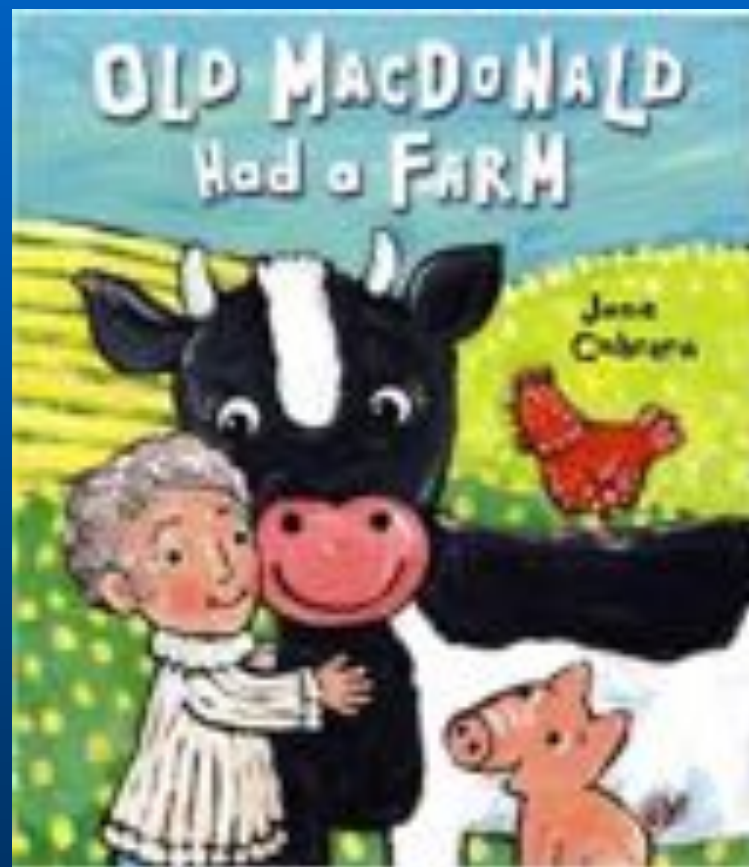


# Childless Tractors: Improving Farming Safety for Children

Kam Benton

Hesse Rural Health Service

# My Home



# My Toys



# My Backyard My Pool





# My Animals



# Children on Farms

- Home extends to farm & playground
- Work place (Farming industry has one of the highest risk of work related deaths)
- Visitor
- Animals
- Farm vehicles, Plants & Machinery
- Chemicals
- Tools
- Firearms
- Grain and hay stores, i.e. silos, hay bales
- Dams

# Farm Related Deaths in Children



- 15 and under age group has the most under represented work related farm accidents in Victoria
- Account for 1:7 farm fatalities
- Twenty-one children aged 0-17 died on Victorian farms between July 2000 and June 2003
- Six (aged 0-4) attributed to drowning in dams, reservoirs and irrigation channels
- Nine connected with operation of mobile plant & transport
  - 2 tractor related
  - 3 in connection with use of ATVs (all terrain vehicles)
  - 2 motorcycle use
  - Remainder involved cars

# Farm Related Injuries Children 15 & Under



- **Top causes hospital admissions and emergency department presentations 2001 & 2002**
  - **Motor vehicles including 2 & 4 wheeled motorcycles**
  - **Agricultural /farm machinery**
  - **Animals including horses**
  - **Falls**



# Children On Farms

- Small
- Limited experience
- Undeveloped sense of danger
- Immature
- Mobile & independent
- Inquisitive
- Act impulsively and unaware of risks
- Influenced by peers
- Farm duties

# Historical Background



- The then “H&CS” recognised the enormity of unintentional injuries and fatalities to children on farms
- “Taking Injury Prevention Forward” 1994/5
- Hesse successful Submission to develop a pilot trauma preventative program to target injuries and deaths in children living on farms

# Program Development

- Seeding grant to run a pilot project 1995/6
- Extensive literature search prior to program development
- Unlike NSW, SA and Qld
- No professional media based information for Victoria targeting children
- No coordinated State wide approach to reduce child rural trauma

# Program Development – cont'd



- Main focus – raising awareness on dangers of children riding on tractors, utilities and other farm machinery
- Target rural children 10-12 years
- Develop age relevant classroom based course material and learning package to cover core safety areas

