



# Agricultural Supervisor Training

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KEEPING OUR YOUNG WORKERS SAFE AND HEALTHY

# Why are we here?

Many young workers are enthusiastic, energetic and eager to learn.

As a supervisor of young workers, you have the opportunity to influence young workers' attitudes toward safety on the farm.





Young workers are **two times** more likely to get injured on the job than older workers.

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Workplace injuries are  
**predictable** and **preventable**!





**...followed by  
ATVs.**

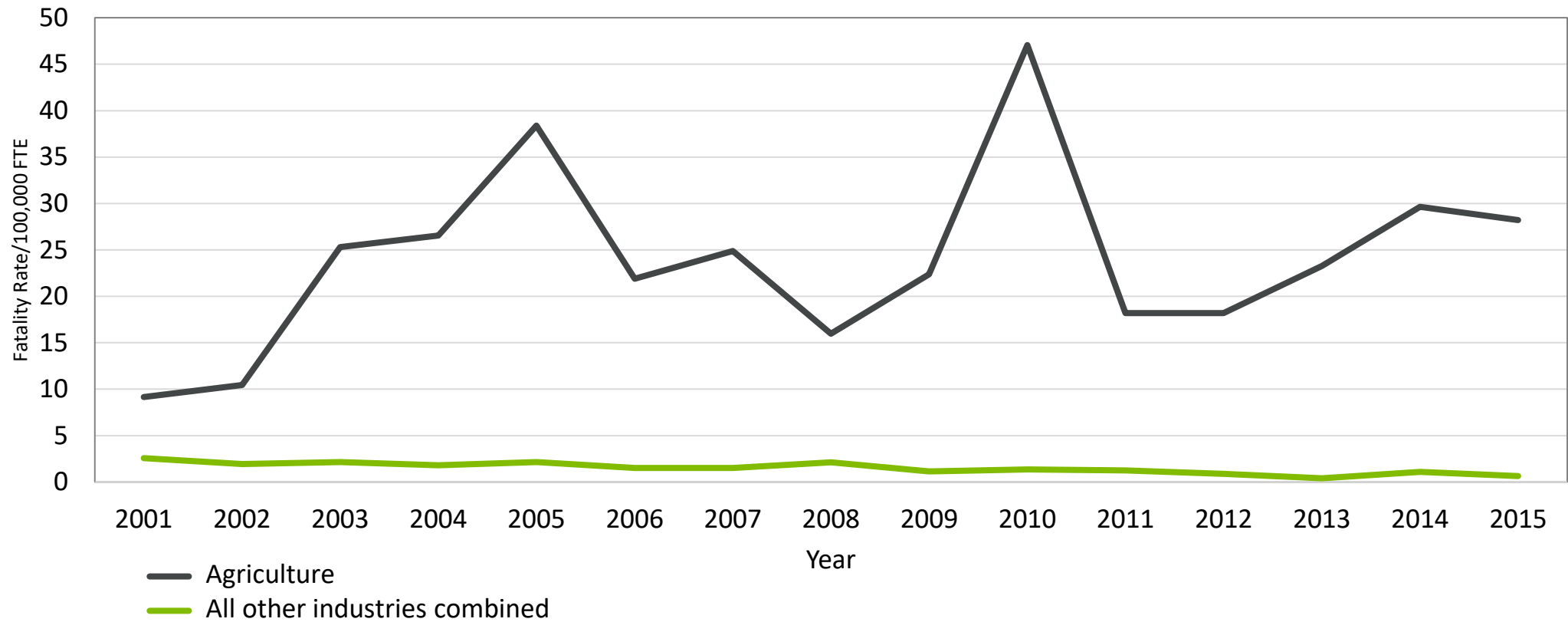


**Tractors: Leading  
source of fatalities...**



Source: NIOSH [2018]. Analysis of the Bureau of Labor Statistics Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries microdata. Morgantown, WV: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health. Unpublished.

Fatality Rates Agriculture vs All Other Industries, 2001-2015



Source: Fatal injury totals were generated by NIOSH researchers with restricted access to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries (CFOI) microdata; additional information at [www.bls.gov/iif/oshcfoi1.htm](http://www.bls.gov/iif/oshcfoi1.htm)

Children and young workers on the farm are at high risk for injury. In 2015, young agricultural workers were 44.8 times more likely to be fatally injured.

