Families Step Up Safety Effort

The 2011 Farm Safety 4 Just Kids Incentive Grant recipients carry out new crop of safety improvements.

Spring is a fun time for Karter Knipper. The 2½-year-old loves to shed his winter coat and mittens and play outside. As the pace of spring planting picks up, he’s excited to see and hear the roar of farm machinery pass by on the road or turn into the driveway.

But his parents, Andrea and Kevin Knipper, are keenly aware that a new growing season also plants the seeds for safety hazards. The Knippers’ growing family includes a second son, Kiptyn, born in November.

The Knippers grow grain and hay and have a small cow-calf herd near Edgewood, Iowa. Both also work off-farm.

“During planting and harvesting, I help Kevin,” Andrea says. “We were concerned about safety since Karter is very mobile and curious. It would be a safer choice to keep him at day care longer during these busy times.”

The Knippers applied for a 2011 Farm Safety 4 Just Kids Safety Incentive Grant to assist with day care expenses during the busy seasons. Grant recipients are awarded up to $250 to make their farms safer or to conduct safety programs in their communities.

They were selected as one of 10 recipients. The grant is sponsored by Farm Safety 4 Just Kids and Successful Farming magazine. Over the past 17 years, the program has benefitted about 190 families and community groups.

Andrea also used the grant funds to pay family members to baby-sit and to hire help during evening hours.

Last summer they fenced a play area.

“Karter already is displaying his love for farming and the outdoors,” she says. “The play area gives us a chance to mow the yard and trim weeds while he’s in a safe place, yet still in our sight.”

HORSE-RELATED HAZARDS

Mari Schultes received a grant to buy equestrian riding vests for her grandchildren. She says that the life-saving value of equestrian helmets was imprinted on her years ago.

“My daughter was a senior in high school when she jumped off a horse and hit her head on a steel gate,” she says. “Her helmet was demolished with the imprint of the steel bar. When we were buy-

2011 Grant Winners

These families received up to $250 for their safety improvements.

- David and Ashley Bonham
  Hamilton, Ohio
  Updated heat lamps in the sheep barn.

- Michael Feilmeier
  Hartington, Nebraska
  Fenced in a play area.

- Joey and Lindsey Haskell
  Frankfort, South Dakota
  Fenced in a play area with swing set.

- Rose Hosek
  Rockwell City, Iowa
  Replaced fence adjoining farm fields.

- Richard Jamison
  Seaford, Delaware
  Purchased SMV emblems, steel-toe boots, fire extinguishers, safety latches, tractor canopy.

- Kevin and Andrea Knipper
  Edgewood, Iowa
  Hired child care during harvest.

- James Miner
  Yuma, Colorado
  Purchased fire extinguishers, medical-grade sharps container, and first aid kit; childproofed cabinets, drawers, and refrigerators.

- Mari Schultes
  Coon Rapids, Iowa
  Purchased equine safety vests.

- Jonna Schutte
  Monona, Iowa
  Added At Play and Slow signs in the driveway; fenced in the play area.

- Robert and Virginia Sykes
  Franklinton, North Carolina
  Purchased equestrian helmets.
ing a new one, we learned that another young woman had died that same day of severe head injuries when she was thrown by her horse; she hit the cement rail of a bridge. My daughter survived because of a helmet.

Last fall, Schultes had a horse-riding incident of her own. She suffered broken ribs, a punctured right lung, and a broken vertebra tail on her right side. She was wearing a helmet.

“We use horses for cattle work on the farm,” she says. “It’s vital to protect our children as much as possible. Children think they’ll never be hurt. We, as adults, need to oversee their safety as much as possible and be good examples.”

SAFETY FIRST

Near Yuma, Colorado, James Miner, 17, heard Shari Burgus, Farm Safety 4 Just Kids, talk about the safety grants at a farm show. He returned home, took a look around his family farm, and applied to fund the purchase of fire extinguishers to keep in their tractors and in the farrowing barns where heat lamps are used.

“If a fire started, we’d have no way to put it out, and we’d have to wait for the fire department to respond,” he says.

To safeguard his younger brother and sister, he also used grant funds to buy a medical-grade sharps container to properly dispose of used needles and syringes. He purchased childproof locks for low cabinets, drawers, and refrigerators where medicine and other hazards are stored.

“The goal of our farm is to raise quality show pigs for 4-H and FFA, so we have a lot of families visiting here,” he says. “I’d like to build or buy an enclosure where young kids can play safely, away from animals when their parents are looking at animals to purchase.”

Finally, thanks to the grant, Miner now has a first aid kit on the farm. “I’ve recently started raising bees to pollinate the surrounding hayfields and to harvest honey,” he says. “With people coming to the farm and the potential risk of bee stings and allergies, we need a high-quality first aid kit to deal with it.”

Near Hamilton, Ohio, Ashley and David Bonham and their two sons raise club lambs from a flock of 40 ewes.

“Our sons love to be there when the lambs are born and to take part in getting the babies warm and fed,” Ashley says. “They are great helpers. Our son, Bennett, may only be 2, but he’s convinced the sheep depend on him.”

The Bonhams use heat lamps in the lambing room. “We were looking at a sheep supply catalog one day, and we realized how outdated our heat lamps are,” she says. “Our heat lamps didn’t have any guards to protect the babies, ewes, and people in the pen from burns or to prevent fires.”

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

The 2012 FS4JK Farm Family Safety Incentive Grant deadline is September 3. To apply, mail or email a one-page request that explains your farm safety improvement project. Include an action plan as well as an estimated budget for the project.

“We’re often amazed how much families are able to accomplish with a small amount of grant funding,” says Tracy Schlater, FS4JK marketing director. “Even if the grant doesn’t pay for the entire safety project, it can offer a big boost to get it under way.”

Farm Safety 4 Just Kids also awards a limited number of Farm Family Safety Incentive Grants to individuals and organizations to conduct farm safety programs in the community. •

LEARN MORE

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