

INSIDE GRUNDY COUNTY
By Bill Arndorfer
Grundy County Extension Education Director
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Grundy County Extension recently hosted a farm safety day camp along with several partners who covered safety issues related to lawn mowers, chemicals, machinery, guns, outdoors, grain bins, grain handling, fire, sun, ATV, first aid, tractor/machinery blind spots, farm hazards and railroads. Volunteers from area businesses and organizations shared their time and talents in covering these important topics with elementary aged youth. Farm safety is an important issue for farm children and those who will visit a farm. There is not enough room in this column to review all of the safety messages shared during the farm safety day camp but the following are some highlights.

Tractors and machinery are involved in three out of four farm injuries to children. While it is impossible to completely childproof a farm, there are steps that can be followed to help minimize the risk. Often times adults over estimate the ability of a child to follow instruction and take on responsibility. Following a few safety rules will help to reduce this risk to children. Never allow children to drive a tractor. Post "No Rider" decals on tractors and do not allow passengers. Never allow children in work areas. Make sure master shields are in place on power take off units and augers. Always know where children are when backing up and double check blind spots.

One third of all entrapments and suffocations in flowing grain involve children under age fourteen. Never allow children to play in grain, ride in grain wagons or get into bins or hoppers. Never allow children in areas where grain is loaded or unloaded. Grain entrapments happen quickly and the youth learned how much effort would be required to pull someone from grain.

At least half of the U.S. deaths from pesticides happen to children under age ten. Children are naturally curious and can be attracted to containers and bright colors. They tend to put things in their mouths. Teach children at age two not to eat or drink anything unless given to them by a trusted adult. Keep toxic substances in original containers with the label about first aid procedures and chemicals involved. Keep all toxic substances on high shelves in either a locked building or inaccessible area. Youth in attendance learned what type of household and agricultural products are dangerous.

Falls from farm machinery and in buildings are a major cause of injuries under age nine. Never allow children to enter a farm building alone. Lock silos and bins. Make fixed ladders inaccessible.

Electricity is always a danger for children, especially on farms. For children under three, cover outlets and keep cords out of reach. For children of any age, shield all electrical boxes and wiring. Unplug tools and appliances after use.

For more information on farm safety for children, contact the Grundy Office of ISU Extension at 319-824-6979 and ask for publication Pm-1592.