# Pilot Childless Tractors Program



## Core safety areas:

- Farm rules
- Basic first aid & emergency numbers
- Tractor safety & other farm machineries
- Motor bikes and quad bikes
- Chemicals & workshop safety
- Animals, water & grain safety

# Pilot Childless Tractors Program



- One-hour program delivered over six weeks by community health nurses
- Three local pilot schools
- 60 children and respective classroom teachers participated
- Evaluated by participating schools, children and parents



# Evaluation - Pilot

- Some children not able to relate / disinterested due to farm differences, i.e. “I don’t have a shearing shed or workshop at my place”,
- Some teachers find the program not relevant for children “not on the land”
- One hour was not enough time to cover some topics, i.e. tractors, chemicals, workshop & grain safety

# Evaluation - Pilot

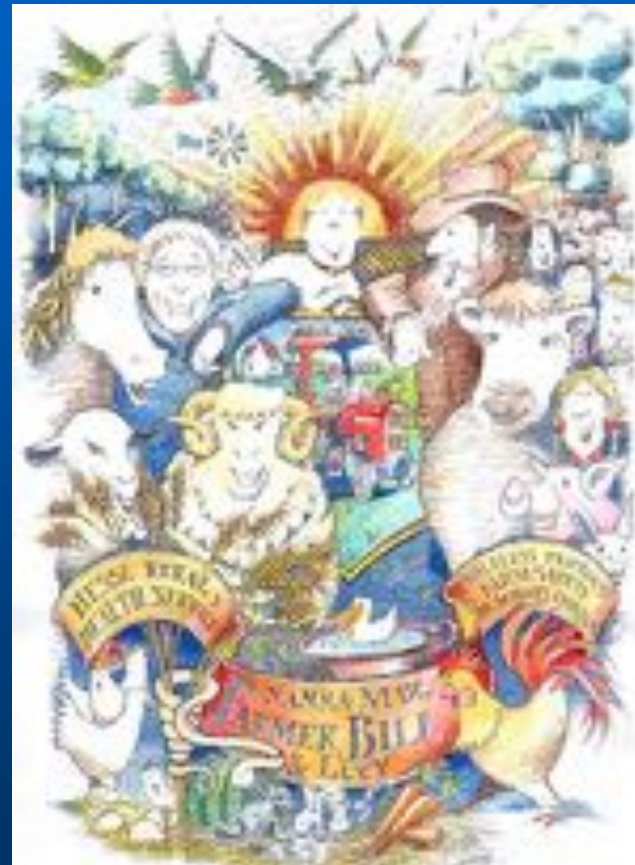
- **Workbooks used at home, allocated class time**
  - Vector to involve parents and siblings in topic discussions at home
  - Great way to reinforce at home what the children had learnt at school
  - Fun and enjoyable activities for children
  - Good revision tool

# Beyond The Pilot

- Video technology used for children to film their home farms
- Footage used for discussion and peer review to develop better understanding of safe practice
- Eight-week program
- Scaled model of a working farm
- Farm excursion (risks assessment during farm walk)
- Revised workbook

# The Childless Tractors Program

- An educational program for children to promote farm safety
  - Raise awareness
  - Increase knowledge
  - Engage parents through children



# The Childless Tractors Program



# The Childless Tractors Program

- Rules and why we have them
- Meet the team - our budding farmers, staff, partners, volunteers, friends, supporters, and of course, Nanna Maz, Farmer Bill & Lucy





# The Childless Tractors Program



# The Childless Tractors Program

- First Aid & Emergency Services

## MAKE AN EMERGENCY TELEPHONE LIST: EMERGENCY NUMBERS

AMBULANCE **000**  
POLICE  
FIRE  
POISONS INFORMATION CENTRE \_\_\_\_\_

HOSPITAL \_\_\_\_\_

DOCTOR \_\_\_\_\_

FRIEND OR RELATIVE \_\_\_\_\_

- Write clear directions on how to get to your home, make notes of landmarks and using map references if possible

