

Day Camp To Teach Kids Farm Safety

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Lancaster Farming Staff
VILLAGE OF OREGON (Lancaster Co.) — The statistics are grim: two children in Lancaster County in the past decade have been killed because of silo gas. Many more are injured.

Of 8,000 children that die per year from entirely preventable, avoidable injuries in the country, 300 of them are farm kids.

There are more children that die of injury than of all diseases combined, according to farm safety experts.

What's to be done?

The local chapter of the Farm Safety 4 Just Kids, together with the Safe Kids Coalition, are presenting a special Farm Safety Day Camp for farm children ages 8-13 on Saturday, June 3, at the Oregon Dairy Farm on Oregon Pike.

The day camp, according to sponsors, is open to farm children to promote education of farm safe-

ty. Beginning at 8 a.m., children will view safety demonstrations that show the hazards of tractors, grain flow wagons, PTOs, skid loaders, all-terrain vehicles, mowers, and electrical systems. Also, special stations will show children the dangers of animal handling, farm chemicals, hidden hazards, and other equipment. Also, special courses will help children understand the importance of learning about fire prevention, first aid, and roadway/buggy safety.

The day-long Farm Safety Day Camp will provide lots of free food for breakfast and lunch. Ice cream snacks will be provided. Also, contests will be held throughout the day to demonstrate safety awareness.

For Plain farm children, bus transportation from churches will be provided.

Oregon Dairy Farm is providing free use of their farm for the day camp and will provide the food for

the children. Also, donations have been accepted from Cargill Grain, U.S. Health Care, and local physicians and other organizations to hold the event.

Organizers of the day camp say they need donations to make the day camp a success.

People often refer to situations where a child gets hurt on a farm as an "accident." But these are not acts of fate, according to Dr. Albert C. Price, Roseville Pediatrics, senior adviser to the Safe Kids Coalition and Farm Safety 4 Just Kids.

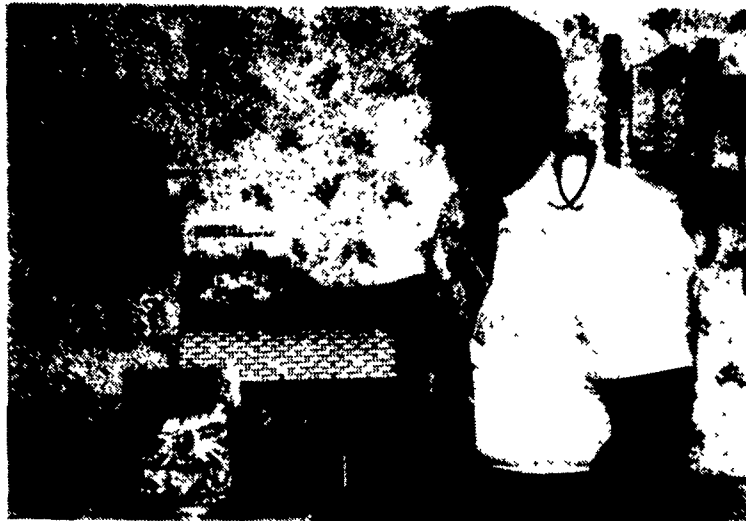
"They are avoidable injuries," he said. "The children are not being supervised. They're on equipment they shouldn't be on. They're doing jobs that are beyond their physical or mental capability."

Recently, Price, who is helping to coordinate the day camp, said he participated in a court case involving a nine year old child that was being "allowed and trained to drive a combine."

"Maybe that's not what that child should be doing," he said. Often, parents believe that if they had to drive a combine when they were 10 years old, then their kids should too — which can easily prove disastrous.

Price is excited about the day camp and how it may help reduce preventable injuries and death of children on the farm. He mentioned the implementation of rules for medicine, including childproof seals for containers, a move which helped reduce injuries and death.

When you make the kids wear bike helmets, injuries drop significantly, said Price. "There are many things that you can use for statistics that show that good, preventive education does something."



Dr. Albert C. Price, Roseville Pediatrics, senior adviser to the Safe Kids Coalition and Farm Safety 4 Just Kids, is helping to coordinate the Farm Safety Day Camp in June. Kids can eat for free, learn farm safety, and take home coloring books and stickers about farm safety.

Price said that farming is different from the work of the general population, in that the farmer depends on his children in the work cycle. Unfortunately, said Price, children sometimes don't belong in that work cycle. "They ought to be in a different kind of job."

In the past year, the Farm Safety 4 Just Kids organization has worked hard to bring the message about safety to farm families. In July last year, Shari Burgus, director of program serves for the national group, based in Earlham, Iowa, spoke to the Lancaster County Coalition of Safe Kids at the Farm and Home Center. At the Farm Show, the two organizations sponsored a booth that provided information and handouts about farm safety.

The coalition, according to Price, is the only organization on the East Coast devoted to not only the safety of children in the city, but also the farm.

The day camp is modeled after the first safety day camp in Cedar Falls, Iowa, in 1988.

Price recently asked a farm boy about the dangers of a silo. "He had no concept of what the problems were," said Price. Because of this ignorance, and lack of farm community involvement, a lot of kids have been injured as a result of entirely preventable accidents.

"What we're saying is, if you don't want us to legislate, like with the bike helmets, then come up with good education programs for your children and decide what you want to do with these projects. We'll help you."

Eventually, Price hopes that more "family" day camps can be set up to teach kids not only farm safety, but to teach parents such things as first aid.

"Farmers do not want a lot of legislation — that's understandable, because they've paid the price for a lot of legislation. But we're saying, all right, come and help us. Work with us."

To donate money to operate the day camp, contact Price at Roseville Pediatrics, 160 North Pointe Blvd., Lancaster, PA 17601, (717) 569-6481.

For registration forms, contact Mitch Woeste, (800) 822-0769.



At this year's Farm Show, the two organizations sponsored a booth that provided information and handouts about farm safety. These are some of the items that will be provided free at the day camp.



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