

# Tips For Dealing With Drought-Related Stress

BY DR. MIKE ROSMANN

Harvest is already taking place in many locations, or is not happening because drought left little to harvest.

The U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Disaster Technical Assistance Center (DTAC) August 2012 Bulletin listed four articles about coping with drought-related stress. Interested persons can subscribe to the SAMHSA DTAC Bulletin at their website: <http://www.samhsa.gov/dtac/resources.asp>.

I commend the SAMHSA DTAC for their timely listing of resources for dealing with drought-related stress, as I drew upon these publications for this article.

Two of the four resources were authored by Dr. Bob Fetsch of the Colorado State University Extension Service. Bob and I have known each other for many years and have worked together on several projects.

Besides having similar professional interests, Bob and I both have Germanic and farming backgrounds-his at Muenster, Texas and mine near the western Iowa community of Westphalia. Our two communities share some of the same family names, extended kin and traditions.

The founders of Westphalia, Iowa, Emil and Carl Flusche, also founded Muenster and the towns of Westphalia, Kansas, Michigan and Missouri, plus four more towns in North Texas.

Here are tips from Managing Stress during Tough Times by Dr. Fetsch, which is available at: (<http://www.ext.colostate.edu/pubs/consumer/10255.html/10255.pdf>)

\* Resilient people re-frame and adjust their thinking and reactions away from a sense of lack and toward a sense of options

\* There is always more than one option to solve any problem

\* Stress and depression cause farmers and rural residents to have an increased risk for substance abuse problems, farm accidents, injuries and suicide

\* Depression and stress during tough times, like drought, often result in conflicts with spouses and poor parenting practices that may cause problems for youth in school achievement, peer relations, antisocial behavior, self confidence, depression and substance misuse

\* As more people reach out for support, usually more self-help groups, support groups and crisis services such as hot lines are created

\* Depression, substance misuse, lack of social support, and access to a fire-arm are among the top predictors of suicide

Dr. Fetsch offers additional tips in Making Decisions and Coping Well with Drought, which is available at: (<http://www.ext.colostate.edu/pubs/consumer/10256.html>)

• There are at least three ways families can make decisions in their family meetings-autocratically, democratically and by consensus

• Reaching consensus is useful with major family decisions. However, it may be too time-con-

suming to use with smaller decisions where an autocratic or democratic decision-making strategy can suffice

• When one person has all the power in decision-making, others may feel discounted or disenfranchised

• Intergenerational families that use a consensus decision-making strategy show improved family functioning, family satisfaction, self esteem and family coping

Farmers and ranchers are in an unpredictable era. We are uncertain when to sell livestock and crops. We don't usually know yet what insurance will pay for and what forms of assistance will become available.

It is important to stay up-to-date with federal and state pronouncements concerning the drought. Disaster declarations and provisions sometimes change on a daily basis. Usually these announce-

ments are available in letters and publications from the federal Farm Service Agency (FSA) office for the county where the farm/ranch resides. Farm news broadcasts are a good source of information.

In some particularly hard-hit locales, community education and support programs may be initiated through the Extension Service, churches, and sometimes through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) when a disaster rises to the level that individual assistance, including crisis counseling, becomes available.

Disasters that rise to the level that FEMA assistance becomes available usually entail fires or other causes that seriously damage people's lives and property. FEMA assistance does not accompany public assistance declarations, such as might be needed to repair public roads, power lines and infrastructure.

Crisis counseling only accompanies declarations that provide individual assistance. Radio, television, newspaper reports and local Extension offices are a good source of current information about drought counseling and other forms of individual assistance.

Two previous columns are relevant to drought issues: Weathering farm and ranch disasters, which was released for publication on July 2, 2012, and Droughts take toll on our hopes, which was released for publication on July 9, 2012. The newspaper where you read this column might have them on its website. Or you can order them from the website: <http://www.agbehavioralhealth.com>.

It's easy to be self-critical, especially over decisions made earlier to sell crops ahead, when now the price has increased or the producer doesn't have the grain to fulfill a contract. Talking now about the situation with family and those involved in the contract is a better coping strategy than putting it off.

*Dr. Rosmann is a psychologist and farmer. He can be contacted through the website: [www.agbehavioralhealth.com](http://www.agbehavioralhealth.com).*

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## Visiting Hours

# Helpful Tips For Baby Safety

BY RENEE TERESHINSKI

Director of Women's and Children's Services

The first year of an infant's life is exciting and joyous. However, it can also be a nerve-racking experience for anyone taking on the caregiver role. One of the most important aspects to be aware of when caring for a baby is safety. September is Baby Safety Month, and I would like to take this opportunity to highlight a few important areas of baby safety.

### NEWBORN SAFETY:

When a baby is born, they spend the majority of their days sleeping. Remember to place them BACK TO SLEEP to help reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). Here are a few other important sleeping safety points:

• The mattress needs to be firm, and there should be tight fitting sheets placed on it.  
• There should be no soft bedding, positioners, stuffed animals or crib bumper pads that could suffocate an infant if they would become wedged against them.