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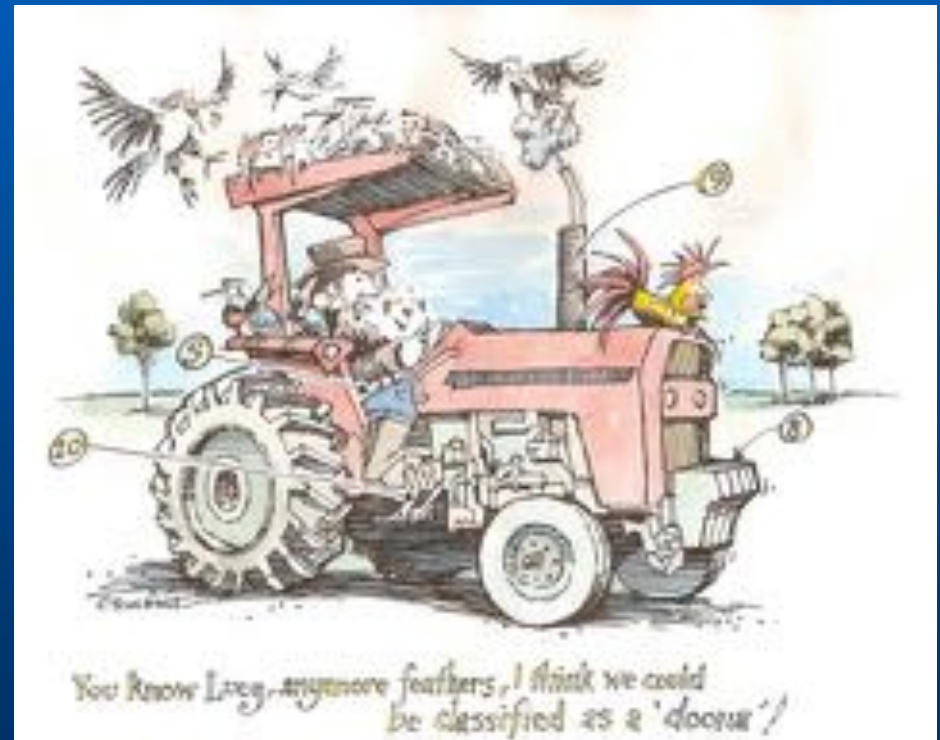
# The Childless Tractors Program





