Safeguarding Children in Agriculture: A National Action Plan

Public Policy

3. PUBLIC POLICY: Identify and promote public policy strategies that provide safeguards for all children and young workers in agricultural environments.

Strategies	Outcomes
1. Support federal, state, and local policies that improve working conditions for young agricultural workers and strengthen social systems affecting families and workers in rural settings.	A. Federal and state policies for youth hired to work in agriculture will be comparable for youth hired in nonagricultural work regarding age and work hours. B. Public policies and funds will address disparities in unemployment insurance, workers' compensation, paid sick leave, and health care access. C. Position papers for educating policy makers and the public will be developed in collaboration with key groups.
2. In cooperation with stakeholders, support the updating of the U.S. Department of Labor's Hazardous Occupations Orders in Agriculture to coincide with current and emerging agricultural work-related hazards and exposures.	A. The Hazardous Occupations Orders in Agriculture will be updated to reflect current agricultural work practices, automated machinery, and extreme weather conditions. B. Federal and state policies will require youth to have a valid driver's license to legally operate tractors and other farm machinery on public roads.
3. Ensure accessibility to affordable and quality childcare and educational programming, to meet the needs of family farmers and the hired agricultural workforce.	A. Government tax incentives will support childcare for working parents in rural and agricultural settings. B. Government funding will support early childhood programs, before- and after- school programs, summer school programs, and school transportation.
4. Support funding and training of personnel including local law enforcement, Fire/EMS, and child protection agencies to investigate unsafe and/or inappropriate presence of children in hazardous worksites.	A. Personnel will be trained to avoid the term "accident" in incident reports and, where permissible, include prevention strategies in communicated reports. B. Local authorities will recommend relevant strategies to be implemented for the safety of children in their jurisdiction.

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