

Public Policy & Advocacy

Approaches for Protecting Youth in Agriculture

Barbara Lee, PhD



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

OUTLINE

- **Definitions**
- **Cases that keep you awake at night**
- **Federal/state/local regulations**
- **Safety practitioners' and the law**
- **Objections from the ag community**
- **Building coalitions**
- **Communicating with policymakers**
- **Advocacy success stories**



Definitions

- **Laws**
- **Regulations**
- **Policies (organization)**
- **Guidelines**
- **Advocacy**
- **Lobbying**
- **Children's Work**
- **Child Labor**
- **NIOSH**
- **OSHA**
- **Urban/Rural Counterparts**

Is this for real?

- Farm mother and 4 sons in field, picking rock. 5-year old is operating the skid steer loader; runs over 3-year old.
- Barn with unguarded fans. 3-year old walks into fan blades.
- Grandfather giving 4-year old “joy ride” in bucket of front-end loader; hit rock; child pinned underneath.
- Fundraising event for infant – teen drives tractor to school and features mother & infant inside cab.
- Mother interviewed by media (“we need kids to keep farm going... you don’t get it”); later child’s leg shredded in machine.
- 10-year old driving tractor downhill, hip LP tank, rolled over, pinned beneath.

Laws/Regulations

- Department of Labor, 1938 Fair Labor Standards Act
 - Minimum age, work hours, Hazardous Orders
 - YouthRules! Website
- State regulations

Child Labor Bulletin 102

Child Labor Requirements in
Agricultural Occupations Under
the Fair Labor Standards Act



YouthRules!
Preparing the 21st Century Workforce

Know the Rules | Find Support | Teen Work Stories | News & Resources

Everything You Need to Know to Work

Know the Rule
Young Worker
Labor Laws in

The image shows a screenshot of the YouthRules! website. At the top, there is a logo with a star and the text "YouthRules! Preparing the 21st Century Workforce". Below the logo are four navigation buttons: "Know the Rules", "Find Support", "Teen Work Stories", and "News & Resources". The main content area features a photograph of a young woman with long dark hair, wearing a striped apron, smiling and holding a red apple. She is standing in a grocery store aisle with shelves of produce in the background. At the bottom of the image, there is a blue banner with the text "Everything You Need to Know to Work" and "Know the Rule Young Worker Labor Laws in".

Health/Safety Regulations

- OSHA standards
 - Enforced if ≥ 10 employees
 - Provide housing



- EPA
 - Worker Protection Standard
 - Other



Safety Practitioners & Law

- **Child ag:** labor laws, OSHA, EPA, parental protection laws
- **Legal knowledge** – know what, how, when it sanctions or restricts behaviors
- **Legal procedure** – consider confidentiality, repercussions
- **Law advice** – employ licensed counsel
- **Expert witness** – opportunity to share evidence
- **Introduce legislation** – to modify existing or introduce new laws

Objections from Farming Community

- “Agrarian myth”
- Generational perspective on agriculture privileges
 - Affecting adults and children
- Misunderstandings of what is/is not regulated
- Non-alignment of risk perceptions with regulatory intent
- Agribusiness power, influence
- Looser rules for owner/operator children vs. employee children
- Culture, economics may override “price” of non-compliance

Coalition Building

- **Strength in numbers**
- **Raising awareness across semi-related organizations**
- **Finding common ground**
- **Building consensus to create a unified position**

Communicating w/ Policymakers

- We elected her/him to be responsive to policy needs
- (S)he won't bite you !
 - Their first priority – stop bad policy from being introduced
 - They welcome opportunities to pass laws that improve our lives (*and enhance their own importance*)
- Educating policymakers (via staff)
 - Make and keep acquaintance
 - Focus on the “Ask” and its justification (research/evidence)
 - Consider opposing view and propose funding sources
 - Provide briefing paper that is Brief!
- Choose your priority issues carefully
- Stories
- Follow-up Follow-up Follow-up and again

Advocacy Success Stories

- **Automobile safety – seatbelts, infant car seats (federal)**
- **Bicycle helmets for <16 years (local)**
- **No smoking in public buildings**
- **Endorsement & funding for 1996 National Action Plan for CAIP**
- **Sustained funding for NIOSH AgFF program**
- **EPA Worker Protection Standard**

Advocacy **(Un)** Success Stories

- **Withdrawal of proposed updates in Child Labor/Ag Laws**
- **Passage of immigration reform for farmworkers**

Politics, Economics, Culture

Factors to keep in mind ...

