



Illinois Extension
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

Lessons Learned at Farm Safety Day Left a Lasting Impression

Accidents can happen in a split second. It is never too young to start learning how to be situationally aware and safer. For the past 30 years, [University of Illinois Extension](#) and [Illinois Farm Bureau](#) have made it a priority to teach area youth how to be safe around the farm and beyond.

Farm Bureau and 4-H staff serving Fulton and Mason counties partner together to coordinate the annual Farm Safety Day. The name can be misleading, as the topics provide valuable lessons both on and off the farm.

Topics this year taught youth about safety as it relates to fire, weather, hiking, farm equipment, animals, grain bins, firearms, and poisonous plants.

"If even one child avoids serious injury or worse because of something they learned at our farm safety program, that makes our time and planning worth it," stated Fulton County 4-H Program Coordinator Janis Blout. "We may never know, but it's worth it."

Eric Arnold from [Illinois Law Enforcement Training and Standards Board](#) was impressed with the youths' knowledge about weather safety. He focused on knowing what to do when faced with warnings and helpful supplies to have in a weather emergency. Hiking safety skills taught by [Extension Master Naturalist](#) Kim Dunnigan included what to carry with you on a hike, how to plan ahead, and how to get help if needed.

Stevan Hofreiter from [Stelter- Hofreiter, Inc.](#) in Havana did a very impactful demonstration that used a pool noodle to represent what happens when a person's arm is caught in a grain auger. One girl said, "Okay, you've got my attention." Austin Ramsey left an important impression as he explained that [ADM](#) has a safety meeting every morning.

John Kachanuk, [Havana Fire District](#), let kids try on his protective fire gear, and comments were heard about how heavy it was. Checking out the fire truck and equipment is always a favorite part of the day. At the poisonous plants session youth learned "Leaves of three, let it be," and "Leaves of five, let it thrive."

Local presenters taught these sessions eight times, as the groups of youth and adults went from station to station in 20-minute intervals. Approximately 80 youth and 40 adults were present.

Each child in attendance received a sack lunch and a goodie bag at the end of the morning filled with a few reminders of things they had learned that day.



The Farm Safety Day presenters left lasting impressions on 80 youth, thanks to their interactive demonstrations and impressive presentations about a variety of safety topics. The kids loved hearing from John Kachanuk, Havana Fire District, trying on his gear, and checking out the fire truck.

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