

**Environmental Minutes with Dr. Mom**  
***Teens and Tractor Safety – J. Levin***

Agriculture ranks among the most hazardous industries. Farmers are at very high risk for injury and even death. Farming is one of the few industries in which the families (who often share the work and live on the premises) are also at risk for injuries. Thousands of children are injured each year while working on farms, and many are killed.

Pieces of farm equipment, especially tractors, play a major role in many of these injuries and deaths. Tractors without roll-over protective structures and seat belts can overturn resulting in crush injuries and death. The North American Guidelines for Children's Agricultural Tasks (NAGCAT) allow adults to match up a child's physical and mental abilities with the tasks involved in completing different agricultural jobs. They help answer the question, "Is your child ready for the job?"

For example, the NAGCAT guideline for driving a farm tractor without an implement attached addresses ability, training, and supervision of the child. Can the child reach and operate all controls while wearing a seatbelt? Is the child strong enough? Can he or she react quickly, recognize a hazard, and solve the problem without getting upset? See the guidelines (link below) for age specific recommendations.

Links:

NIOSH Agricultural Safety (Injury) Topic Page, <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/injury/traumaagric.html>

Health and Safety for Kids on the Farm, <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/kidsag.html>

NAGCAT Guidelines, [http://www.nagcat.org/nagcat/pages/default.aspx?page=nagcat\\_guidelines](http://www.nagcat.org/nagcat/pages/default.aspx?page=nagcat_guidelines)

Driving a farm tractor: no implement attached,  
<http://www.nagcat.org/nagcat/Pages/Proxy.aspx?Content=MCRF-Centers-NFMC-NAGCAT-PDF-tractor-dtractor.1.pdf>