# Occupational Injury & Occupational Illness



# Case Studies

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- The next few slides present stories of actual young worker fatalities and injuries.
- Later, we will discuss ways to prevent injuries from happening.



# Case Study #1: Pat and the Bale Trailer

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Pat, age 16, wanted to help his boss, so he decided to hook up the bale trailer to the pickup. He had seen it done several times but had never done it himself. He used the stabber on the tractor to pick up the bale trailer and set it on the hitch of the pickup. He noticed something did not look right and decided to investigate. He put his finger between the ball on the hitch and the hook up on the trailer to make sure the latch had not flipped. Suddenly, the stabber on the tractor released and the trailer fell on his finger, pinning it under the hitch. He was stuck. There and there was no one around. He pulled his hand back to free himself and in the process, tore off his finger.



# Case Study #2: Juan and the Power Washer

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19-year-old Juan was power washing in the hog barn in December with a gas-powered washer. To keep the washer from freezing he decided to pull it into the barn. After a while, the carbon monoxide fumes from the washer engine made him feel dizzy and nauseous. He fell, banged his head on the concrete floor, and was out of work for a week.



# Case Study #3: Alejandra and the ATV

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On a warm summer day 17-year-old Alejandra was asked to take the ATV out to the pasture to check the cows. Because the terrain was rough, she was driving slowly. Her cell phone kept alerting her that she was receiving text messages. This distracted her, and she hit a log and was thrown off the ATV. When she didn't come back, her co-workers went to the pasture and found her lying on the ground. She was rushed to the hospital with 3 broken ribs and torn tendons in her left leg. Her recovery took about six weeks.

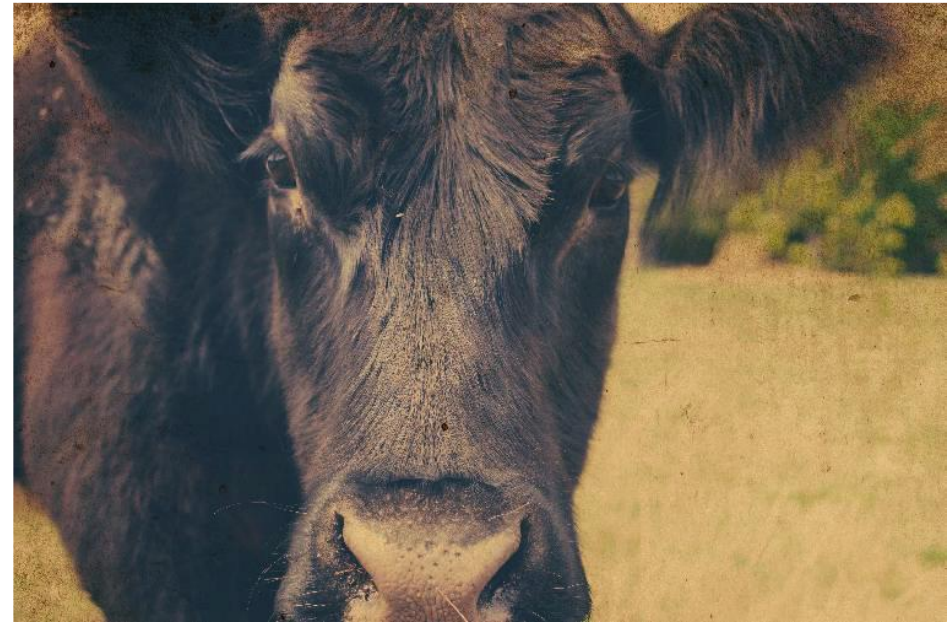




# Case Study #4: John and the Bull

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The bull was out in the dairy pasture with a large group of heifers. John decided to go out in the pasture to get a closer look. Within a matter of seconds, the bull – who had not previously shown signs of aggressiveness – ran straight at John. John was fortunate that he was near the gate and was able to escape to safety.



# Case Study #5: Marjori and the Old Tractor

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Marjori has been using the old tractor to haul feed out to the cattle. Although the tractor is a little banged up and the seat is torn, it gets the job done.

