Today on Across the Fence a lesson and safety for our children and grandchildren. We are going to learn about a new 4H project farm related projects that can help prevent accidents and save lives. Good afternoon and thanks for joining us I'm Judy Simpson. Farming is hard rewarding work but it can also be dangerous. For children and teenagers in particular farm equipment such as tractors can be deadly. That's why the University of Vermont extension has launched a safety initiative. Is called the 4-H Youth Farm Safety Project. Here to tell us more about the project is coordinator Kristen Mullins and with Kristen is Stacy Jordan. Stacy is the injury prevention coordinator at fletcher Allen healthcare and she also works with the nonprofit organization safe kids in Vermont. Welcome to both of you.

Kristin Stacey.: Thank you

Judy.: Kristen tell us what UVM extension is doing with the youth farm safety project.

Kristin.: Sure the youth farm safety project is an educational farm safety program. We're doing a range of activities. Some of them will be safe to camps workshops etc but really looking at the issue of farm safety and how it affects a specifically young people and what looks like on diversified farms.

Judy.: In just a few minutes we're going to go to Peacham for example of the demonstrations that you talk about but first I want to ask Stacy about safe kids Vermont. What is safe kids and how does it relate to the for each farm program?

Stacy.: Safe kids Vermont is a coalition of many different community partners and we all come together with a common interest of reducing unintentional injuries and children from birth to 14. Kristin and I met adding injury prevention meeting and now participate in each other’s activities and projects and as we all know farming is a way of life and it's part of our tour is an and culture here in Vermont. We want to reduce the injuries that we see across the full age spectrum on farms that are coming in two are hospitals across a state and any activities that we can do in partnership to reduce injuries and children is the main focus of that coalition.

Judy.: Some people may not know how prevalent some of these injuries are. Kristen from your professional in perspective there's some pretty sobering statistics.

Kristin.: Yes the statistics are very sobering. Nationally agriculture has is the most dangerous industry has that there is home and if we're looking specifically at youth agriculture has the second highest rate of youth worker fatality. If you look at how young people are being killed working on farms 25% of those fatalities are related to machinery and that includes tractors. 17% of those fatalities relate to motor vehicles that includes ATVs. And is not just the youths who are working on farms either. And a national study in 2006 there was estimated to be
roughly 3600 injuries reported for youth household youth that means youth who live on farms while they're working. However 75% of the injuries that happened to younger children happened while they were working. Where were looking at there's fatality rate of 16% excuse me. 16% of the fatalities occur through drowning.

Judy.: Really?

Kristin.: Yes that's more common with younger children so what this tells us is that we need to focus not just on the young people who are working on farms is very important to focus but we also need to focus on the safety of young people. Who are living on farms whether they're doing the work are not an all so young people who are visiting farms which is growing in Vermont. The number of young people visiting farms.

Judy.: In just making them aware of all the things that can go wrong?

Kristin.: Absolutely and all the things that can go right and how to do right. Focusing on in a positive manner. It's terrific that young people are working in visiting our farms and we want to make sure it's a safe activity. Do we know how Vermont compares to the rest of the country?

Kristin.: Did you want to start and you want me to start on it?

Stacy.: We spoke to the department of health for collects all of our emergency room data and we don't have the level of detail that we would all like in data collection to separate the types of injuries by age. We are seeing about an annual intake in emergency rooms across the state of agricultural injuries about 200 a year. We're hoping as we move forward that there is a data project and planning in place to be able to get more details to give us more outcomes so that we can build programs and measure the effectiveness of some of the wonderful work that Kristen is doing in the project

Kristin.: This is the sixth and Stacy citing there roughly 200 farm related injuries seen in emergency rooms across the state that is for all age groups. Not just specifically for youth. We do not have a broken down by youth yet. One thing I was thinking of the other day I found interesting if you look it five years from 2004 to 2008 there was roughly 1000 emergency room visits where the injury and related was a farm injury. The census data for Vermont in 2007 reported that there was roughly 6900 and something so roughly 7000 farms in the state of Vermont if you compare those two numbers it seems to me what we're looking at is approximately one where the serum visit has per every seven farms over a five year period.

