



**TITLE: Be An AgSafe Family by Keeping Kids Safe**

**World Count: 551**

**Byline: Canadian Agricultural Safety Association**

Each year, the Canadian Agricultural Safety Association teams up with sponsors and friends to celebrate Canadian Agricultural Safety Week. For the next three years CASA is asking everyone in the agricultural community to “Be An AgSafe Family” and this year, you can do just that by “Keeping Kids Safe.”

The ag family is large; it includes all those who work and care about agriculture. Ag family members come from farming communities, schools, agri-businesses and other organizations that work to make Canadian agriculture vibrant and thriving. For each of the next three years, Canadian Agricultural Safety Week will focus on different parts of the ag family. For 2016, this focus is on “Keeping Kids Safe.”

How can members of the ag family (Remember this includes more people than children, moms and dads and grandparents!) work to keep kids safe? Well, there are plenty of things each and every one of us can do.

Farm families can work to establish safe play areas where little ones can explore, learn and play without the risk of being hurt or killed. We all know that small children are incredibly curious. Their little minds and bodies are growing and absorbing the big, wonderful world around them all the time. Something as simple as a blade of grass can be fascinating. A small bug or butterfly can send their imaginations soaring. Livestock, farm equipment, and other potential hazards can also be intriguing, exciting and fascinating. That’s why it’s so important to set boundaries and establish rules and guidelines around play areas on the farm.

Farm families can also work on determining tasks for children on the farm that are safe and age-appropriate. Understanding how children develop and grow is key in determining what they are capable of and how they can participate in ag tasks safely. It’s important to be honest with yourself and your child. Just because they might be big enough, that might not always mean they have the attention span or the skills to successfully and safely complete a task.

Farming communities and schools can work to teach children about the hazards they might come across on the farm. Some ways of talking with children about farm safety can include incorporating farm safety into the school day, or even hold a farm safety day event. Safety day events, like Progressive Agriculture Safety Days® are available to all Canadian communities. These days are organized by the community for the community and address the safety issues that are of most concern to the community.

Agri-businesses are in unique positions to influence safety on the farm. As trusted members of the farming team, agronomists, equipment technicians, and sales representatives all understand their customers’ needs. Agri-businesses hear the problems of their farming community. Weather





woes, equipment prices, input costs, insurance issues, and even safety concerns can all be topics of conversation between the agri-business rep and his customer. By being a voice and talking about safety with your customer, you can influence safety. By supplying safety gloves with products or hearing protection, you are making a difference to the safety of farmers and their families.

Most of all, everyone can be a part of keeping kids safe. Supervision, training, determining safe play areas, age-appropriate tasks and talking about safety are all a part of being an Agsafe Family.

*About Canadian Agricultural Safety Week:*

*Canadian Agricultural Safety Week (CASW) is a public awareness campaign focusing on the importance of farm safety. CASW takes place every year during the third week of March. In 2016, CASW takes place March 13 to 19. CASW 2016 is presented by Farm Credit Canada. For more information visit [agsafetyweek.ca](http://agsafetyweek.ca).*