Recently she noticed that when she is done with all the fields that her legs, back, and arms hurt and start cramping when she is sleeping.



# Discussion

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*Do you know anyone who has been injured on the farm?*

*How could their injury have been prevented?*



# Young Workers: Vulnerable Workers

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## **Ages 14-15**

- Brains and bodies are still growing and developing.
- Not as strong or coordinated as adults.
- May overestimate their physical ability.

## **Ages 15-17**

- Able to think and understand a concept without actually seeing it.
- Part of the brain that regulates risk taking, the amygdala, has not fully formed.
- Still growing, which can impact coordination.

## **Ages 18-21**

- Even when young workers are legal adults, their brains and bodies still continue to grow.
- May need less supervision from parents and employers.
- Still more likely to engage in risk-taking behavior than older adults.

# Other Factors That Impact Safety:

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Sleep

Family

Emotional

Medications

Responsibilities

Health

Substance Abuse

Technology

Social Media

School Activities



# Facts About Sleep

- Young workers require more sleep than adults because of their developing brains and bodies.
- 87% of U.S. high school students get less than the recommended amount.
- Medications may increase sleepiness.
- Sleep deprivation increases risk of injury on the job.



# Other Influences

- Young workers are still learning how to juggle competing demands like work, school, social activities, and family responsibilities.
- Technology devices, like cell phones, are increasingly implicated in injuries and fatalities (e.g. texting while driving).
- Due to heightened risk taking, peer pressure, and curiosity, young people may be engaging in substance use.







- Young workers have a lot of valuable assets, but they are also still developing physically and cognitively.
- Factors from the worksite can impact young workers when they are not at work. Sexual harassment, violence, or bullying on the job can create serious stress in a young worker's life.
- **As a supervisor, understanding the limits, unique needs, and strengths of young workers is an important part of keeping them safe.**

# Watching out for young workers



# Keeping Young Workers Safe

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Regulations – Federal and State

Assigning age appropriate tasks

Modeling safe behaviors

Implementing workplace policies

Training, supervising, and communicating with young workers

# Regulations



Federal regulations have been put into place to protect workers.

The U.S. Department of Labor declared eleven agricultural tasks too hazardous for youth younger than 16.

As a supervisor, you are required to know the laws.



**1. TRACTOR** - Operating a tractor of over 20 PTO horsepower, or connecting an implement or any of its parts to or disconnecting it from such a tractor.

**2. GENERAL MACHINERY** - Operating or assisting to operate (including starting, stopping, adjusting, feeding, or any other activity involving physical contact associated with the operation) any of the following machines: corn picker, cotton picker, grain combine, hay mower, forage harvester, hay baler, potato digger, mobile pea viner, feed grinder, crop dryer, forage blower, auger conveyor, the unloading mechanism of a nongravity-type self-unloading wagon or trailer, power post-hole digger, power post driver, or nonwalking rotary tiller.

**3. SPECIALIZED MACHINERY** - Operating or assisting to operate (including starting, stopping, adjusting, feeding, or any other activity involving physical contact associated with the operation) any of the following machines: trencher or earthmoving equipment; fork lift; potato combine; or power-driven circular, band, or chain saw.

**4. LIVESTOCK** - Working on a farm in a yard, pen, or stall occupied by a bull, boar, or stud horse maintained for breeding purposes; a sow with suckling pigs; or cow with newborn calf (with umbilical cord present).

**5. WOODLOT** - Felling, bucking, skidding, loading, or unloading timber with a butt diameter of more than 6 inches.

**6. LADDER and SCAFFOLD** - Working from a ladder or scaffold (painting, repairing, or building structures, pruning trees, picking fruit, etc.) at a height of over 20 feet.

**7. TRANSPORT** - Driving a bus, truck, or automobile when transporting passengers, or riding on a tractor as a passenger or helper.

**8. TOXIC ATMOSPHERE** - Working inside fruit, forage, or grain storage designed to retain an oxygen deficient or toxic atmosphere; an upright silo within two weeks after silage has been added or when a top unloading device is in operating position; a manure pit; or a horizontal silo while operating a tractor for packing purposes.

