

# Be a Positive Role Model for Children

As a parent, isn't it cute when little three-year-old Kael wears your boots, little Annie wants to tag along with you to check the cattle, or five-year-old Jack informs the family he wants to be a farmer, just like dad. These situations are all welcome indications that children are watching closely, but it also means you better be on **your** best behavior! Children observe what you do and often follow suit without knowing whether it's right or wrong — they just want to be like mom, dad, grandma, uncle, etc. **Your behavior as an adult makes a big impression on young minds.**

Safety on the farm is a big concern. Agriculture has long been known as a dangerous occupation with many injuries and fatalities to both young and old alike. Twenty-seven percent of the 4.6 million U.S. farm residents are youth. The farm environment can be inherently dangerous and the actions to perform work require caution and observation of safe practices. CDC/NIOSH indicates that farm machinery causes the most fatalities to youth.

Often times, adults forget and perform farm tasks in an unsafe manner. Do we want our children to continue unsafe traditions and accept the consequences that could result? If children are influenced by what they observe, maybe it is time to change behaviors.

## *Be a good role model to protect the ones you love - your children.*

- Don't allow extra riders.
- Turn off and remove keys from machinery when not in use.
- Wear proper protective equipment when using machinery, chemicals and tools.
- Walk around high speed machinery, such as power take off (PTOs) shafts instead of stepping over them.
- Inform others about your whereabouts and when you expect to return.
- Approach animals calmly and slowly.
- Stop all machinery before making adjustments.
- Heed warning signs and decals.
- Follow instructions for proper use of machinery.
- Recognize and acknowledge when mistakes are made.



**Kids are watching. They will repeat what you say and do.** In order to prevent them from getting hurt make sure you are doing things in a safe manner!

