

CHILD SAFETY ON FARMS

Around 20 children are fatally injured on Australian farms each year and around 500 are hospitalised for on-farm injury. For children under five years, the greatest risk is drowning in farm dams. This is followed by runovers or falls from vehicles, including quad bikes, cars and utes. Quad bikes are the leading cause of death to children 5-14 years of age; and for children who are visitors to farms. Farm motorbikes (for boys) and horse-riding (for girls), are leading causes of hospitalised injury. Children and young people continue to be seriously injured or killed on farms due to practices such as not using helmets or seatbelts; and riding in the back of utes and trailers.

A SAFE PLACE TO PLAY

A securely fenced house yard supported by close and active supervision can help prevent toddlers and young children wandering away un-noticed, accessing farm dams, roadways and other farm hazards.



- Is there a securely fenced houseyard or play area for young children to play, separated from farm hazards?**
- Are house yard fences 1.2-1.5 m high; have less than 10cm ground clearance; and no footholes for climbing?
- Are house yard gates self-latching and child resistant?
- Does the safe play area have shade and interesting things for children to do?



WATER

- Are swimming pools, effluent ponds, channels or dams near the house securely fenced?
- Are tanks, wells and troughs near the house fitted with lids/mesh - and are unused dips and ditches filled in?
- Have those who look after children been alerted to 'keep watch' when children are near water or can wander off into water?
- Do you know how to resuscitate a drowning child?**



HORSES

- Are children only allowed to ride horses suited to their age and riding ability?
- Are children appropriately instructed and supervised when riding and handling horses?
- Do children always wear a well fitting equestrian helmet and smooth-soled boots when riding horses on the farm?**

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FARM MOTORCYCLES

- Are children appropriately trained and supervised when learning to ride two-wheeled motorcycles?
- Do children ride bikes of an appropriate size? Can they lift the bike off the ground unaided; and can their feet touch the ground when astride the bike?
- Do riders always wear a correctly fitted motorcycle helmet, long pants, and sturdy footwear?**
- Does the farm adopt manufacturers' recommendations to:
 - Prevent children under 16 yrs riding quad bikes?
 - Prevent passengers riding on quad bikes?



FARM VEHICLES AND MACHINERY

- Are drivers careful when moving vehicles near the house in case children are present?
- Are keys kept out of reach of children when vehicles are not in use?
- Do children always use seatbelts or proper restraints in vehicles; and never ride in the back of utilities?**
- Do you prevent children from riding as passengers on tractors and mobile plant?
- Are children generally encouraged to keep clear of tractors and machinery on your farm?



OTHER HAZARDS AND 'OUT OF BOUNDS' RULES

- Are 'out-of-bounds' rules regularly reinforced with children who are not with a supervising adult?
- Do 'out-of-bounds' areas include hazardous places such as water storages, machinery and vehicles, silos, workshops and areas where stock are yarded?
- Are hazards such as stockyards, firearms, chemicals, electricity, noise and silos that children could access on your farm, been identified and addressed?



For farm safety checklists and other information on farm safety risks and controls, go to aghealth.sydney.edu.au or contact:

AgHealth Australia
PO Box 256 Moree NSW 2400
Ph. (02) 6882 1486 Email: aghealth.usyd.edu.au

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