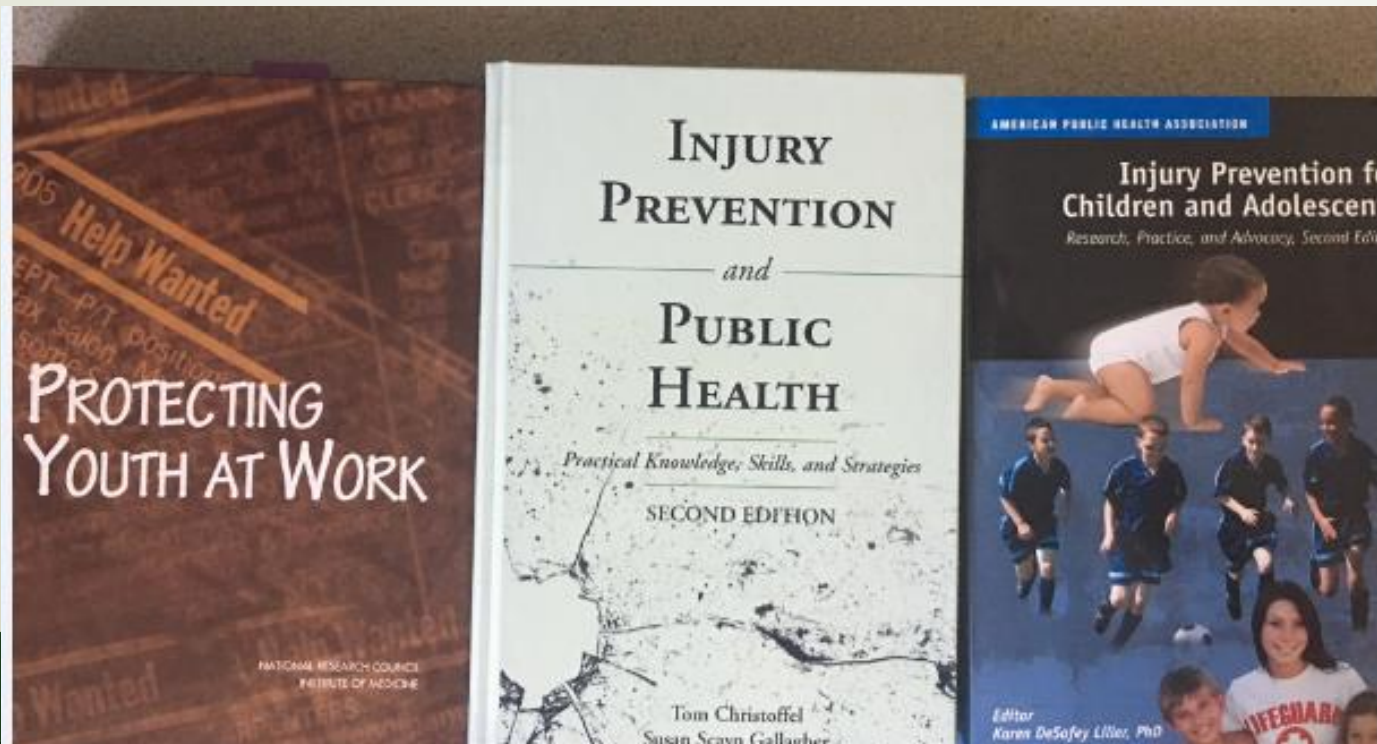
- Bipartisan approaches are ideal
- Money to fund new programs, will likely be drawn away from another program
- Cost/benefits of paid lobbyists
- “Culture clashes” e.g. buggy lighting
- Find a champion in Congress

Other Advocacy Strategies

- **Position papers, e.g. Am. Academy of Pediatrics**
- **Op ed articles in major news outlets**
- **Commentaries in journals**
- **Interactions with media, persons of influence**
- **Comments into Federal Register**
- **Participation on state/federal advisory committees**

Guidance

- Government Affairs liaison
- Staff members of your Congressmen/women
- Lobbyist of professional societies/organizations
- Trust your instincts



Public Policy/Advocacy Examples

(Migrant/Seasonal Child Care Services)