# The Childless Tractors Program

- Tractor Safety



# The Childless Tractors Program



# The Childless Tractors Program

- Tractors & Other Farm Machinery



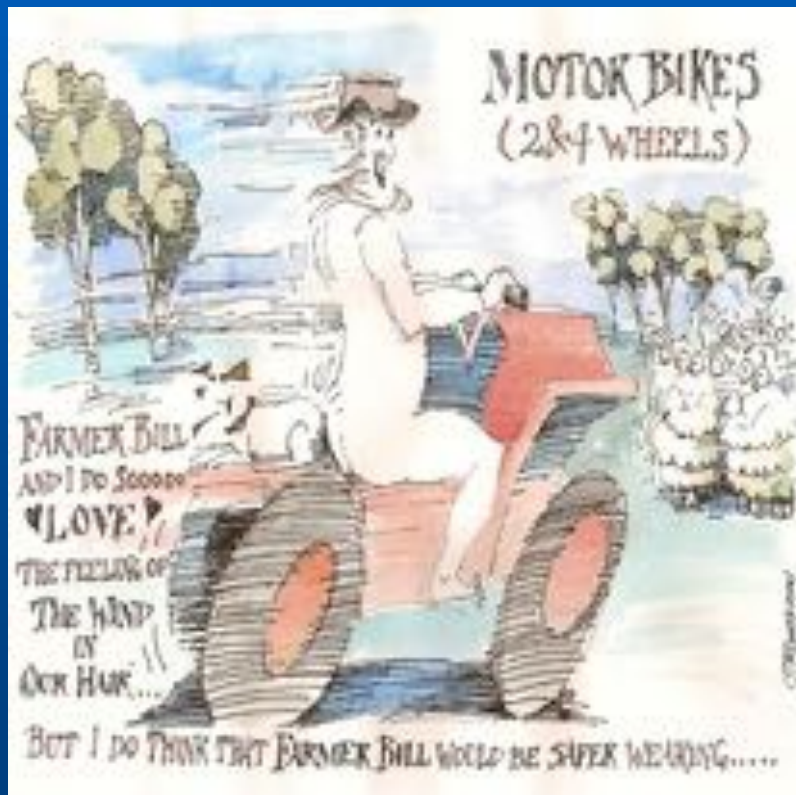


# The Childless Tractors Program



# The Childless Tractors Program

- Two & Four Wheeled Motor Bikes



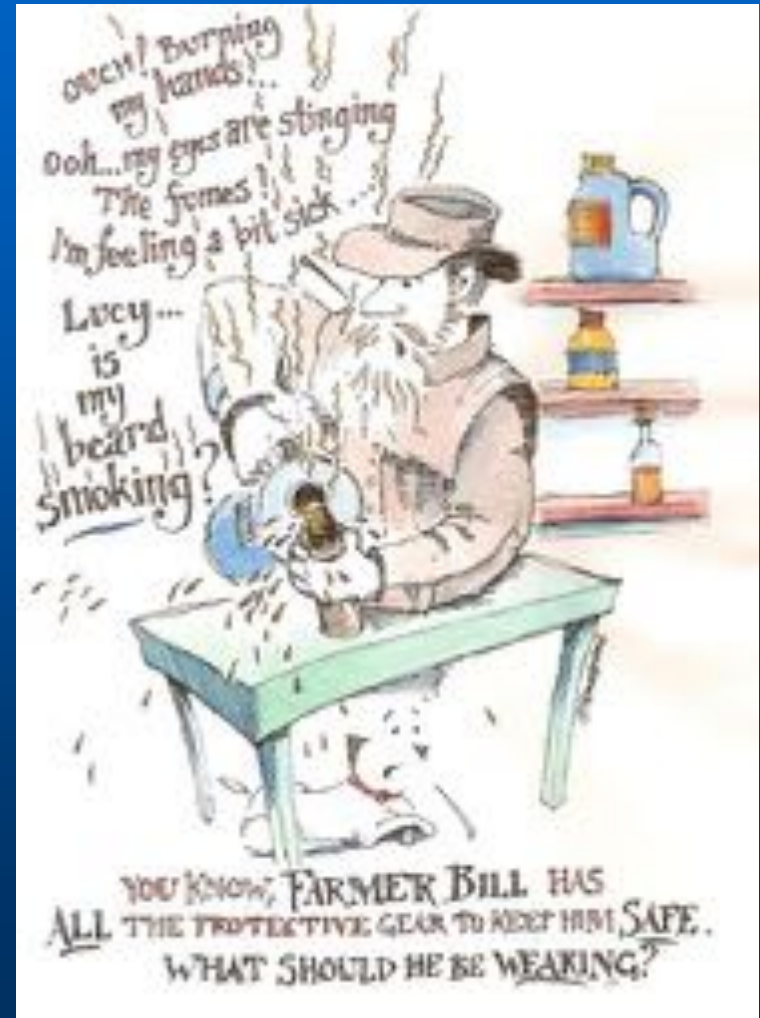
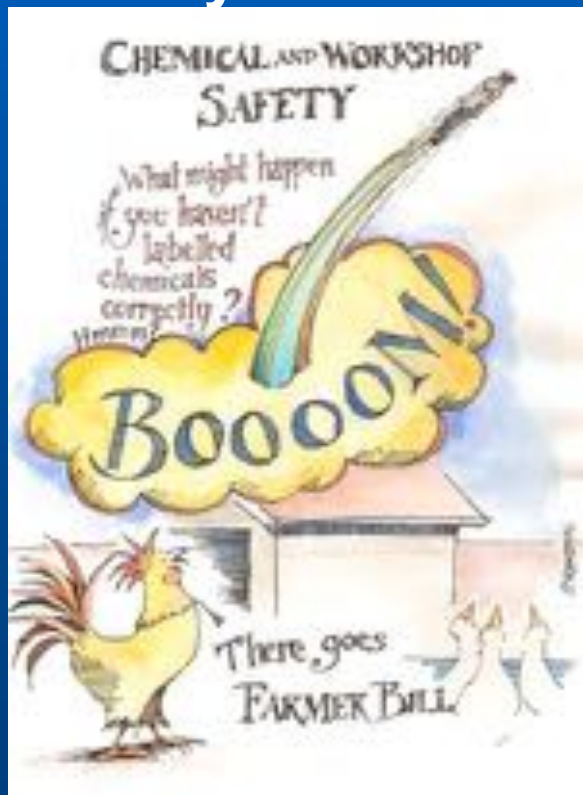
# The Childless Tractors Program





