

Toolbox Talks



We all need to remember

- If you are unsure of anything or feel that something you have been asked to do is dangerous, DO NOT begin the task. ASK for assistance or more information and we will work together to find a safe way to do the job or solve the problem.
- Ensure you are aware of the location of the nearest First Aid Kit.
- Make sure everyone is fit for work, free from signs of fatigue, drugs or alcohol. If in doubt, ask or talk to your manager.
- This farm is a workplace, but may also be a place of residence for the owner, their managers and employees. Be vigilant for children and bystanders at all times.
- The safety, health and wellbeing of all who live on, work on and visit this farm is the most important responsibility we all share.

Even if we are busy and under time or financial pressures, safety **MUST** come first.



emergencyplus
Save the App that could save your life.

EMERGENCY CONTACTS

In case of emergency, CALL 000 or your local emergency service provider, then call your manager or supervisor.

POISONS 13 11 26
Poisons Information Centre

A Practical Guide

Child Safety on Farms

Growing up on or visiting a farm is a valuable and educational part of childhood. However, it's essential to acknowledge that farms can be hazardous environments for children.

The Hazards and Risks

The Risks on Farms for Children

Farms function as both workplaces and residences, which presents unique challenges in maintaining a clear separation between children and workplace hazards. Children are vulnerable to farm related dangers, and in many cases, lack the necessary judgement to make safe choices.

The most common causes of injuries or fatalities involving children on farms are related to:

Water

There can be many different water hazards on farms that pose a drowning risk to children. From something as small as a pet's water bucket or animal water trough, through to larger bodies of water including dams, creeks, tanks, ponds, dips, and irrigation ditches.

Farm Vehicles, SSVs, Quads, Motorbikes, Plant and Machinery

Due to children's smaller sizes, fatal crush injuries can be received from being struck, run over, or otherwise crushed by even relatively small lightweight items of plant and equipment. Their small size also makes children less visible to operators of vehicles and machinery. Entanglement with moving parts on vehicles and machinery is likely with children potentially unable to understand the risk.

Animals

Interactions with livestock can be especially risky. Prey animals like horses, cattle, sheep, and goats may mistake a small child for a predator and attack. Predator farm animals like working dogs, or pigs may see a young child as prey. Children may find it difficult to understand animal behaviors and the dangers posed by different animals. Younger children can be at greater risk of exposure to zoonotic diseases due to their tendency to put items in their mouths.

Silos, Grain Storage & Confined Spaces

Children love to explore and may not understand the potential dangers posed by these areas on a farm. The risks of

asphyxiation, suffocation, engulfment, drowning, and being caught up in internal machinery like augers and belts are possibly higher for children than for adults due to a child not recognising a dangerous situation.

Chemicals

Children may not fully understand the dangers associated with farm chemicals or recognise hazardous substances. Their curiosity and lack of awareness can lead them to explore and interact with these chemicals unknowingly. Exposure can occur through:

- **Ingestion:** Swallowing a chemical accidentally.
- **Absorption:** Skin or eye contact with a chemical.
- **Inhalation:** Breathing in chemicals.
- **Injection:** Entering the body through high-pressure devices or syringes.

Some chemicals have the potential to cause greater harm to children than they do to adults due to children's organs not being fully formed and their bodies lacking vital enzymes required to break down toxic substances.

Short term exposure can have immediate effects depending on the chemical and may include symptoms like nausea, headaches, rashes, burns, or respiratory issues. Short term exposures can be fatal.

Long-term exposures to certain chemicals could lead to serious conditions like cancers, birth defects, and organ diseases.



When in the farming environment, children should be actively supervised by responsible adults.



Reducing the Risk

As there is often a blurred line between the farm as a high-risk work environment and the farm as a home, it is up to parents or caregivers to educate children (including visiting children) about the risks and hazards that are present and establish clear boundaries to keep children safer.

Understand and Allow for Children's Behaviours

Children are naturally curious and may not fully understand the dangers present on farms.

• Awareness and Supervision

Active supervision by an adult who is aware of the risks is the best way to keep children safe on farms. Children can still wander off or be exposed to hazards so it is a good idea to take as many precautions as possible.

• Communicate and Educate

Encourage open communication between adults and children about safety rules and potential hazards.



Construct Safe Play Areas

Safe Space

Designate specific play areas that are secure from and as far away as possible from machinery, animals, and hazardous materials.