**9. CHEMICALS** - Handling or applying (including cleaning or decontaminating equipment, disposal or return of empty containers, or serving as a flagman for aircraft applying) agricultural chemicals classified under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (7 U.S.C. 135 et seq.) as Category I of toxicity identified by the word "poison" and the "skull and crossbones" on the label or as Category II of toxicity, identified by the word "warning" on the label.

**10. BLASTING** - Handling or using a blasting agent, including but not limited to, dynamite, black powder, sensitized ammonium nitrate, blasting caps, and primer cord.

**11. FERTILIZERS** - Transporting, transferring, or applying anhydrous ammonia.



**AGRICULTURAL WORK CLASSIFIED AS  
HAZARDOUS**

**LEARN MORE AT:**  
[www.agsafety4youth.info](http://www.agsafety4youth.info)



# Federal Regulations

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**All Ages:** May work at **any time** in **any job** on a farm owned or operated by **their parent** or person standing in place of their parent.

**Ages 16 or older:** Can work in **any** agricultural job at **any time**, including during school hours.

**Ages 14-15:** Can work outside of school hours in a **non-hazardous** agricultural job.\*



# Exemptions from Hazardous Occupations Orders in Agriculture

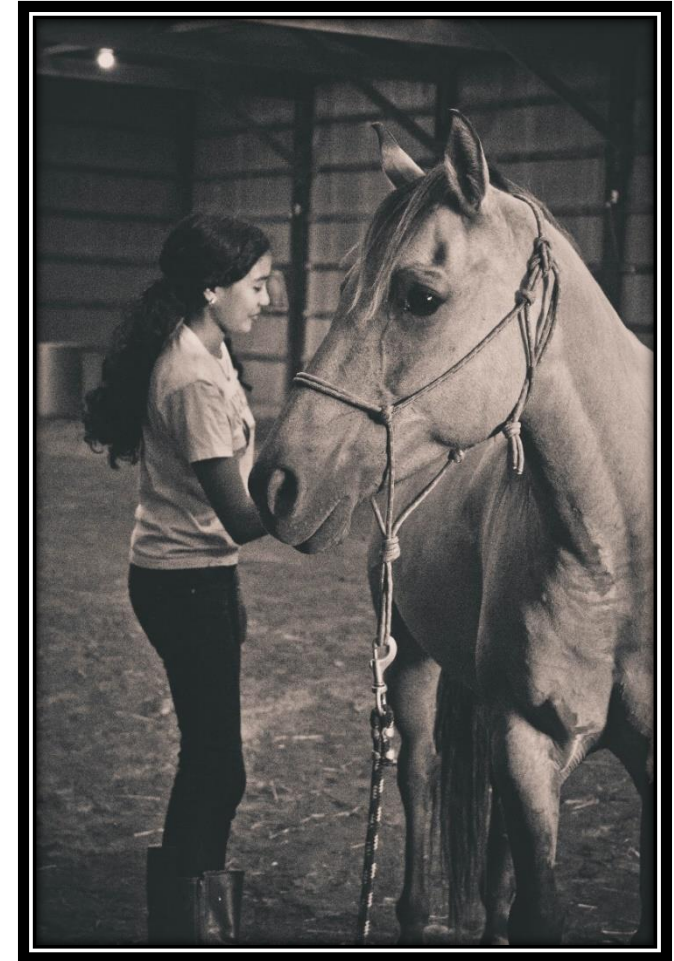
**Minors working on a farm owned or operated by a parent or legal guardian**

**Minors 14 or 15 years of age completing a tractor and machinery certification program**

- Exempt for tasks 1 & 2
- 4-H Extension program
- Vocational / Ag Science program

**Student learner enrolled in an Ag Science classroom working as an apprentice under a written agreement with the ag employer**

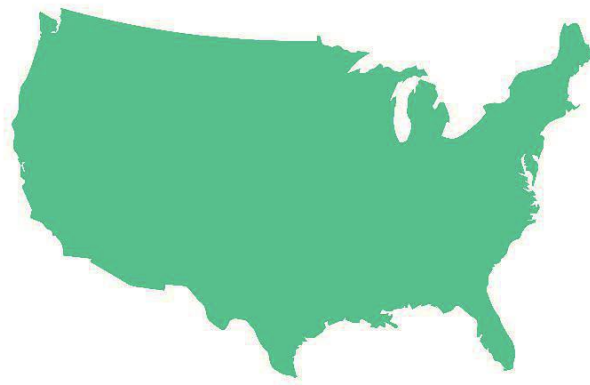
- Exempt for tasks 1 – 6



# State Regulations

## Regulations vary by state.

If there are variations between federal and state regulations, the stricter of the two applies.





