

## 25 Years of Youth Grants

by Brandi Janssen, PhD, I-CASH Director

I-CASH was founded in 1990 by an act of the Iowa state legislature. Early partners included Marilyn Adams, who founded Farm Safety 4 Just Kids in 1987, the year after her 11-year old son Keith died in a gravity flow wagon on their farm. This early partnership ensured that youth injury prevention would remain an important part of I-CASH's programming. In 1998, I-CASH started offering small grants for Iowa youth groups to take farm safety into their own hands. We have offered these grants every year since, and are proud to look back over 25 years of engaging Iowa youth groups in farm safety initiatives.

One of the main goals of the youth grant program is to get middle and high school aged kids directly involved in the planning and completion of a farm safety project. We look for applications that describe how members of a youth group like 4-H or FFA will brainstorm ideas, take initiative to find additional community partners, or develop materials to share in their schools, county fairs, or rural neighborhoods.

Putting young people in charge has resulted in some really great projects over the years. One recent favorite is the "Stay Safe, Take a Break" project which started in Washington County. 4-H members collect safety and health materials, healthy snacks, and other goodies for farmers in the fall. They go out in teams and interrupt farmers during harvest to give them the bags. The farmers get a break and can chat with potential future agriculturalists in their neighborhood. Some groups have really embraced technology, creating instructional videos about livestock handling for fair attendees. Others have used video to record interviews after a safety day so that both instructors and learners can reflect on the day's events.



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As part of the I-CASH center evaluation, we have conducted interviews with past program participants and we have learned a lot about the broad benefits of the program. Several pointed out that empowering youth with safety information can have an impact on their parents, siblings, and other family members involved in farm work. One adult leader noted, "my kids pointed out when I don't follow the safety rules that I give for them." Others described the impacts on farmers in their area, including hearing that the farmers felt supported and appreciated as a result of the projects.

We have had youth organizations in 61 Iowa counties receive grants since the program began in 1998. I hope that we can soon fund projects in the other 38 and cover the whole state. Like many farm safety programs, the youth grants arose in part from a tragedy, the death of Keith Adams. We hope that the projects contribute to a growing culture of safety on Iowa's farms, preventing future deaths and supporting the health and well-being of the next generation of farmers.

## Director's Message

by Brandi Janssen, PhD

I kept saying that it hadn't been a terribly bad winter, and then February hit with a weekly ice, snow, or thunderstorm to round out the season. Now, I am seeing spring flowers start to emerge, the redwing blackbirds have arrived, and I am looking forward to spring.



Brandi Janssen, PhD

At I-CASH, we enjoyed gathering mostly in person at our MRASH conference in November for the first time since 2019. A hybrid set-up also made participation easier for several out of state attendees, as well as a few locals who opted to join virtually because of some bad weather. On second thought, maybe winter wasn't so mild after all. You can read more about MRASH plans for 2023 on page 5. In addition, we distributed a fall campaign focusing on equipment lighting and marking and our annual farm safety calendar in the winter. This spring, we are focusing on storing farm and household chemicals; keep an eye out at your local extension and FSA office for those materials.

If you received the 2023 calendar, you might have noticed some new elements. This year our youth grant program celebrates 25 years of farm safety projects in schools and communities around Iowa. Our calendar highlights the safety topics covered by some of the grants over the years. The cover is a collage of many project photos submitted by grant recipients, and I have had several people reach out to tell me that they see someone they know! We do still have a very limited supply of calendars. Send me an email if you'd like to receive one and read more about the youth grant program on page 1.

Since last spring, we also have been working with the University of Iowa Center for Evaluation and Assessment to conduct a center-wide evaluation of our programs. Their staff have been surveying and interviewing many of our collaborators, including advisory board members, youth grant participants, seasonal campaign recipients, and those of you who receive this newsletter. I am looking forward to hearing what they have learned about the effectiveness of our center's activities, as well as how we can improve going forward.

Finally, both I-CASH and GPCAH are excited to welcome new staff members to further build our outreach and engagement efforts. Tabitha Kuehn has joined I-CASH as the Outreach Coordinator and Mandy Archer is the new Outreach Specialist for the Great Plains Center. Now that we are consistently able to hold in-person events, as well as continuing online and multi-media strategies, both centers will benefit from their talents and expertise. You can read more about their backgrounds on page 4.

Wishing you all a safe and healthy spring!