• Crib slats should be secure and no more than 2 3/8 inches apart, or the size of a soda can.

• Drop side cribs should not be used.  
• Sleep sacks are wearable blankets that are a safer option than loose comforters.

• Room sharing in a bassinette or crib is also a safer option than having a baby sleep in the bed with you.

• Don't place a baby on a soft adult bed, couch, chair or car seat to sleep unless directed by your baby's doctor.

• To prevent choking, remove the drawstrings from hooded clothing. Learn CPR and the Heimlich Maneuver for Infants.

### BABIES ON THE GO:

Parents and caregivers can help keep babies who are constantly on the move safe, especially when they are in and around vehicles.

• Learn how to properly install the car seat and have it checked by a certified child passenger safety technician.

• Recent American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommendations state that children need to be left in the rear-facing position as

long as possible, at least until their 2nd birthday. Utilize the height and weight limits until your child meets them. The old rule of "20 lbs and 12 months" to turn the seat forward facing is actually now the minimum recommended requirements.

• Cars are NOT playgrounds. Often, children play in areas surrounded by vehicles. Be very cautious about front over and back over incidents that could injure or kill children. Walk completely around your vehicle and check underneath before moving it when children are around.

• Never leave a child alone in a vehicle, not even when a window is open. Children left in hot vehicles will increase their body temp three to five times faster than an adult. If you ever see a child alone in a vehicle, call 911. When driving with children, place a purse or bag by the child so you will have to open their door and won't forget them if they are quiet or asleep.

• Always lock the trunk and vehicle doors, especially when at home, so kids cannot become entrapped in a vehicle.

Babies at Play: At this stage in life, suffocation and choking when at play is the most significant issue to address. Supervise your baby when they are at play. Get down on the child's level and remove the cords and hazardous items that could possibly end up in their mouths when crawling. Use age appropriate toys, and make sure to read the warning labels and watch for any recalls on a particular toy. Refer to [www.recalls.gov](http://www.recalls.gov) for updates on toy and equipment recalls.

Babies at Home:

Burn awareness is very important.  
• Check water temperatures before placing an infant in the bath by placing your inner wrist or elbow in the water.

• Avoid microwaves to heat formula or milk as there can be hidden hot spots that will scald an infant's mouth and throat.

• Do not carry hot water or beverages when holding a baby.

• Cover unused electrical outlets and place barriers around ovens, fireplaces and furnaces.

Even if you don't have a pool, drowning prevention in the home is also very important.

• Keep toilet lids shut. If needed, there are

toilet lid locks available.

• Empty buckets and wading pools immediately after use and store them upside down.

• When bathing an infant, keep your hand on the baby and NEVER leave them unattended in a tub or near sinks.

• Remember, infants can drown in seconds and in less than an inch of water.

Falls are very common in the infants who insist on standing and walking before they are one year old.

• Do not place chairs or cribs near windows.

• Secure heavy furniture by using wall anchors or braces.

• Utilize a safety gate for every stairway in your home.

• Strap infants into highchairs, infant car seats, carriers, swings and strollers.

• Avoid baby walkers with wheels.

Fire prevention is important for everyone in the family.

• Install smoke alarms on every level of the home and outside each sleeping area.

• Bedrooms should have an alarm as well.

• Alarms need to be tested once a month.

• Create and practice a fire escape plan and designate one person to get an infant out of the home in case of a fire.

Poison prevention is also a key to a safe home for the entire family.

• Read all labels and follow the instructions when giving medications to children.

• Keep medications out of reach in the original child-resistant containers.

• Household products should be kept out of sight from children or behind a locked cabinet.

• Learn the Poison Control phone number (1-800-222-1222).

• Every home should install a carbon monoxide (CO) detector on every level of their house and test these once a month.

• Remember not to run a car engine in a closed garage, even to warm it up. It should first be moved outside.

Baby safety is always very important. Taking these quick steps to ensure baby safety will help you enjoy this exciting time.

SOURCE: [www.safekids.org](http://www.safekids.org).

# Internet Helps Track Down Missing Pets

BY SUE MANNING

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — More owners are reporting lost or stolen pets, but the online nation is coming to the rescue.

The number of dogs being stolen in the United States has gone up dramatically in the last few years, the American Kennel Club says. The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals says thefts skyrocket in New York every summer when residents combine walking the dog with running errands.

Police will take a report if there's a witness or if a pet is extremely valuable. But animal-loving social media bloodhounds have jumped to help, alongside any number of dog-finding companies, devices and apps.

Nearly 70 percent more dogs were stolen across the country in 2011 than a year earlier, said AKC spokeswoman Lisa Peterson. "It was the largest jump since we started keeping track in 2007," she said.

The club collects media reports about stolen pets and retrieves data from the AKC Companion Animal Recovery database, a mix of microchip filings and customer calls, she said. In 2011, the AKC recorded 432 stolen dogs, compared with 255 in 2010.