**Remember, just because it is “legal” for a youth to do a job, doesn’t mean they can do it!**





# Assigning Tasks



Assess the youth's ability to perform the task regardless of their age.

Supervisors and parents can use  
the Agricultural Youth Work  
Guidelines:  
**[www.cultivatesafety.org](http://www.cultivatesafety.org)**





## Age

Assign tasks based on age, cognitive, and physical capabilities. Supervisors and parents can use the Agricultural Youth Work Guidelines (AYWG).

Questions in the AYWG help you determine if a youth is able to perform a task. They also provide information on hazards, protective strategies, and supervision.



## Abilities

Think about young workers' brains and bodies when you assign tasks.

Assess a young worker's ability to operate the machinery or perform the task.

## Experience

Start by assigning simple jobs and gradually add in more complex tasks as they get more experienced.

Don't forget to reassess their abilities frequently.





# Modeling Safe Behaviors

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**Young workers will always do what you do – not what you say.**



**Your behaviors – whether safe or not – are the ones young workers are most likely to adopt.**

**Supervisors and co-workers have a big influence on young workers.**



# Model Safe Behaviors

- **Assess worksite for hazards and address the hazards**
- **Use PPE (seatbelts, hearing and eye protection, gloves, sunscreen)**
- **Take breaks**
- **Come to work rested and focused**
- **Follow workplace policies and cell phone usage guidelines**



**Research shows supervisors are a MAJOR factor  
in creating a safe work environment.**



***How do and/or can you  
model safe behavior?***

# Workplace Policies

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Workplace policies are some of the most helpful tools a supervisor can have for creating a climate of safety in the workplace.



# Examples of Potential Policies to Protect Youth



**New hire training**

**Employee supervision**

**Job assignments**

**Work hours**

**Substance use**

**Cell phone use**

**Attendance/punctuality**

**Weather emergencies**

**Health-related issues and absences**

Having workplace policies and consistently enforcing them protects all workers.



When they are hired, young workers should be made aware of policies and what happens if they do not follow the rules.

# Developing Policies: What is a Good Policy?

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- Good policies include a statement of the employer's commitment to health and safety, well-described objectives, and clear and simple language.
- Good policies include consequences for not following the policy, such as "zero-tolerance".
- Good policies include current contact information if there are questions about the policy.
- Good policies include documentation indicating the worker was told about the policy and understands the policy.
- Good policies include instructions for reporting when a policy is broken, near misses, and incidents.

**Example policies are available at [AgOSH.org](https://www.agosh.org)**



# Training Young Workers

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**All workers  
need  
training!**



# Training is an opportunity to teach young workers **workplace expectations**, such as:

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**Arriving on time**

**Showing up alert and ready for work**

**Wearing the right clothes and shoes for the job**



**Asking questions when they don't understand**

**Speaking up if they see something unsafe**

**Avoiding outside distractions at work**



# **Young workers need training...**

**...when hired**

**...when given a new task or tool**

**...whenever there is a new hazard in the workplace**

**...after an incident (an injury or close call)**

**...periodically for review**

**...when switching tasks (review the safety procedures)**



# What should proper training cover?

**How to do a job or task**

**How to recognize hazards**

**All the workplace policies**

**How to use personal protective equipment**

**What to do if problems arise**

**What guidelines to follow in case of an  
emergency**

**How to report an injury**



# The “Teach Back Method”: A Good Way to Train Young Workers

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1. Review the task with the young worker
2. Ask the worker to tell you how to do the task (“Tell Me”)
3. Watch the worker perform the task (“Show Me”)
4. Check in



## Review the task:



1. Describe the task step by step.
2. Demonstrate how to perform the task.
3. Review the instructions and ask if anything is unclear.



## “Tell Me”:



1. Ask them to tell you how they would complete the task.
2. Ask the worker to repeat the instructions step by step.
3. Correct mistakes.
4. Ask questions that tell you if the youth has thought about safety. These should NOT be questions answered with a “yes” or “no.”

