



## **FACTS ABOUT INJURIES TO CHILDREN WHO LIVE IN RURAL AREAS**

**Nearly one million children ages 14 and under live on farms and ranches in the United States.**

- Each year, approximately 70 children ages 14 and under die from injuries occurring on farms. Nearly 40 percent of farm deaths among children are due to machinery, and another 27 percent are due to drowning. An estimated 30 percent of all farm machinery-related childhood deaths and 32 percent of all farm-related childhood drownings are among children ages 4 and under.
- In 2001, an estimated 15,888 injuries occurred to children 14 years of age or younger on U.S. farms. Children ages 10 to 14 account for nearly 60 percent of these injuries. Farm injuries among children peak at ages 4 and 5 and then peak again for children ages 12 and 14.
- One of every five child injuries occurring on farms is animal-related, the majority involving horses or cattle.
- More than 20 percent of childhood agricultural injuries occur among children who do not live on farms.
- Children ages 6 and under primarily suffer injuries on farms that are due to falls, large animals or close proximity to tractors. Older children, ages 6 to 12, are more likely to suffer from mutilating farm equipment injuries that result from attempting age-inappropriate farm tasks.

**Certain groups of children are at higher risk for farm-related injuries.**

- In 1998, males accounted for 80 percent of farm-related fatalities and nearly 75 percent of nonfatal farm-related injuries among children ages 15 and under.
- Children ages 3 and under are more likely to drown in farm ponds than older children. Drowning rates for all age groups are three times higher in rural areas than in urban areas. Fifty-seven percent of rural drownings occur in fresh water, such as irrigation canals, ponds, rivers and lakes.

**For all ages, more than 60 percent of motor vehicle-related fatalities occur in rural areas.**

- Passengers involved in fatal rural crashes are nearly twice as likely to be ejected from the vehicle and 64 percent less likely to be transported to the hospital than urban passengers.
- Rural highways are more dangerous due to increased vehicle speeds, poor road conditions and insufficient access to medical response.
- In 2003, 14 children ages 14 and under died as occupants of pickup truck beds. Thirty states and the District of Columbia have restrictions on passengers riding in pickup truck beds, but many of these laws contain huge gaps in coverage and do not provide comprehensive protection for young children.
- Male children ages 14 and under are more likely than females to suffer transportation-related injuries and deaths as occupants of motor vehicles, while riding in pickup truck beds and while riding on ATVs and snowmobiles.

**Fire death rates in the most rural communities (population under 2,500) are roughly double the national rate.**

- Use of alternative heating equipment such as wood stoves and space heaters explains much of the high rural fire-related death rate; fires in rural areas are twice as likely to be caused by heating sources as fires in non-rural areas. Deaths due to cooking equipment, appliances and electrical fires are also more common in rural areas.
- Remoteness and slower emergency response times are problems in detecting and extinguishing rural fires. In addition, having a higher proportion of homes made of wood makes the extent of flame damage sustained by residential structures worse in rural areas.
- African-Americans living in rural areas have a fire death rate 3.5 times higher and rural Native Americans a rate more than two times higher than that for rural whites.

**Children ages 14 and under who are not wearing equestrian helmets are more likely to suffer head injuries when thrown from a horse.**

- In 2003, nearly 14,800 children ages 14 and under were treated in emergency rooms for equestrian-related injuries. Nearly 40 percent of equestrian injuries result in hospitalization. Head injury is the most common cause of equestrian-related death and serious injury.