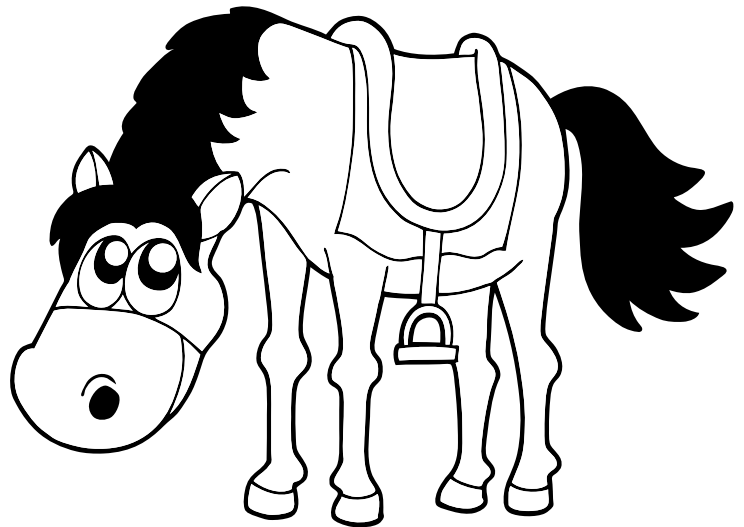
- The peak hours when the sun's rays are the strongest are between 10:00 am and 4:00 pm.
- Apply waterproof sunscreen (at least 15 SPF) 15 to 30 minutes before going out into the sun and reapply frequently.
- Dress children in light-colored clothing.
- Encourage children to wear a hat and sunglasses.
- Prevent dehydration by making sure your child has plenty of fluids before, during and after play. Water is the best choice.



Bicycle safety and rules should be taught to children as soon as they are old enough to learn to ride, including the use of safety helmets. Parents should never allow a child to use a helmet that has been worn in a crash because it will not provide adequate protection. Once a helmet has been involved in a crash, a new one must be obtained. Helmets should also be worn when using scooters, skate boards, and in-line skates.

 **PARENTS, DO YOU:**

- Set a good safety example for your children?
- Safeguard children from potential hazards?



Altru Health System is proud to serve as the lead agency for Safe Kids Grand Forks. To learn more on rural safety or for additional childhood injury prevention resources, visit [www.safekidsgf.com](http://www.safekidsgf.com), call 701.780.1489 or e-mail [safekids@altru.org](mailto:safekids@altru.org).

