

# Nurture

Quarterly Newsletter of the National Children's Center for Rural and Agricultural Health and Safety

Fall 2009  
Volume 12, Number 2

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

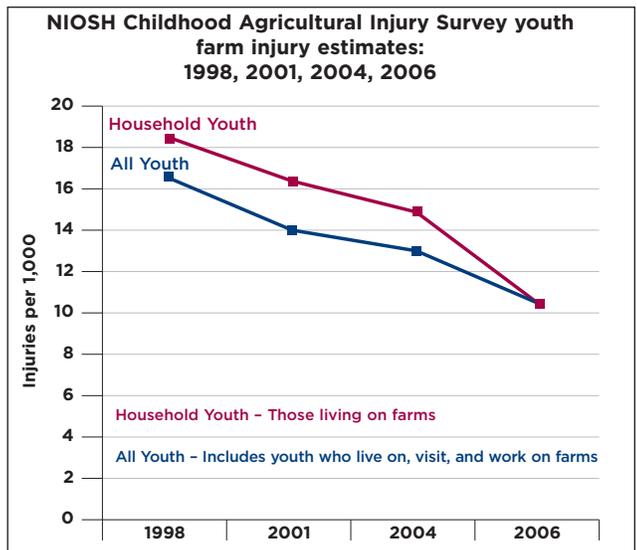
*"The National Children's Center for Rural and Agricultural Health and Safety strives to enhance the health and safety of all children exposed to hazards associated with agricultural work and rural environments."*

## Child injury rates decline overall; Blueprint to address new challenges

National rates of injury have declined since 1998, according to data from the Childhood Agricultural Injury Survey (CAIS), however, evolving safety issues will require fine-tuning of strategies going forward.

The rate of childhood agricultural injuries per 1,000 household youth (those living on farms) declined by 44 percent from 1998 to 2006. The rate of injuries per 1,000 farms (includes all though who live on, visit, and are hired to work on farms) declined by 37 percent during that same period, according to the survey, which is conducted for the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health by the USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS).

The injury landscape appears to be changing, and the National Children's Center's Blueprint for Knowledge Translation project is designed to meet the new realities by re-focusing childhood agricultural health and safety efforts. The Blueprint project is headed by Susan Gallagher, M.P.H., Director of the MS program in Health Communication, Tufts University School of Medicine.



While the decline in overall injury rates is an encouraging development, higher relative injury rates for all-terrain-vehicles (ATVs) and horses are cause for concern.

A mixture of work and non-work exposures, including ATVs and horses, is a likely contributor to the higher injury rates seen in farm household children ages 10-15 relative to other age groups, according to John Myers, Health Statistician for the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health. Based on the 2006 CAIS, the injury rate per 1,000 household youth was 14.7 for the 10-15 age group, compared to 8.8 for ages 16-19 and 8.0 for children younger than 10.

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### Safe Play Spanish Mini-Edition online



Key elements of the 2003 Safe Play resource have been condensed and translated into Spanish for the "Creating Safe Play Areas on Farms: 2009 Mini-Edition," which was produced in response to requests for a shortened, Spanish-language version.

Regina Fisher, M.S. and Amy Liebman, M.P.A., of the National Children's Center worked with

Association of Farmworker Opportunity Programs on the six-page resource. It can be viewed online at <http://www.marshfieldclinic.org/NCCRAHS/>. Limited numbers of printed copies might be available later in 2009.

### September 23: Children and Youth Safety Day



September 23, 2009, is Farm Safety and Health Day for Children and Youth, observed as part of National Farm Safety and Health Week. Farm Safety 4 Just Kids and the entire

Childhood Agricultural Safety Network honors the hard work of farm and ranch families, and urges you to visit <http://www.necasag.org/nfsnhw.php>, where the National Education Center for Agricultural Safety has collected press releases and public service announcements relevant to safer, healthier rural families year-round.

### Agritourism guidelines distributed at national Extension conference

The National Children's Center supplied copies of "Agritourism Health and Safety Guidelines for Children" and related supplements to all 120 attendees at the National Extension Tourism Conference in Park City, Utah, June 14-17, 2009. Distributing the copies were Beverly Stencel, the Extension representative from Wisconsin, and Steven Burr, the conference director. To view the National Children's Center guidelines go to <http://www.marshfieldclinic.org/NCCRAHS/> and click "Projects & Products."

### Children's farm task guidelines searchable online



It's easier than ever for parents to decide if their children are ready for specific jobs on the farm. The North American Guidelines for Children's Agricultural Tasks (NAGCAT) are now searchable online at [www.nagcat.org](http://www.nagcat.org). Simply type the name of the task in the search box and the most relevant of 62 different guidelines will appear. The most requested guidelines include, "Milking cows," "Farming with an ATV," "Lifting," and Spanish language versions of "Hand harvesting vegetables," and "Driving a tractor." The NAGCAT online search function is the first product of the National Children's Center's Digital Dissemination initiative, one of seven major projects funded by a five-year competitive award from NIOSH. The Digital Dissemination team is creating new Web-based options for current and proposed National Children's Center projects.

### Paper highlights mismatches between children, tractors

Farm tractor work is commonly assigned to young people on North American farms, where tractors account for the majority of deaths and major portions of non-fatal trauma to working youths. However, little is known about the potential mismatch between the anthropometric and physical characteristics of children and tractor characteristics. Results of a study that evaluated the ability of children of varying ages and percentiles to reach major controls on 45 tractors in common use in the U.S. are detailed in "Ability of youth operators to reach farm tractor controls" (*Ergonomics*. June 2009;52:685-94. Authors: Fadi Fathallah, Ph.D.; Ji Hong Chang, Ph.D.; William Pickett, Ph.D.; and Barbara Marlenga, Ph.D.). The main study finding was that many tractor controls, especially those that are hand-operated, may not be effectively reached by the majority of youth operators aged 12 to 16 years. The study raises further serious questions about the ability of children to safely operate tractors in common use on U.S. farms and calls for reconsideration of age guidelines for the assignment of children to tractor work on farms.