Judy.: From what you've described the need for safety training is clear. And I think we're going to take a look now that a 4-H project that's providing some of that information. We're going to head to Peacham Elementary School that's where Keith Silva found Kristen and others leadng a farm training safety program.

‘Safety Day’ at Peacham School lets students learn hands-on how to stay out of harm’s way.

Donnie Moore/6th Grade Peacham School: “Have a safety route to get out of your house if it’s on fire.”

Emily Grant/6th Grade Peacham School: “It’s fascinating how much equipment is on a fire truck like how many hoses and how long they are.”

In addition to meeting emergency personnel and seeing safety equipment close up … organizers made sure that these students also got to learn about places and vehicles that they see every day.

Ruth Vaal RN/Peacham School Nurse: “Many of these students here at Peacham come from farms. The farm is, especially to a child, very inviting, you know, children are very curious by nature and they’re drawn to a farm to the animals to the equipment the tractors and often my fear is that often especially if they’ve grown up around a
farm they may be a little too comfortable around it so I really wanted to make sure that they were aware of some of the dangers around a farm.

Vaal contacted Kristen Mullins … UVM Extension’s 4-H youth farm safety coordinator.

Kristen Mullins/UVM Extension 4-H Youth Farm Safety Coordinator: “I think most children have had some discussions about safety at home, at school, in their doctor’s office. So safety is not a new concept to them and many of the children, for example, many of the children here at Peacham School do live on farms. Almost of them have visited farms and certainly all of them have seen farms. So they have a concept of what safety on a farm might be. They’re going to be able to relate to at least one thing we include in our presentation and our activities and then we try to build from there.

Using a model, Mullins shows students how and why they should keep their distance around farm animals and how tractors are just as dangerous off the farm as on.

Micah King/6th Grade Peacham School: “Farms are everywhere in Peacham pretty much, there’s a farm down there and like if you’re crossing the road and there’s a big tractor that’s blocking you and there’s a car coming and the car doesn’t see you you can get hit and injured.

Moore: “You can be safe on a farm by never going in front or in back of a tractor and in front of animals.”

Moving from the model to the real thing … Mullins points out the dangerous parts of a tractor, but she also makes sure students learn about the built-in safety measures as well.

Grant: “You have to have the roll bar on the back of it and you have to have a seatbelt. I didn’t know you had to have a seatbelt.”

‘Safety Day’ at the Peacham School is designed as a way for students to learn life skills that are as important as ABC’s and 123’s … to do that requires resources and teachers.

Vaal: “We really look so much at curriculum in the schools […] every student that comes through every grade there are grade expectations of things that they need to be taught within that specific grade. So we really wanted to make sure that we had something that was of the right substance. I mean I could fly by the seat of my pants and say, “oh, I would like a tractor here and I think I want you to touch on animal safety, but Kristen knew everything. She had that all in place.

The take-away message of Mullins’s demonstration is that farm safety is about awareness and respect.

Moore: “A farm can be a dangerous place, but sometimes it’s just fine.”

Grant: “I’m going to think about how dangerous the equipment is and how hurt I could get if I was fooling around around it. I would say I’m safe around that stuff now. KS: “And maybe less scared?” EG: “Yeah, definitely less scared.”

Mullins: “The farm is a wonderful place to work, it’s a wonderful place to live and we really want to underscore that. We want children to be excited to go into farming because we want to keep our farming going in Vermont and the Northeast. So I’m really excited to bring that excitement to the children and for children who are around farms to share that excitement with the groups. 4-H education is all about experiential learning so clearly we’re going to have our safety program be experiential and hands-on and interactive as well.
For the student’s at the Peacham school being safe at school, at home, and on the farm is all in a day’s work. In Peacham, I’m Keith Silva with Across the Fence.

Judy.: Thanks Keith I'm joined now by two Vermont safety experts Kristen Mullins from UVM extension and Stacy Jordan from fletcher Allen healthcare. Kristen great response from those kids they were really a captive audience.

Kristin.: They were great. They were at school so

Judy.: But still they were all very engaged in what you're talking about.