Design for Safety

Ensure that:

- Play areas are adequately fenced with self-latching gates to prevent children from wandering into danger zones.
- Play area fences cannot be climbed over or crawled under.
- Items inside a play area can't be used to escape the play area.

Supervise

Children require supervision even while they are in a safe play area.

Communicate and Educate

Talk to children about the boundaries of safe play areas and the importance of staying within them.

Manage Water Hazards

Supervise

Active supervision is the most effective means of protecting against accidental drowning.

Restrict Access

There are mechanical and engineering options for restricting access to water storage infrastructure. For example, tanks, wells, pits and dips can be secured in many different ways including fitting lids to tanks, or covering wells and pits with mesh, or having access points latched and ladders removed.

Develop Farm Vehicles, SSVs, Quads, Motorbikes, Plant and Machinery Policies

Passenger Safety

- Children should only be allowed to ride on machinery, plant, or other farm equipment that is designed to carry passengers, has suitable restraints, and is being used for low-risk activities.
- Children should never be passengers on quad bikes.

Operating Farm Plant

- Children should only be allowed to operate machinery, plant, or other farm equipment as appropriate for their age and size, in line with their training, and experience, and only if allowed for by the manufacturer.
- Children under the age of 16 should not operate quad bikes.

Size and Age Appropriate

Items of farm plant such as motorbikes should be appropriate for the age, size, strength, and experience of the child, and then only if allowed for by the manufacturer.

Protect with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Appropriately fitting PPE should be worn by children when operating or when around machinery, plant, or equipment.

Lock it up

Keep machinery and equipment locked and secured when not in use. Remove keys and place in safe locations.

Communicate and Educate

Have age-appropriate conversations with children about the dangers of machinery and the importance of keeping a safe distance.

Exclusion Zones

Establish no-play zones around machinery and equipment, and clearly mark these areas.

Toolbox Talks

A Practical Guide Child Safety on Farms

Manage Animal Hazards

Introduce Safety Measures

Teach children how to interact safely with farm animals, including the importance of not approaching them suddenly or startling them.

Supervision is Key

Actively supervise interactions between children and animals.

Remove Aggressive Animals

Keep aggressive or unpredictable animals separate from areas where children play.

Animal Awareness

Ensure children understand the difference between pets and working animals and the need for caution around both.

Horse Riding Safety

Children should only be allowed to ride horses that have been assessed by a competent person and matched to the child's age and experience. Appropriate clothing, including closed in footwear should be worn when riding horses.

Helmet Use

Appropriately fitting helmets that meet Australian safety standards are one of the best ways to reduce the risk of head injuries in children when riding horses.

Links and Resources

George the Farmer - Educator's Guide
georgethefarmer.com.au
George the Farmer *Poster*

Farmsafe Australia
The Farm Safety Song with
George the Farmer
YouTubeKids

VFF Making Our Farms Safer –
Child Safety on Farms Guidebook
makingourfarmssafer.org.au

Royal Life Saving Australia
royallifesaving.com.au

Primary Producers South Australia –
Farm Safety for Kids
ppsa.org.au



Manage Chemicals and Hazardous Materials

Provide Secure Storage

Store chemicals, pesticides, and hazardous materials in locked cabinets or storage areas that are inaccessible to children.

Preserve Original Containers

Keep chemicals in their original containers with clear labels and safety information.

Educate About Hazards

Educate children about the dangers of chemicals and the importance of never handling or ingesting them.

Encourage Responsible Handling

Ensure that adults who work with these materials do so responsibly, wearing appropriate protective gear and following safety protocols.

Perform Regular Inspections

Regularly check for leaks, spills, or damaged containers and address any issues promptly.

Disposal Procedures

Dispose of chemical containers and waste properly, following local regulations.

Emergency Preparedness

Establish a Plan

Have a well-defined emergency plan in place and ensure that all family members, including children, are familiar with it.

Teach Emergency Response

Teach children how to call for help in case of emergencies.

Maintain Emergency Numbers

For older children provide them access to a list of important contact numbers.

Seek Child-Focused First Aid Training

First Aid training should include how to provide first aid to children.

Involve Children

Include children in First Aid training and emergency response as appropriate for their age.

Cater for Kids

Have items suitable for use on children included in First Aid kits.

Hold Regular Drills

Conduct regular emergency drills to ensure everyone knows what to do in case of fire, accidents, or other emergencies.