The numbers only skim the surface, she said. Facebook and Twitter are flush with lost or stolen pets.

Better records are impossible because the law defines pets as property, so even if a police report is filed, it won't be flagged just because a dog was taken, explained Los Angeles Police Department spokesman Kevin Maiberger. If an animal is valued at more than \$950, the crime will be bumped up to grand theft, but it still won't mention pets except in the list of stolen items, he said.

A lack of records doesn't mean a lack of tears though, said Cora Bennett of Somerset, Ohio.

Marissa Banik, her daughter, didn't stop crying for hours after pugs Chloe and Pugsy were stolen

from their yard on Aug. 20.

Bennett and Banik called animal shelters, put up fliers, posted the theft on Facebook and other sites, called police, searched the neighborhood, talked to neighbors, posted a reward and followed several leads, Bennett said. "They are her babies," Bennett said.

Joanne McGonagle of New Lexington, Ohio, a friend of Bennett's, helped spread the word about Chloe and Pugsy on Facebook.

She also relayed the happy ending. A utility employee who saw the poster on Facebook called Banik and said he saw two pugs tied up at a service station. A service station employee watched surveillance footage and got the license plate of the car the pugs were in, McGonagle said. That employee saw the car outside a market, confronted a couple and threatened to call police so they gave him the pugs, she said.

There was a joyous reunion at the Banik home. "We had a big party. Everybody was coming over and giving them treats and loving on them and it was awesome," said Bennett, chief sitter for her "granddogs."

Peterson said pet thefts are all motivated by economics. "Some may want a dog but can't afford the adoption fees. Some are stolen directly out of stores because they don't want to pay the price. Some are stolen to sell and make money on the Internet or on a sidewalk. Some are held for ransom or given as gifts," she said.

To prevent loss or theft of your pet, Peterson recommends:

— Don't leave a dog unattended in a yard, especially if it's visible from the street.

— If a stranger approaches to admire your dog, don't answer questions about the pet's value or where you live.

— Never leave a dog alone in a car.

Thieves in search of GPS systems or laptops may let a dog out.

— Don't tie your dog outside a store. If you have errands, use pet-friendly stores or leave your dog home.

— Use a collar tag and a microchip with updated online information.

If a dog does go missing, an owner should contact local animal shelters and neighbors. If anyone saw the theft, police will get involved. Some local newspapers, radio and TV stations put missing pets on their websites.

Digital services like petameralert.com, lostpetcards.com and findtoto.com are growing, too. Each year, there are 10 percent to 15 percent more callers to petameralert.com, said founder Mark Jakubczak.

For a fee (starting at \$99.95), the service will call neighbors with a computer-generated message and fax posters to pet-related businesses. Jakubczak said recovery ranges from 62 percent to 84 percent, he said.

"Every year we find more and more pets, so it's very rewarding," Jakubczak said.

HomeAgain offers a free app called petrescuers, which taps into a network of 900,000 people nationwide. You have to be a member to report a lost pet, but there is no charge to those who find pets, said company spokesman Ryan Smith.

Other petfinding companies include ipetalert, lostpetusa and lostpettracker.

"Losing your dog creates anxiety, panic. It's devastating, you don't know where your best friend is," Peterson said. "Time is of the essence. The longer you wait to get the word out, the farther away they could be."

## Yankton Library Pre-School Story Time Starts Sept. 10

The Yankton Community Library, 515 Walnut, will begin its fall session of preschool story time the week of Sept. 10. Story times are on Mondays at 6:30 p.m., and Wednesdays and Thursdays at 10:15 a.m.

Preschool story time introduces 2- to 6-year-olds to books and reading through songs, stories, finger-plays, puppets and crafts. Story time, which lasts approximately 30-45 minutes, is an opportunity to introduce children to the library and the joy of reading. It is a great way to enjoy reading aloud stories, sing old and new songs, discover books and meet new friends.

Story time generally meets in the meeting room of the library. Parents/caregivers are asked to stay in the room with the child.

For more information, contact the library at 668-5275.



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**Ryan J. Garry, M.D.**

*Board Eligible in General Surgery*

Dr. Garry is a graduate of Sanford School of Medicine of The University of South Dakota School of Medicine, Sioux Falls, South Dakota. He completed his general surgery residency at Exempla St. Joseph in Denver Colorado and Iowa Methodist Medical Center in Des Moines, Iowa.

Dr. Garry will perform general surgery procedures such as laparoscopic hernia, stomach, colon, adrenal and splenectomy surgery; colonoscopies; esophagogastroduodenoscopy (EGDs); "Painless" hemorrhoid surgery; and minimally invasive parathyroidectomy.

Dr. Garry joins Drs. Appedwick, Kampshoff and Serck in providing care as a general surgeon.

Please join us in welcoming Dr. Garry, his wife Kari, and their children, Regan, Kael and Reese, to Yankton.

**Dr. Garry began seeing patients at the Yankton Medical Clinic on August 20, 2012. For an appointment please call 605-664-2742.**



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