

Kids' KOrner

Farm Accidents Blight Young Lives

No one likes to think about accidents and dying. Yet many accidents happen because children do things that they did not know could hurt them.

About 300 kids are killed each year in farm accidents and at least 5,000 more are injured seriously. Many are permanently disabled.

The following stories are not meant to scare you but to teach you dangers so that you will not get hurt or killed.

Much of the information is

taken from *Farm Safety For "Just Kids"* and from *Successful Farming*.

Two years ago David Virnig was a typical 13-year-old farm boy who loved helping with the farm work and wasn't too fond of school. Then, on one October day, his life changed in a few shattering seconds.

He was helping his brothers unload a silage wagon on the family farm near Hillman, Minnesota. When he reached for a switch

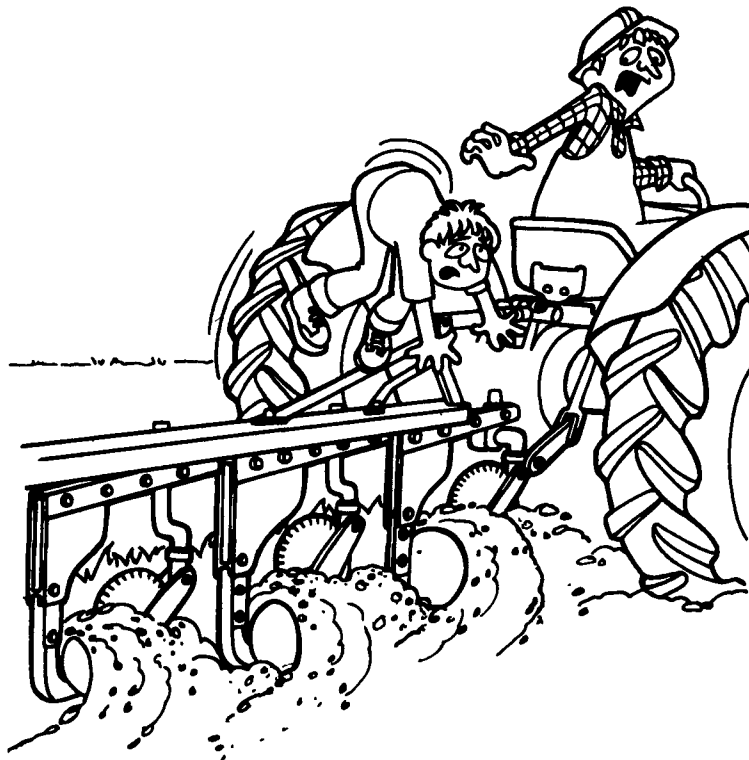
across the PTO shaft, his shirt caught and he was dragged into the shaft.

Today he still is much like other kids—except he wears a pair of mechanical arms with hooks for hands, and a sweatshirt with "Hookman" emblazoned on his back.

David, who was hospitalized for three months, can write, use a word processor, drive a retrofitted tractor and wield a fork and spoon. He doesn't plan to farm, but hopes to stay in an ag-related field.

"I would tell other kids who work around equipment to take it slow, watch what they're doing and try to keep their mind on the job," David advises.

Since David's accident, his father, Andrew Jr., has devised a guard for the silage box. He and his wife Marlene are facing a huge medical bill which threatens to claim their farm of 21 years.



Tractor Accidents

Although manufacturers are designing safety features into tractors, the accident frequency continues to rise. Of all fatal machinery accidents, 70 percent involve tractors and of these more than half are overturn accidents. A great majority of these accidents could be prevented—consider the following cases and the preventative suggestions.

Case Study No.1

A young teenage boy was attempting to pull an anchor post out with a 40 H.P. tractor when the tractor overturned and pinned him underneath. The boy was pronounced dead at the scene.

1. Always hook a chain or cable to the lowest point of the tractor—never on the axle or top link of the three point hitch.

2. Rollover protection, either a roll bar or crush-proof cab should be on every tractor.

3. Never chain the wheel to a log, tree or fence rail for traction, get help.

4. Only allow experienced operators on your tractors as they are powerful and lethal—not a toy.

5. Horseplay with tractors and showboating is gambling with lousy odds.

Case Study No. 2

A young farmer was fueling his tractor while it was running as it was spring seeding and he was in a hurry. The fuel caught fire and he was severely burned. He wasn't even able to do his own harvesting! Cost: Thousands of dollars for a tractor, custom operator costs, wages and reduced yield on crops.