- Federal funding of programs flat – decreases capacity as expenses increase and leaves no room for expansion
- Federal poverty level definition – so low that many migrant parents are not able to qualify
- Immigration laws and/or documentation required for child care centers are too onerous
- Relief needed from liability concerns for employers wanting to pursue on-site child care services
- Tax breaks/benefits for child care too minimal: need increase in child care credit &/or redesign it to be similar to health care deductions

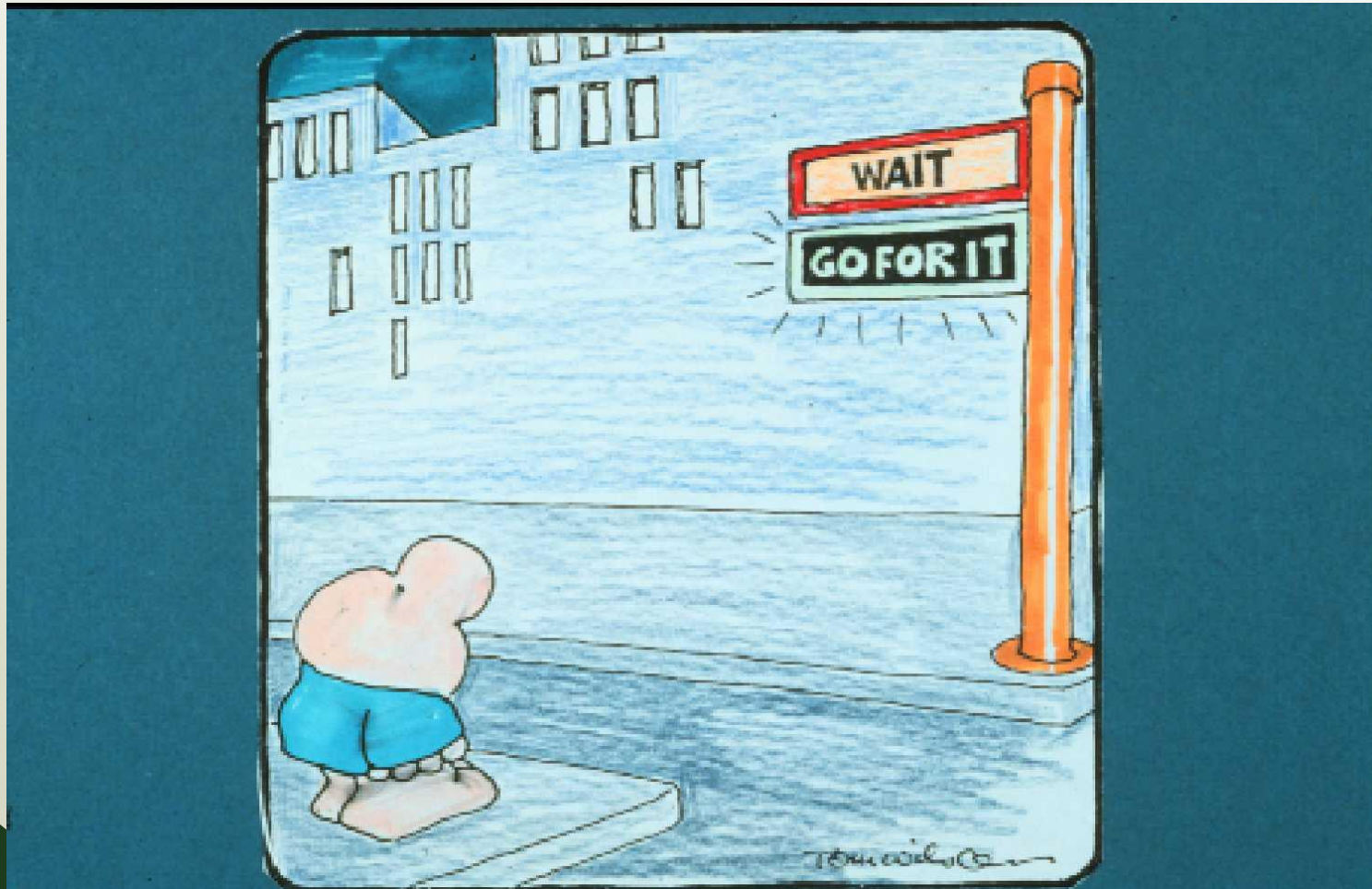
US Senate Hart Building



Wisconsin State Legislature



WE CAN ALL BE ADVOCATES



Questions?



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