Toolbox Talks

Facilitator Guide

INSTRUCTIONS

The information sheet is background information ONLY. Be sure to customise your talk to your operation and facilities.

How to deliver an effective Toolbox Talk

- Know your Topic. If you don't understand the material it will be hard to explain and make it relevant.
- Print copies of the Toolbox Talk Info sheet for yourself and each of the participants.
- Hold the talk in a location relevant to the topic being discussed.
- Explain why the Toolbox Talk is being held.
- Stay on topic and keep it simple.
- Encourage conversation and participation.
- Be sure to give real life examples whenever possible.
- Be open to questions.
- Read through the provided cases studies.
- After each study ask attendees what could have been done to prevent this situation.
- Conclude with a brief review of the main points or a summary based on the discussion.
- Record the details of the Toolbox Talk including the location, date and names of attendees.

Note: This Facilitator Guide is intended to provide a basic structure for conducting a Toolbox Talk. Customise it as needed to suit your specific audience and objectives. Always prioritise safety and ensure that participants have a clear understanding of the information presented.

A Practical Guide

Child Safety on Farms

Introduction

- Welcome everyone.
- Emphasise the importance of being aware of children on the farm.
- Mention the objective: to raise awareness and provide practical tips for keeping children safe on the farm.

Icebreaker Consider starting with a brief question or scenario related to child

safety to engage participants. For example, "What do you think the most dangerous things on a farm are when it comes to children?"

Distribution of Resources Handout printed Toolbox Talk Information Sheets and any other resources related to keeping children safe on the farm.

Key Points

Awareness

- Highlight how children may be more vulnerable to some risks than adults.
- Discuss children's tendency to be curious and unaware of dangers.

Safe Play Areas

- Do you have a dedicated safe play area for children? If so, where is it?
- If you don't have a safe play area, is a safe play area needed?

Water

- Make sure everyone is aware of potential water hazards on your farm.
- Explain the importance of checking that gates are closed and that lids and covers are in place and secure.
- Explain the importance of keeping ladders and other potential items that children could use to access water hazards secure.

Farm Vehicles, SSVs, Quads, Motorbikes, Plant and Machinery

- Explain your farm rules regarding children around farm vehicles, SSVs, Quads, Motorbikes, Plant and Machinery.
- Discuss ways to operate motor vehicles, plant and equipment on your farm to reduce risks to children.

Animals

- Discuss the animals that need to be considered on your farm.
- Discuss how to manage these animals and their interactions with children.

Chemicals and Hazardous Substances

- Ensure that everyone is aware of where chemicals and hazardous substances are on the farm.
- Discuss how to prevent access to chemicals or potential exposure incidents.

Emergency Response and First Aid

- Explain how children fit into your emergency plan, including the location of any child related emergency equipment and first aid supplies.
- Discuss how emergency drills will be conducted.

Interactive Discussion and Case Studies

Encourage participants to share their experiences, challenges, or questions related to children on farms.

Use the Case Studies on the next page to prompt conversation. Read the case studies out loud and ask participants for their thoughts.

Q&A Session

Allow participants to ask questions and seek clarification on any topics covered.

Conclusion

Summarise the main takeaways from the talk.

Reiterate the importance of everyone's commitment to safety on the farm.

Closing Remarks

Thank participants for their time and attention.

Remind them to apply the knowledge gained from this Toolbox Talk in their daily work.

Feedback

Ask for feedback on the Toolbox Talk content and delivery to improve future sessions.

Toolbox Talks

Facilitator Guide

CASE STUDIES



Risk Management Tools

DOWNLOAD ONLINE MATRIX

Use this simple and effective tool to assess and manage the risk of your farming activities prior to commencing.

All team members can join in and contribute, developing different ways to manage risks on your farm. Doing a risk assessment helps determine hazards and develop appropriate control measures to lessen risks.

farmsafe.org.au

P. +61 2 6269 5622 | E. info@farmsafe.org.au

Disclaimer: This *Toolbox Talk* is intended as a *general* guide only and is designed to be used to increase risk awareness and safe work practices - it is not legal advice and does not take the place of proper individualised on-farm workplace inductions, work, health and safety training, or any other tailored steps which may be necessary to protect health and safety at specific worksites.

CASE STUDY 1

Preventing a Dip in The Dip

Scenario

Sunny Vale Farms has a set of cattle yards a short distance away from the Farm Manager's accommodation. The cattle yards contain an inground plunge dip. A new farm manager with young children is about to move into the accommodation.