1. Never fuel your tractor when it is hot—always shut tractor off when fueling.

2. Keep a fire extinguisher and first aid kit mounted on your tractor.

3. Service and adjust your equipment before starting the tractor.

4. Never turn the radiator cap completely when the tractor is hot—just turn it to the safety stop until the pressure is relieved.

Case Study No. 3

Two teenage boys are using a farm tractor for transportation after working hours on an Indiana farm. Both were killed instantly when the tractor rolled into a ditch.

1. NO RIDERS—the farm tractor is designed for one person only—the operator.

2. Do not succumb to the whims of your children—keep them off tractors and farm equipment.

Safe Kids Are No Accident

Two years ago Robert McNutt and his wife, Mary, stopped to see their daughter, Linda, her husband, Jim, and their five children. Linda and the kids were outside with Jim's father, Russell Hoskins. A neighbor, Marvin Miller, pulled a gravity wagon into the yard and began unloading it into the bin with auger. Soon afterward three of the children, including Miller's 8-year-old son, began playing on top of the 300-bushel wagon. McNutt saw Miller's son yelling, but he couldn't hear him above the noise of the machinery and didn't see anything wrong.

When Miller emerged from the grain bin, he realized his son was screaming that McNutt's grandson, David, 10, was under the corn. McNutt quickly shut off the grain auger. He and Miller found David's arm sticking out of the grain and 14-year-old Lisa buried in corn up to her chest. They couldn't pull him out or even move the corn away from his face.

Miller jumped out and opened a gate. McNutt and Lisa began to sink, but she managed to cling to the side of the wagon. Before McNutt became submerged, he cupped his hands in front of his face.

Then Linda climbed into the wagon and became partially buried. Hoskins, age 77, climbed in to stop her from sinking.

But while McNutt was submerged, David's legs emerged in the gate opening, and Miller pulled him out. He was unconscious and turning blue. They removed the corn from his mouth and began CPR.

In a few moments, the second gate of the wagon opened, the grain began to flow, and McNutt emerged unharmed. By that time, David was on his feet.

It was a near tragedy for four people.

Absolutely! no extra riders on tractors.



Check position of people before starting up machinery.

Ten Seconds To Darkness

by Paul Howes

I'm usually real careful around anhydrous. I always wear my goggles. But this time I was in a hurry. Dad's tractor had just broken down, and the suppliers' truck was pulling in with a replacement tank.

I can still see my goggles laying on the fender of the tractor as I picked up the transfer hose to flip it over the tank. The moment the valve on the end of the hose hit the

tank, ammonia shot out and hit me right in the face. Fortunately, I was only a few feet from the river and my father dragged me to the shore.

The terrible burns on my face and esophagus have healed pretty well by now. But my left eye is heavily scarred. People frequently stare at it or withdraw altogether. My right eye is very sensitive to light and is painful, and some days my vision is only 20/200 with it.

Readers Write

Hi,

My name is Dawn Louise Zimmerman. I have three sisters and two brothers. Jay had a birthday this week. He is 9; Dawn, 8; Malinda, 6; Dennis, 3; Lori, 20 months; and Lois, 8 months old.

One morning we woke up. I went to look if our dog had pups and she did! She had nine pups!

One day we were playing school. Our mom came down to the basement and said, "I have a surprise for you."

"What? What?" "We begged, 'What is the surprise?'"

She said, "Our heifer had a calf!"

We quick put our coats on and went to look. Our calf was black. Its mother was not nice to it at first. We did not name it yet.

We have 50 steers and one heifer.

Goodbye,

Dawn Louise Zimmerman
Newmanstown

Safety Training Falls Short

Two years ago last fall, Keith Algreen, was helping his church group raise funds for a boy who needed a new liver. "If anything ever happens to me, he sure could have my liver," Keith told his mother, Marilyn Adams. Two days later, the 11-year-old suffocated in a gravity-flow wagon. Thanks to Keith's organs, four people lead normal lives.

We had no idea how dangerous a gravity wagon could be," Adams points out. "Keith was just a little boy. But he was doing an adult job alone."

To cope with pain and to prevent similar tragedies, this Iowa woman formed a national safety group, called, Farm Safety For "Just Kids."

If you would like to know more about farm safety, contact Farm Safety for "Just Kids," 716 Main St., P.O. Box 458, Earlham, Iowa 50072. They will send you a newsletter on a regular basis to help you know how to avoid accidents. Include \$1 for student membership, \$5 for adult and family, and \$15 for group memberships.