### New fact sheet describes national childhood ag safety, health efforts

National statistics on childhood agricultural injuries, as well as summaries of current National Children's Center projects, are included in a new fact sheet available at <http://www.marshfieldclinic.org/NCCRAHS/>.

# CASN meeting draws good turnout in New Orleans



Several first-time attendees were among 30 participants at the Childhood Agricultural Safety Network (CASN) meeting held June 15, 2009, at the New Orleans Marriott, during the National Institute for Farm Safety Conference. Ironically, none

of the three people instrumental in establishing CASN in the early part of the decade – Barbara Lee, Ph.D., National Children’s Center; Marilyn Adams, Farm Safety 4 Just Kids; and Susan Reynolds, Progressive Agriculture Foundation – were able to attend. “This is fantastic,” Adams said. The three founders of CASN are thrilled with the attendance and commitment of so many outstanding organizations, and at how CASN continues to grow. CASN is a coalition of health and safety organizations across North America. Its purpose is to strengthen partnerships and collaborative efforts involving the agricultural community, child injury prevention organizations, and minority-

serving associations that will improve and expand childhood agricultural injury prevention efforts. To read more, go to [www.childagsafety.org](http://www.childagsafety.org).

## Child injury rates decline

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“The percentage of youth 10-15 who rode ATVs or horses – two leading causes of non-work injury – were higher than reported for those in the other age groups,” Myers said. “This is especially true for ATVs, where nearly 50 percent of all household youth 10-15 years old were reported to have been on an ATV in 2006.”

For youth younger than 10, the majority of injuries were non-working injuries. For youth 16-19, this changed to about an even number of work-related injuries and non-working farm injuries, Myers said. For youth 10-15, both work and non-work events occur at nearly the same frequency as well, but at higher rates.

The percentage of youth who worked on the farm in 2006 was similar for both the 10-15 and 16-19 year age groups. Additionally, about half of 16-19 year olds and one-third of 10-15 year olds operated a farm tractor in 2006.

Kitty Hendricks, Research Epidemiologist with the Division of Safety Research at NIOSH, will address these and related data in a paper accepted by the Journal of Rural Health titled “Changing Farm Injury Trends by Sex for Youth Living on U.S. Farms, 1998-2006.”

Four CAIS surveys have been completed: 1998, 2001, 2004 and 2006.

## Farm Safety 4 Just Kids wraps up workshops



Farm Safety 4 Just Kids hosted nine regional farm safety and health workshops in 2009. The workshops were designed to teach community members how to teach injury prevention to rural children and their

families. The project was funded by the USDA Risk Management Agency (RMA). The project wrapped up with three workshops in August: Ardmore, Oklahoma; Los Lunas, New Mexico; and Centreville, Maryland. Pictures from the workshops are posted on Farm Safety 4 Just Kids’ Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/home.php?#/pages/Farm-Safety-4-Just-Kids/46908264524>.

The San Joaquin workshop was conducted entirely in Spanish thanks to Teresa Andrews from the NOISH-funded agricultural center at Davis, California. Farm Safety 4 Just Kids has three Spanish-language PowerPoint presentations available from this workshop. They address pesticide exposure, heat and sun exposure, and general farm safety. You can download the Spanish PowerPoint presentations at <http://fs4jk.org/>.



**Cheryl Tevis**

## Editor honored for reporting on safety

Cheryl Tevis, Senior Farm Issues Editor, Successful Farming magazine, was named 2009 Dean T. Stueland Scholar for her farm safety advocacy. The award was scheduled for presentation by Marlene Stueland on September 16 in Marshfield, Wisconsin. Tevis' 1989 report, "We kill too many farm

kids," challenged traditional thinking about children and their place in the farm worksite, and helped lay the groundwork for research. In 1999 she was instrumental in disseminating the newly announced North American Guidelines for Children's Agricultural Tasks. She authors a regular feature, "Rural Health," the longest-running series in any farm publication on the topic of family health.

## Schedule of upcoming events

### September 20-26, 2009

National Farm Safety and Health Week. Theme: "Rural Roadway Safety - Alert, Aware & Alive," <http://www.nsc.org/necas/>

### November 18-19, 2009

Midwest Rural and Agricultural Safety and Health Forum  
Johnston, Iowa, <http://www.public-health.uiowa.edu/icash/>

### January 13-15, 2010

AG CONNECT Expo  
Orlando, Florida, <http://www.agconnect.com/>

### January 27-28, 2010

"Be Safe, Be Profitable: Protecting Workers in Agriculture,"  
Dallas/Fort Worth, Texas. Co-organized by the Agricultural Safety and Health Council of America (ASHCA) and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH). This conference will unite leaders of agricultural organizations and agribusinesses with safety practitioners, researchers, producers, and workers. Via plenary sessions, expert panels and research networking they will share knowledge regarding evidence-based interventions and program experiences that lead to identification and adoption of high quality, cost-effective safety practices for workers in agriculture. See [www.ashca.com](http://www.ashca.com).

**Nurture** is a publication of the National Children's Center for Rural and Agricultural Health and Safety (a program of Marshfield Clinic, Marshfield, Wisconsin).

It is published three times each year to disseminate children's rural health and safety information to professionals in the fields of health and safety, agri-business, the media, and others.

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Funds for this newsletter are provided by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH award no. 5U54OH009568-01).



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