

# Gear Up for Ag Health and Safety™

## Project Summary

The Gear Up for Ag Health & Safety™ program aims to build understanding of common farm hazards, improve understanding and knowledge about their impact, and promote safe farm practices to positively influence farm safety culture among current and future young farm workers.

The National Centre for Farmer Health delivered 21 Gear Up for Ag™ programs at a total of 20 schools between February 2021 and July 2022, reaching 394 students involved in agricultural studies from secondary schools and vocational training organisations located in farming communities across the state.

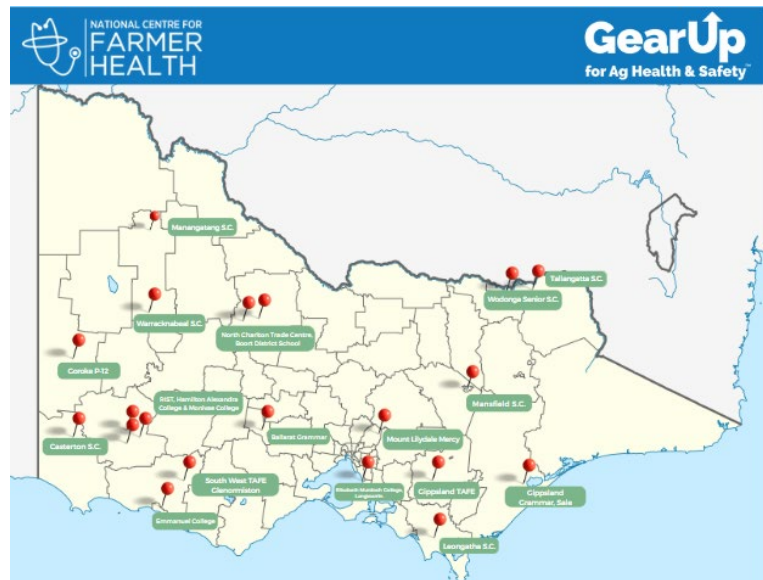


Figure 1: Gear Up for Ag™ - program delivery locations across Victoria

## Key Agricultural Activities and Risk Factors

Students participate in a pre-program survey prior to the program delivery, allowing for tailoring of training to provide health and safety education relevant to student's exposures, at home and on the farm. The following data represents 411 responses collected through pre-program surveys from programs delivered between February 2021 and July 2022.

<b>85%</b> were younger than 15 years old when they began helping/working on a farm or in agriculture	<b>69%</b> currently assist or work in a farming / agricultural environment	<b>48%</b> supervise other people on farm, with the majority (82%) supervising their siblings	<b>84%</b> rate their own health and safety practices on farm very or extremely important	<b>69%</b> plan to work in agriculture in future
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## Examples of safety behaviour changes from students

'Wearing a helmet every time I ride a motorbike'

'More cautious around large animals'

'Always making sure I'm wearing hearing protection when shooting, mowing, grinding.'

'Using a mask when filling up the sprayer'



## The most common activities before age 15 included:



**74%**

driving a farm vehicle (e.g. ute, tractor)



**78%**

working with large animals



**71%**

riding a quad bike



**64%**

riding a motorbike

## Post-Program: Identifying Change

Students complete a post-program survey 3-6 weeks after program delivery to assess (i) changes in knowledge and understanding of farm hazards, and (ii) self-reported changes to safety practices and behaviors. 18 of the 20 schools completed the post program surveys, with a total of 211 responses received.

**64%**

reported that additional PPE had been purchased since the program

**96%**

reported that their knowledge of farm hazards had increased

**34%**

reported that they had discussed farm safety concerns with family or friends

**65%**

reported that the program had influenced their own safety behaviours

Sixteen of the 20 schools responded to the post-program school evaluation survey. Ninety three percent (93%) agreed that the Gear Up for Ag™ program provided information and knowledge that added to their curriculum. All schools agreed that the information was relevant to the students' lives, work or studies and that there was a good balance of information, activities, questions and discussion.

## Overall school rating of Gear Up for Ag™



**4.73**

stars out of 5

## Conclusion

The Gear Up for Ag™ program highlights areas of risk and offers contextually appropriate and evidence-based agricultural health and safety education to build hazard awareness and foster important discussions to improve farm safety practices. Comments from the students on the post program surveys offer greater insights into how the program has affected students' own farm safety behaviour and attitudes, and their capacity to positively influence farm safety culture into the future.