Kristin.: They're really engaged. They were a wonderful group I very much appreciate being invited there and that was our pilot of going out into the community and bringing out some of the new props that we're making and we're still developing them but it was a really fun pilot when the first group gathered around our farm safety display in the little girl next to me said I love this. It's a very good.

Judy.: Very hands-on and very user friendly too. It could very easily show the kids what you're talking about when it comes to safety issues.

Kristen.: Yes you need to figure out what's going to get somebody and with children hands-on and toys is something is going to draw their attention that they are experiencing as an mention on the film four H education is experiential and you just don't know what's going to work which is why we're creating a whole bunch of different approaches. Safety doesn't have to be boring we know it's important and it can be interesting.

Judy.: Excellent.

Stacy.: Want to show another example of one of your visual and hands-on.

Kristin.: Sure let's go for it.

Judy.: You have this display which is a table top display that you use maybe you can tell me about this.

Kristin.: Again this is something we just developed and Stacey’s very kindly going to hold it for us. What this is talking about is the PTO or power takeoff on a tractor. It's one of the most dangerous things that we find on farms that are using tractors. Not all farms have tractors but most do. The PTO or power takeoff basically what it does is it has all the power of the tractor transmission and it comes out on a metal shaft in the back of the tractor. I don't know if you know what I'm talking about even better than I do. That PTO a very common strengths behind it it can either circle around 540 times per minute. RPMS is rotation per minute or 1000 which is often a very common powering speed so 1000 rotations per minute. What they shows on a table top if someone's own affair and walking by and they like O watts is funny looking thing. If you grab one end of the Judy and as you pull it I want to think about the fact in one second this is how much if you or your fabric can be wrapped around that PTO in just one second.

Judy.: While that's scary.
Kristin.: It's very scary. If he speaks to just about any farmer or equipment dealer across the state just about everybody knows somebody who may have lost an arm or leg or have been killed through a PTO accident. It's very common.

Judy.: Even though their aware of the danger of this piece of equipment still it's an accident. You have a cough that's hanging lower than it should and the next thing you know you're in the emergency room.

Kristin.: Absolutely so when we're talking to children about is therefore how do you make sure that doesn't happen so being aware of what you should wear on equipment and how you move around the equipment. We can talk about all day and show photographs but if you have a young person grabbed the fabric and walked back to 13 feet and you keep saying one second one second in may have a larger effect than just talking about.

Judy.: Wow. So what's next for the farm youth safety project?

Kristin.: What's next for the youth farm safety project is lots and lots of activities. One on the video Ruth the nurse at Peacham said Kristen knows everything. I don't know everything. So I'm going to continue to be talking to agricultural educators farmers farm service providers and if anybody wants to contact us and share information am very happy here from people. We will be doing workshops day camps will be at fairs doing demonstrations and one big thing we're focusing on over the next few months is making an online website that's focusing on diversify farm safety for young people 12 to 15 years old so that's pretty exciting.

Judy.: Excellent and how about for safety kids VT

Stacy.: Part of my injury prevention work is to continue working with Kristen and some of the activities that she's doing and some of the hopes that we work and experience feedback that she gets in her project will give us a platform for some of our focus of concern and one of those major topics is actually ATV safety. That goes from farms into recreation and hoping to learn a lot from working with Kristen from the project and see if kids in general right now in the summer or working a lot around bike helmets water safety always knowing where kids are in going back to the unfortunate statistics about drowning is that nothing replaces parents watching their children and knowing they are around the water. In wearing helmets and having fun and being as safe as possible so we don't get hurt.

Judy.: Let's give people some information now. Kristen how can people get in touch with you for some more information about what you're doing?

Kristin.: Sure if you prefer the phone you can call me at 1800 571-0668 you can also I believe our web site is going to be on the screen you can contact us that way as well.

Judy.: Also for you?

Stacy.: I have multiple ways to find some of the activities and programs. Fletcher Allen.org is our general website and there are sections there on the way we do prevention and they can also find safe kids Vermont there as well.

Judy.: Terrific thank you both for coming on and bringing this to light it was really interesting. That's our program for today I'm Judy Simpson we will see you again next time on across the fence.

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