## “Show Me”:



1. Ask them to show you how to do the task.
2. Watch them perform the task.
3. Correct mistakes, answer questions, and review the proper procedure.
4. Repeat until they complete the task successfully.

# Check In & Essentials for Success



1. Once the worker has safely demonstrated completion of the task 4-5 times, check in with them periodically to answer questions and ensure safe performance of task continues.
2. Training is an ongoing process. Supervising and providing real-time feedback can catch bad habits.
3. Always emphasize that safety is more important than speed.
4. Be sure to document each training session. This protects you and your workers.



# Supervising young workers

Young workers need supervision, especially when they engage in new or infrequent tasks.



## Types of supervision:

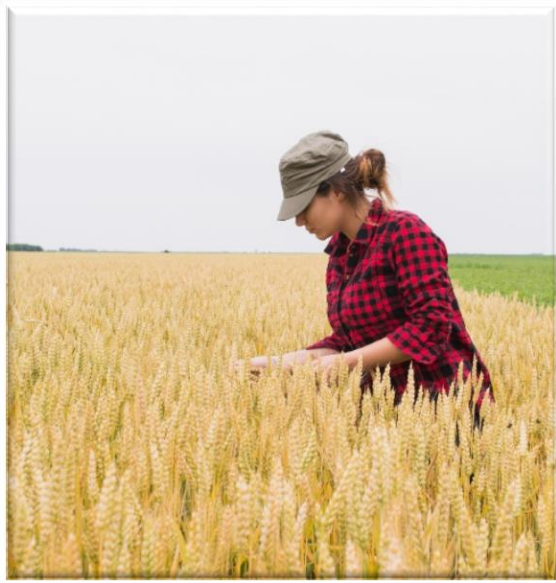
Constant supervision: within sight and sound of adult

Intermittent supervision: out of sight and sound for up to 15 minutes

Periodic supervision: out of sight and sound for 15-30 minutes



**Many young workers want to do a good job, so they may not ask questions.**



**Young workers may not want to talk to you because they...**

**...are reluctant to admit they don't know something**

**...feel the need to figure it out on their own**

**...don't want to appear weak, dumb, or unqualified**

**...don't want to admit they need help**

**...don't want to admit they are distracted, tired, or hung over**

**...are afraid of losing their job**



**If something goes wrong, they may try to hide it to avoid consequences.**

## **Examples of when a young worker might need help:**

**Doing a task while sleepy, stressed, or distracted**

**Being dehydrated as a result of working in hot environments**

**Difficulty hearing when someone nearby is doing a noisy task**

**Working with an aggressive animal**

**Standing in blind spots when moving equipment**

### **REMEMBER!**

**Difficulties can happen anytime while performing a task, and the young worker may not realize they need to ask for help.**



# Communication Essentials

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**Part of being a  
good supervisor is  
being able to  
communicate with  
your employees.**

Check in with your workers

Ask if they have any questions

Observe their communication/learning style

Demonstrate respect

Show patience

*What strategies have you used to encourage young workers to ask for help?  
Which ones were successful?*

# Open-Ended Questions

An open-ended question is a question that cannot be answered with a simple “yes” or “no”, but requires an explanation.



Open-ended questions allow supervisors to really gauge what's going on with an employee.

As a supervisor, ask young workers questions that help you understand how they feel about their ability to work.



# Examples of Open-Ended Questions

## REQUIRE AN EXPLANATION:

- *How you are going to do this task?*
- *What hazards do you need to think about?*
- *While you are doing this task, what can you do to prevent injury to yourself and others?*

## ABILITY TO WORK:

- *How are you feeling today?*
- *Is there anything new with you (e.g. at home, with friends, etc.)?*



# Summary

## Assign age-appropriate tasks



## Model safe behaviors



## Implement workplace policies



## Train/Teach-Back Method



## Supervise



## Communicate





# THANK YOU!

By using the safety strategies discussed, you can give young workers the skills to stay safe on the job.



For more information, please visit the  
National Center for Children's Rural  
Agricultural Health and Safety, at  
[www.marshfieldresearch.org/nccrahs](http://www.marshfieldresearch.org/nccrahs).

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