QUESTION	ANSWERS MAY INCLUDE
What can be done to reduce the risk of the plunge dip to the children?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The dip could be sheeted in with materials preventing climbing and solid, lockable gates fitted to both ends to prevent access. The dip could be filled in and alternative methods for treating cattle could be used.

CASE STUDY 2

Chemical Cupcakes

Scenario

Happy Jack Farms doesn't have a safe play area. One day a worker discovers the manager's 9-year-old child and a visiting friend in the chemical storage shed making mud pies out of powdered herbicide.

QUESTION	ANSWERS MAY INCLUDE
What could have been done to prevent this scenario?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A designated safe play area could have been made. The chemical storage shed should have been secured to prevent access. The children could have been supervised by an adult aware of the potential hazards. The children could have been warned about the dangers of chemicals and that the chemical shed was out of bounds.

CASE STUDY 3

Take Me with You

Scenario

The manager's children love to go for drives around the farm and be involved in everyday activities.

QUESTION	POTENTIAL ANSWER
What vehicles, plant, and equipment can the children be carried on as passengers?	<p>Any vehicle, item of plant, or equipment that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is designed to carry passengers and is allowed by the farm's safety policy to be used for passengers. Has appropriately fitted seatbelts or restraints. Is performing low risk activities.

Toolbox Talks

Facilitator Guide

INSTRUCTIONS

This sign-off template is available for you to use as part of your training packages. You will need to attach all evidence of all information given to the person that you have spoken with regarding this specific Toolbox Talk. This may include checklists, policies, safe operating procedures or notes about the conversations had, questions asked and other information provided.

Holding Toolbox Talks or safety meetings are not just about checking a box - they need to be tailored to your farming environment, meet the legislative requirements, and designed to support your employee, contractor, family member or visitor throughout the time that they spend living or working on your property. Inductions are only the first step in your WHS journey and it is important that you continue to create a safety culture on your farm by continuing to engage with your employees on any matters that may affect their health, safety and wellbeing.

The employee/contractor/visitor/family member that you have had this conversation with should acknowledge that they have received, discussed and understood all the relevant information that has been presented to them and attached and sign in the relevant space provided. A good practice is to ensure that the employee initials or signs each relevant piece of information that is attached and retains a copy of each for their own information. Records of WHS conversations should be kept alongside records of employment or in your work, health and safety management system and be updated as needed or as required by law.

A Practical Guide

Child Safety on Farms

On-farm Toolbox Talk Sign-off Sheet

Please list and/or attach all documents that have been provided including checklists, policies, safe operating procedures, etc.

--

On-farm Toolbox Talk Participants

EMPLOYER – DETAILS

I confirm that I have provided a relevant safety meeting to our farming business and that the employee has received, discussed and understood the listed and attached information.

Given Name(s)

Surname

Property Name

Date

Signature

1. EMPLOYEE / CONTRACTOR / VISITOR / FAMILY MEMBER – DETAILS

I confirm that I have received, discussed and understood all information that has been listed and attached to this document.

Given Name(s)

Surname

Property Name

Date

Signature



Toolbox Talks Facilitator Guide

A Practical Guide
Child Safety on Farms

On-farm Toolbox Talk Sign-off Sheet

CONTINUED



Australian Government
Department of Agriculture,
Fisheries and Forestry

This project is supported by the Department of
Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF), through
funding from the Australian Government's National
Farm Safety Education Fund.

2. EMPLOYEE / CONTRACTOR / VISITOR / FAMILY MEMBER – DETAILS

I confirm that I have received, discussed and understood all information that has been listed and attached to this document.

Given Name(s)

Surname

Property Name

Date

Signature

3. EMPLOYEE / CONTRACTOR / VISITOR / FAMILY MEMBER – DETAILS

I confirm that I have received, discussed and understood all information that has been listed and attached to this document.

Given Name(s)

Surname

Property Name

Date

Signature

4. EMPLOYEE / CONTRACTOR / VISITOR / FAMILY MEMBER – DETAILS

I confirm that I have received, discussed and understood all information that has been listed and attached to this document.

Given Name(s)

Surname

Property Name

Date

Signature

5. EMPLOYEE / CONTRACTOR / VISITOR / FAMILY MEMBER – DETAILS

I confirm that I have received, discussed and understood all information that has been listed and attached to this document.

Given Name(s)

Surname

Property Name

Date

Signature