# The Childless Tractors Program

- Chemical & workshop safety



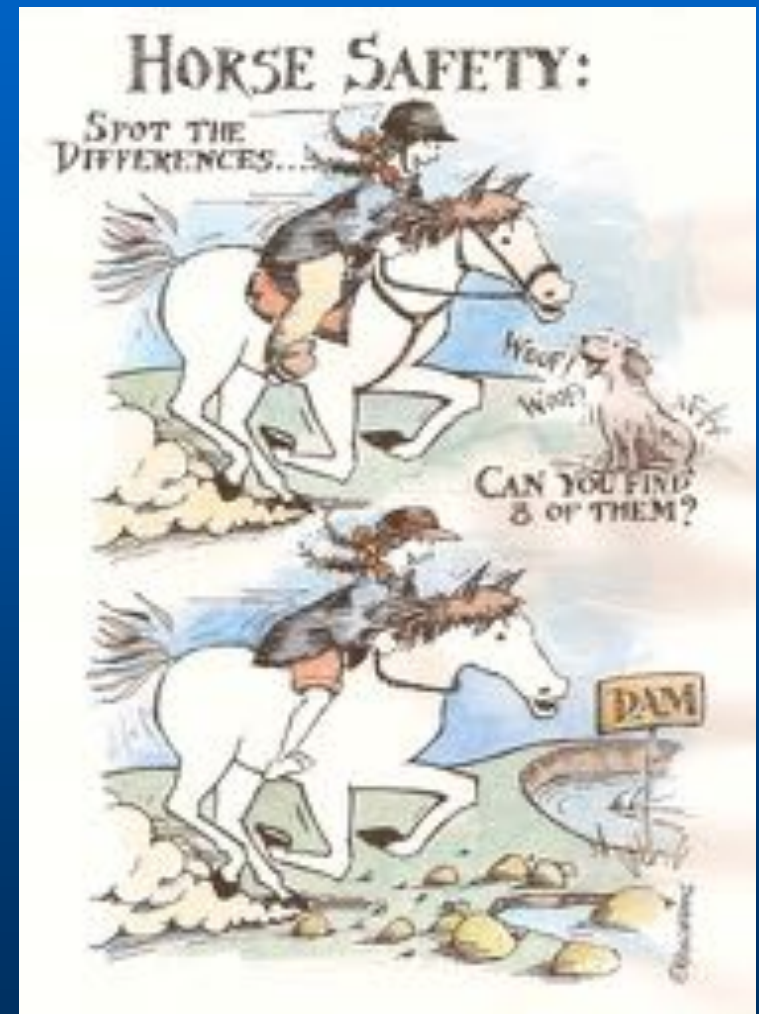
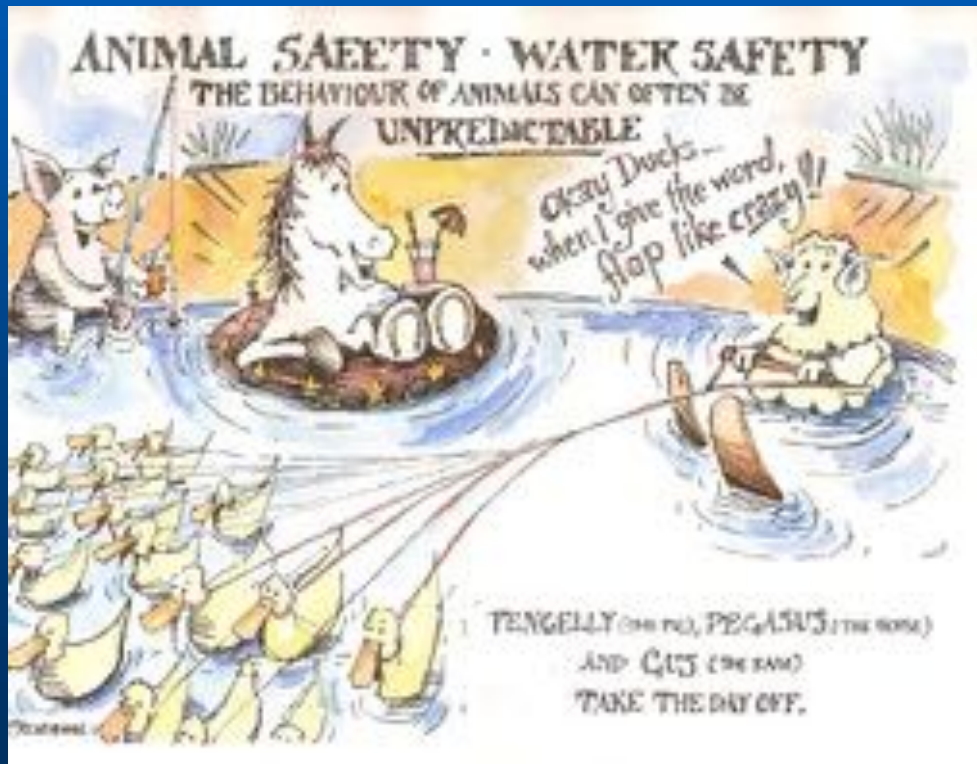
# The Childless Tractors Program