Brandi Janssen  
I-CASH Director

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Find us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/IaCenterAgSafetyHealth](https://www.facebook.com/IaCenterAgSafetyHealth)

  
**I-CASH | Iowa's Center for  
Agricultural Safety and Health**  
The University of Iowa ■ Iowa State University  
Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship  
Iowa Department of Public Health ■ Non-profits for Farm Health

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## GPCAH Outreach at Wisconsin Emergency Medical Services Association 2023 Conference & Expo

by Marsha Cheyney, MPH, GPCAH Evaluation and Outreach Coordinator; and Jenn Patterson, MLitt, GPCAH Center Coordinator

The [Wisconsin EMS Association 2023 Conference & Expo \(WEMSA\)](#) was held February 2-3, in Green Bay, Wisconsin where attendees connected with dozens of speakers, explored new products and services from business leaders, and built networks and peer connections with EMS professionals from throughout the state and Midwest region.

GPCAH Evaluation and Outreach Coordinator, Marsha Cheyney, was on hand to share important information about ladder safety with over 350 EMS personnel as well as 60 high school students and their chaperones. Student attendees were on-track to one day become EMS workers themselves. The presentation also provided guidance to EMS professionals on ways to make safety presentations engaging for a variety of audiences.

Marsha gave 15-minute talks about her new ladder safety display highlighting the importance of ladder safety, which was important to this audience because the Iowa Trauma Registry indicates over 50% of ER visits by farmers are due to a fall. She introduced her Plinko-style gameboard to attract people and engage them to discuss topics such as selecting the appropriate ladder for the job, how to inspect the ladder, and how to safely use ladders to avoid falls. She also shared how individuals could make the game themselves and how to modify it for various audiences.



Jenn Patterson (left) and Marsha Cheyney introduce the Plinko-style gameboard at the WEMSA Conference in Green Bay, WI.

Marsha said, “I was impressed by a firefighter who approached me and said he’d taken ladder safety training 15 years ago. He asked me to go through my entire presentation to see if anything had changed since he took it. We ended up talking a lot about the safety features on newer ladders.”

Jenn Patterson, GPCAH Center Coordinator, shared other resources available to EMS workers who were interested in learning more about hazard prevention in agriculture. She encouraged attendees to tune in to the [FarmSafe Podcast](#). FarmSafe podcast episodes focus on agricultural workers and public health experts sharing first-hand stories and real-life tips for making safer and healthier decisions while on the farm and provides listeners with the ability to make a plan for preventing specific injuries or illnesses.

For expo attendees who wanted more information, she encouraged them to sign up for the 2023 virtual [GPCAH Agricultural Safety and Health: Core Course](#) or to select free courses available through the online [safety training](#) catalog. The Core Course will take place on June 1, 16, 23, and 30, 2023, with an optional in-person farm tour at Iowa State University on June 2. The course has been the national model of effective ag safety and health education for over two decades; providing information and skills needed to enable safety and health professionals to anticipate, recognize, and prevent occupational illnesses and injuries among members of the agricultural community. The online safety training catalog offers hour-long self-directed courses on topics such as PPE for ag health, transportation hazards in ag, livestock handling, and more.

Visit the GPCAH [Resource Page](#) for information on safety and health topics that can be used by operators, managers, families, employees, and others interested in agricultural health and safety.



## I-CASH and GPCAH Welcome New Staff Members

### Iowa's Center for Agricultural Safety and Health

My name is Tabitha Kuehn and I am happy to be the new I-CASH Outreach Coordinator. I grew up in Underwood, a little southwest Iowa town right off Interstate 80. As a kid I was always happiest when I was outside doing things like stomping around in creeks, exploring my grandparents Sac County Century Farm, or trying and failing to befriend every mallard duck I came across. My family instilled a strong land stewardship ethic in me, and I knew I wanted to pursue conservation. It wasn't until later in my college career that I realized I also had a passion for agriculture. Internships I had in college gave me insight into both worlds - I learned how to safely use pesticides as I battled invasive plant species, properly operated machinery like tractors and chainsaws, and got a picture-perfect farmer's tan as I repaired fence on hot summer days. After I graduated from the University of Iowa, I continued to merge conservation and agriculture in my job as Project Coordinator for the Lower Skunk River Water Quality and Soil Health Initiative in southeast Iowa. This position gave me the opportunity to connect with those in the ag industry in a host of different ways, but my favorite was being able to stand out on a farmer's property and have a good conservation conversation right there on the soil that we both cared about. I was on the opposite side of the state from where I grew up, but the same passion for people and the land transcended across rural Iowa. Through these experiences, I gained a whole new appreciation for Iowa's farmers. At I-CASH, I am excited to continue having conversations with rural Iowans and now be able to connect folks with resources to keep them and their loved ones safe and healthy.



