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Farm life... not taken for granted here

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Special for Farmshine

EAST BERLIN, Pa.—“The simple fact is there are a lot of things in life we take for granted. We think... it can’t happen to us,” Jayne and Robby Sebright relate during a recent visit at their Adams County, Pa. dairy farm. “We were so very fortunate. For G.W. it could have been a lot worse.”

George William (G.W.) Sebright is eight years old and like most boys his age, full of energy and adventure. A farm accident involving G.W. a year ago brought valuable lessons for all.

His father, Robby, will share their story at the upcoming PDMP Issue Forum on Farm Safety, Nov. 6 in Cochranville, Pa.

Farm Safety 4 Just Kids will also have a place on the forum agenda with a message for farm dads and moms that will strengthen awareness of the inherent dangers on farms and how to equip children with the knowledge and skills to avoid them.

“At the time of the accident, G.W. and Charlie were 7 and 5, you can tell them what you want, but they are still kids,” Jayne reflects, noting that the lessons continue because they don’t want the accident to diminish the obvious love their sons have for farm life.

“We don’t want to discourage them from being around the equipment, but we do want to give them a stronger sense of what is going on,” Robby adds. That’s the delicate balance all farm families live daily.

“Robby and I both learned a lot raised on the farm,” Jayne notes. “Part of the reason we are here doing what we do, is for our kids.”

“We want our children to have those opportunities also,” adds Robby.

Farm safety is an important issue for farms of all sizes. Families, like the Sebrights, note there is a fine line between providing a safe environment and, at the same time, allowing children to experience what the farm is all about, to allow the opportunities for learning, growing and to instill the spark for farming into the next generation.

According to “Children and Safety on the Farm” published by Penn State University: “Children and adolescents account for about 20% of all farm fatalities, and comprise a

higher proportion of the total number of nonfatal farm injuries. It is estimated that 27,000 children under the age of 20 who live on farms/ranches are seriously injured each year. When children who visit or work on farms are included, the total annual injury toll is estimated to be 100,000.”

For more information or to register for the Nov. 6 PDMP Issue Forum on Farm Safety, call 1-877-326-5993 or visit www.pdmp.org.