# The Childless Tractors Program

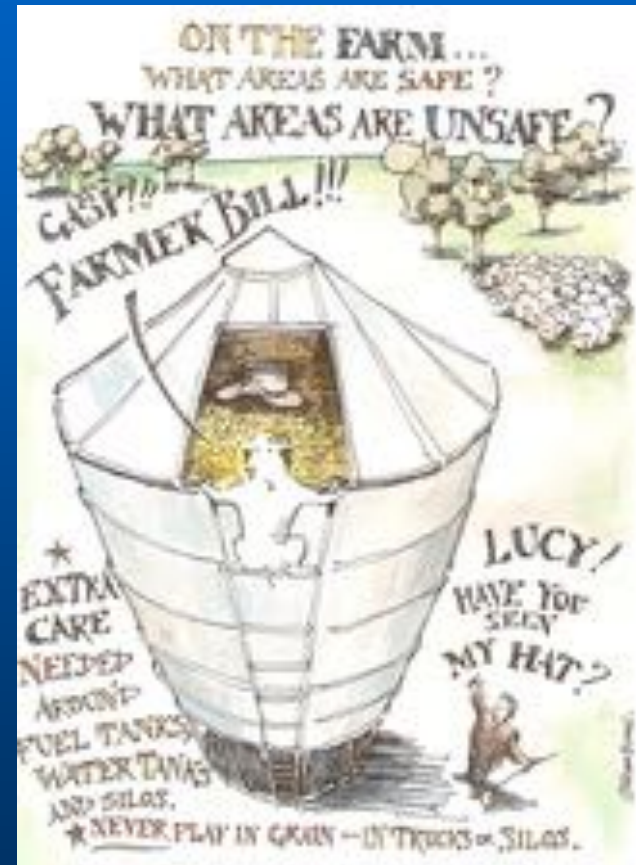
- Animals, Water & Grain Safety





# The Childless Tractors Program

- Animals, Water & Grain Safety



# Outcome Measures

- Pre and post questionnaire for children
- Model farm
- Farm walk
- Individual, focus group discussions with teachers, principals, parents
- Feedback from children, farming community

