



Storytelling for safety

The [first article](#) in the National Children's Center's new Storytelling project is online. Jaxon Boomsma, 7, died in a tractor-related incident at a relative's farm in South Dakota five years ago. The article addresses the incident, the grief, the family's decision to become safety advocates in honor of Jaxon, and the importance of saying "no" to extra riders on tractors. The Storytelling project builds on experiences and partnerships with the translational Telling the Story Project (www.tellingthestoryproject.org), a collaboration of the Great Plains Center for Agricultural Health (GPCAH), the Upper Midwest Agricultural Safety and Health Center (UMASH), the Central States Center for Agricultural Safety and Health (CS-CASH), and the National Farm Medicine Center (NFMC).



National Children's Center
for Rural and Agricultural Health and Safety

"The National Children's Center for Rural and Agricultural Health and Safety strives to enhance the health and safety of all children exposed to hazards associated with agricultural work and rural environments."

National Children's Center turns 25

The [National Children's Center for Rural and Agricultural Health and Safety](#) is celebrating 25 years of preventing injuries associated with the agricultural worksite, one of the nation's most hazardous worksites and the only one where children of any age may be present.

"We are excited to be celebrating this milestone, and we have a number of ways that people can get involved," said Marsha Salzwedel Ed.D., youth agricultural safety specialist with the National Children's Center.

Check www.marshfieldresearch.org/nccrahs for details of events as they become available.

The National Children's Center, part of the National Farm Medicine Center, Marshfield Clinic Research Institute, was established in 1997 with funding from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. It is one of 11 NIOSH-funded [Agricultural Centers](#), and the only center dedicated to childhood agricultural injury prevention.

Barbara Lee, Ph.D., director of the National Children's Center since its inception, recalls that before the National Children's Center, "there were relatively few resources and virtually no guidance on strategies to safeguard working and non-working children on farms."

The national approach to childhood agricultural injury prevention has paid off. Among early Children's Center interventions was the development of guidelines for parents to match farm chores with their child's developmental and physical capabilities. Follow-up data demonstrated a 56% decline in youth farm injury rates from 1998 to 2009, which ranked among Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report's [Ten Great Public Health Achievements 2001-2010](#).

To stay informed about 25th anniversary activities, and to share your 25th anniversary child agricultural safety memories, follow the National Children's Center on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) @NCCRAHS.



Advisory Board meets

The National Children's Center Stakeholder Advisory Board met May 3-4 in Minneapolis. Front row (from left): Jennifer Leonardo, Ph.D., Children's Safety Network; Dee Jepsen, Ph.D., Ohio State University (chair); Athena Ramos, Ph.D., University of Nebraska Medical Center; Suzanne Wright, M.D., Marshfield Clinic Pediatrics. Back row: David Schwebel, Ph.D., University of Alabama at Birmingham; Brian Kuhl, Progressive Agriculture Foundation; Matthew Keifer, M.D., University of Washington; Joseph Grzywacz, Ph.D., Florida State University. "In my 30-plus years with the center, this meeting was the best organized and most valuable advisory board meeting we have convened," Lee said. "I am so grateful and fortunate to be part of our collective efforts!"



Child Injuries Fact Sheet updated

Youth worker fatalities in agriculture exceed all other industries combined, according to the updated 2022 [Childhood Agricultural Injuries Fact Sheet](#) published by the National Children's Center. "There is no central database on childhood agricultural injuries," said Bryan Weichelt, Ph.D., who led the fact sheet initiative. "In putting together this fact sheet we drew upon the best available data from a variety of sources."

Journal issue dedicated to safeguarding youth

The National Children's Center is coordinating an upcoming special issue of the online journal, *Frontiers in Public Health* with the theme: "Safeguarding Youth from Agricultural Injury and Illness: International Experiences." More than 20 authors intend to submit manuscripts, including commentaries reflecting conditions in 15 countries. Plans call for creation of an E-Book featuring this unique collection of research findings, brief reports and international commentaries. Click for [more information](#).

Tracking childhood injuries

A National Children's Center project has created the framework to track medically-attended pediatric agricultural injuries. The U.S. lacks such a surveillance system, making it difficult to determine the scope of injuries, trends and safety measures. Principal Investigator Jeffrey VanWormer, Ph.D., said the first year of his five-year project was focused on linkages – finding farm kids in a 20-county region and then pairing them with Marshfield Clinic Health System injury records. "The first project is who are the farm kids?," VanWormer said. Researchers want to "set up an ongoing surveillance system without a lot of money to maintain," VanWormer said. "If it works relatively well, then you could do it in other parts of the state or country. You just need large health care systems that can connect to the state data."



Child care more challenging during pandemic

A newly-published study by Dr. Florence Becot suggests that closure of schools and child care facilities to contain the spread of COVID-19, along with worries about family members being at risk for the virus, further increased the difficulty of caring for children while working. Data were collected from 134 farm parents in 38 states in late summer 2020 using an online survey. More than half the respondents said taking care of the children became harder, with repercussions on the safety of children, parents' well-being, and on the farm business. Becot's findings in the [Journal of Agromedicine](#) highlight the need for employers, state- and federal-level governments to consider public health goals of containing COVID-19 alongside the needs of working parents and well-being of children.

ATV/UTV safety campaign

"Whether you are riding to work or riding to play, please ride to live by being safe." That is the message of the new ATV/UTV safety campaign by the Childhood Agricultural Safety Network, the latest in a series of CASN campaigns, <https://cultivatesafety.org/campaigns/>. For additional ATV-

UTV safety strategies, resources and incident stories please download the trifold brochure, <https://cultivatesafety.org/campaigns/atvs/>, available in both a digital-optimized format and a printable version with crop marks. In the U.S., there are more than 100,000 emergency room visits annually due to ATV/UTV injuries, and approximately 650 people die in ATV/UTV incidents each year. Up to 50 percent of these injury and fatality incidents involve children.

Welcome!

Matthew Comi, Ph.D., has joined the National Farm Medicine Center in a post-doctoral position funded by the Frank and Betty Koller Trusts. Comi recently completed his doctorate in rural sociology at the University of Kansas. His research examines the cultural content of foodways, especially as related to environment, technology, and now – human health. His planned project will focus on the impacts on the rapid mechanization/automation of the hops industry in Washington and Colorado. His work will be supervised by Drs. Becot and Casper Bendixsen.

Sarah Ruszkowski, M.S., has joined Farm Medicine as a research specialist to Dr. Florence Becot on a range of projects including the Linking Childcare to Farm safety project. Ruszkowski has a master's degree in migration studies and completed a master's research project on alliance building among food justice-focused organizations.

Furthermore....

The [Childhood Agricultural Safety Network](#) is holding its first in-person meeting in three years on June 13 during the 2022 International Society for Agricultural Safety and Health meeting in Fort Collins, Colo. ... [The Auction of Champions](#), the largest annual fundraiser for the National Farm Medicine Center, is scheduled for Thursday, Sept. 15, 2022, at RiverEdge Golf Course, Marshfield, Wisconsin.

