Social Development & Tractors

Social Development in Children

- Children's behavior is influenced by others in their lives.
- Adults, and especially parents, can impact children through actual teaching, by modeling safe or unsafe behaviors, and by setting rules that youth are expected to follow.
- Peers can influence children by encouraging or discouraging risk-taking, by creating peer pressure, and by modeling safe or unsafe behaviors.



How Social Development Can Influence Children

Parent Teaching

- Parents can teach children how to be safe.
- Guidelines and lessons should be patiently provided.
- Careful and patient rule-setting, teaching, and supervision can increase youth safety while operating tractors.

Parent Modeling

- Children watch their parents and mimic what they see, both good and bad.
- If parents engage in safe behaviors, their children are likely to absorb those lessons and also engage in safe behaviors. If parents take dangerous risks, children may too.

Parent Rules

- Parents are the authorities on farms. They must set rules for children and adolescents, and they must enforce those rules.
- Safe behaviors should be praised and rewarded to encourage positive behaviors.

Peer Risk Taking

- Children and adolescents often take risks, as it is natural to try new things to grow.
- Risk-taking while operating a tractor can be dangerous.

Peer Pressure

- Children and adolescents are developing their identity – trying to understand themselves. Because of this, they are susceptible to influence from peers.
- Youth may copy what their peers do, and may try to impress their peers. This can lead to risky behavior, including while operating tractors.

Peer Modeling

- Youth may copy their peers' risky or dangerous behaviors, especially if it is someone they respect or look up to.

See Operating a Tractor to determine if a youth is capable of safely operating a tractor.

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