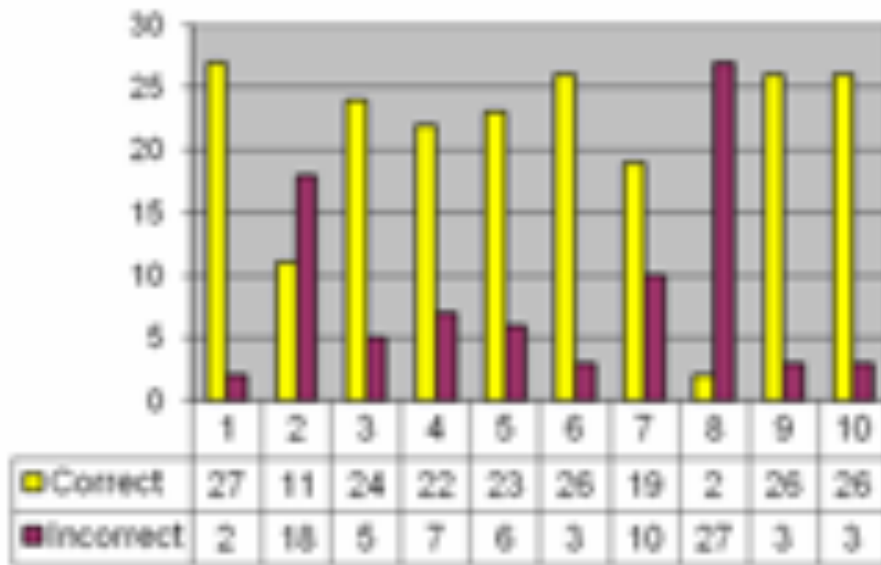
# Knowledge Questionnaire



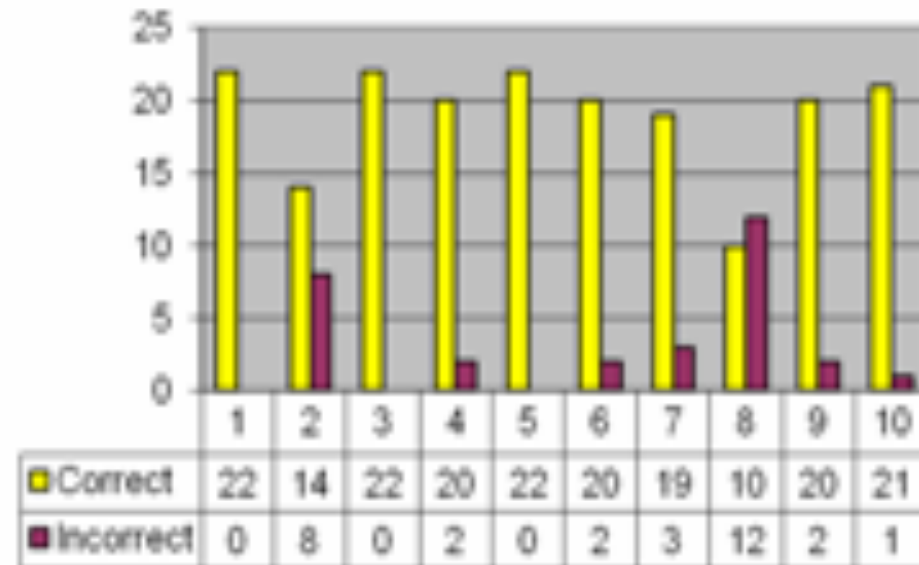
- 1. Playing on hay-bales
- 2. Riding in tractors
- 3. Safety around animals
- 4. Safe chemical storage
- 5. Safety helmets (horses)
- 6. Emergency phone number
- 7. In back of utilities
- 8. Age to ride farm ATV's
- 9. Passengers on motorbikes
- 10. Guards missing on PTO's

# Typical Result

Pre Program 29 Children



Post Program 22 Children



# Identify Risks & Good Practices





















# Identify Risks & Good Practices



# Schools Evaluation

- Program was enthusiastically received by both children and staff.
- The children enjoyed the weekly sessions
- The sessions were well planned and catered well to the children's interests, their involvement being evidenced by the enthusiastic responses and recall of the personal experiences
- Parental feedback indicated that children discuss the topics at home



# Children's Comments

- I thought the farm safety program was worth while. We learnt about machinery, chemicals, safety around animal, motor bikes, silos, diseases with pets, tractors and where to put chemicals
- I now know to tell dad that to put chemicals in a high cupboard where no little children can reach them and to put the big machinery away in the shed and to put gardening equipment in a safe place. I am amazed how much more I learnt about farms

# Children's Comments cont'd

- I am going to ask dad to put roll over protection on our tractor. I like the last day when we went to see the model farm
- It was worth going to because I learnt about how to stay safe. I gave dad two signs, one said "Beware Electric Fence" and the other said "Please Shut the Gate". Now I know what I can and can't do
- **The best part of the program was when the man brought the motor bikes with him.**
- **I liked the eight lessons we had, when Mrs long bought [sic] the first aid kit, videos, slides and lots of things.**

# Children's Comments cont'd

- The farm safety book helped me learn and understand what to do on the farm and how to be **SAFE**
- **The farm safety management program was educational, fun and easy to learn. Now we know about a lot of things such farm machinery, first aid, fires, swimming safety and animal diseases.**
- **I didn't know that there was so much safety gear. I liked it when we got to see the slides of the tractor, it was really helpful.**
- I liked working in the farm safety books, and talking about problems we have on our farms. **Mrs long was very easy to understand.**

# Children's Comments cont'd



- I have enjoyed Farm Safety and learning about the dangers on a farm and how to avoid them
- The program has helped me understand lots of things and to be safe on a farm
- **Farm safety was an activity about farm safety with animals, farm machinery and chemicals**
- **I enjoyed Farm Safety**
- **I liked when Dulcie taught us CPR and DR ABC**

# Farming Community

- “... proud to have been associated with ...  
“
- “... continue to support any future initiative ...”
- “Very positive program where ..., my son ... used to get involved. The idea of practical application is a very good one. The program has been going for a long time now and everything has its time and day. I would like to see a little different in the future.”



# School Principal

- We have found the Farm Safety program of terrific benefit not only to the students who live on rural properties but also to the students who live in the surrounding residential area. The “town kids” often visit their mates on properties and it has dramatically raised their awareness of dangers associated with farm machinery and dams. It’s also given the students who live on properties (opportunities) to talk about their life on the farm and its has exposed a few issues where complacency has lead to a drop in awareness of correct procedures and generally being safe. ...

# The Childless Tractors Program



- Request for “Train the trainer” from two neighbouring health services, Lismore Health Centre (South West HealthCare) and Timboon (Timboon and District Healthcare Service)
- Neighbouring schools requesting program for their children
- Offered to all 12 schools in catchment (now 10)

# The Childless Tractors Program



- **Delivered to 9 schools on second yearly rotation**
- **Valued by schools - Program integrated into curriculum**
- **Ongoing support and commitment from volunteers, individuals and farming community**
- **Delivered to over 200 students annually**
- **Has been running for over 15 years**
- **Neighbouring health services continue to deliver program to their communities**
- **Post program questionnaires consistently indicate positive result in increased knowledge**

# The Childless Tractors Program



- Success can be measured by the children's ability to identify danger and safe practices on model farm and farm walks
- Evidence of flow on effect to adults on their own practices by their children bring home the discussions, i.e. keys no longer left in ignition
- Parents participated in Sustainable Farm Families Program
- Integrated into Hesse Health Promotional Plan
- Ran abbreviated program for younger children

# Key Achievements

- Hesse took part in submission and witness to the Victorian Parliamentary Inquiry into the Cause of Fatality and Injury on Victorian Farms Published August 2005
- Nomination for 1997 Award for Innovation and Excellence in Primary Care
- Geelong Community Foundation funding for artwork for workbook and digital equipment



# Key Achievements cont'd

- Melbourne Bus Link for a 35-foot bus (Barney)
- Community Award for staff member in recognition of her work and contribution to rural health
- Worksafe K.I.D.S. (Kids in Dangerous Situations) Ballarat incorporated footage of farm walk into a video for the Schools TV Program in 2004

# Our Vision

- Build on existing program to develop a story book for younger children
- Barney the Bus to create a 35-foot mobile image of the Childless Tractor Program to extend and deliver farm safety message to rural communities
- Develop web based game technology to engage children with information
- User generated forum, ask an “expert” to analyse/monitor trends/issues
- Retrospective research - large body of evidence of cohort from past 15 years
- Longitudinal study
- Build evidence using data to develop a robust total trauma preventative package for rural children

# Barney

- Library to deliver life education to rural children
- Virtual learning environment - hands on interactive activities to capture interest, excitement and imagination of children



# Key Partners, Supporters, and Sponsors



- **Volunteers**
- **Farming community and individuals**
- **Rural emergency services**
- **Local police**
- **Schools**
- **Geelong Community Foundations**
- **Victorian Worksafe Authority**
- **Retailers Farm machineries**
- **VFF Farm safe alliance farm safety action group**



















# The Future

- Hesse is passionate and committed
- Can play limited role in isolation
- Means to orchestrate intelligence to create an integrated comprehensive and collaborative State wide approach to farm safety in children
- Inject resource onto the issue of total rural injury prevention to create a sustainable healthy farming community

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

Kam Benton

[kbenton.hesse@swarh.vic.gov.au](mailto:kbenton.hesse@swarh.vic.gov.au)

# My Home, My Work, My Playground



# OUR FUTURE