Tabitha Kuehn, BS  
I-CASH Outreach Coordinator

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### Great Plains Center for Agricultural Health

My name is Mandy Archer, and I am the new Outreach Specialist for the Great Plains Center for Agricultural Health. I have a degree in Journalism and Mass Communication along with a certificate in Entrepreneurship Management and a minor in Cinema. My farming background is sparse, but my mom did grow up on a farm in Epworth, IA where she practiced goat-roping, riding horses, and driving through the countryside with her friends like any other teenager. I think most Iowa-born kids either have a family member in farming or know someone who has a farm. I wasn't exposed to it much growing up, but hearing stories from my mom or going to a friend's farm to ride dirt bikes and pick fresh berries reminds me how close farming is to the heart of this state. Farming is intrinsic to living and thriving as a society and protecting our growers has always been an interest of mine. I plan to use my degree, creativity, and interest in the arts to bolster messages about farm safety to our audience using exciting language and graphics. I also have audio editing experience through multimedia classes and in my background working with radio and film production. One of my hobbies is listening to podcasts in my free time, which has helped me coordinate GPCAH's FarmSafe Podcast. I am extremely grateful to have an education in media production and journalism. I am working with Brandi Janssen to create articles for the Safety Watch column in Iowa Farmer Today. Look for my articles in Safety Watch and check back in with the FarmSafe Podcast every other Wednesday to hear about ways that you and those around you can stay safe and healthy on the farm. Go to <https://gpcah.public-health.uiowa.edu/farmsafe/> to listen to our latest episode or email [FarmSafePodcast@team.uiowa.edu](mailto:FarmSafePodcast@team.uiowa.edu) to get involved!



Mandy Archer, BA  
GPCAH Outreach Specialist

## Midwest Rural Agricultural Safety and Health Conference 2023

by Gayle Olson, MS, CHES, I-CASH Assistant to the Director



In celebration of 25 years of youth safety grants at I-CASH, the Midwest Rural Agricultural Safety and Health Conference (MRASH) 2023 will feature topics related to youth and community-based initiatives, and will be held again in early November. MRASH participants love to hear about emerging issues and the innovations in research and outreach, whether through the in-depth topics covered in our keynotes, the shorter breakout sessions or quick flashtalks and posters. In other words, the success of MRASH depends on the involvement of each of you! We will send the announcement of the selected date, location and theme via email and on our social media in April. While waiting for 2023 conference details to be announced, consider submitting an abstract or two for breakout sessions, flashtalks or posters. Please put these dates on your calendars:

- May 1: MRASH Abstract Submission Opens
- August 1: MRASH Presentation Abstracts Due
- August 15: MRASH Presenters Notified
- September 15: MRASH Registration Begins
- October 1: MRASH Flashtalk and Poster Abstracts Due
- November (TBA): MRASH Conference

Was there a session at one of the recent conferences that you missed or would like to review again? You are in luck – visit our [MRASH YouTube channel](#)! With online and hybrid conferences, we could more easily record some of our sessions during the conferences. Many, though not all, of those sessions are archived on our YouTube channel. Playlists are the easiest way to navigate it. There is a playlist for MRASH 2020, 2021 and 2022. Content for 2022 is still being added.



## Registration is open!

The *virtual* Agricultural Safety and Health Core Course will take place on **June 1, 16, 23, and 30, 2023**. An in-person farm tour\* at **Iowa State University** is also available on **June 2**.

The Agricultural Safety and Health Core Course has been the national model of effective agricultural safety and health education for over two decades. The course provides information and skills needed to enable safety and health professionals to anticipate, recognize, and prevent occupational illnesses and injuries among members of the agricultural community.

Expert instruction is provided by experienced faculty and specialists including Board-Certified Physicians, Nurses, Veterinarians, and Certified Industrial Hygienists. Certificates are provided upon course completion. See website for information about continuing education credits.



[bit.ly/CoreCourse23](https://bit.ly/CoreCourse23)

**Thursday, June 1** – 12:00-5:00 CDT online  
**Friday, June 2** – 7:00-6:00 CDT in-person  
(farm tour at Iowa State University)  
**Friday, June 16** – 10:00-4:15 CDT online  
**Friday, June 23** – 10:00-4:15 CDT online  
**Friday, June 30** – 10:00-4:15 CDT online



\*Farm tour is required for graduate student credit.

NEWS AND UPDATES

**2023 Agricultural Youth Grant applications are now available.** Each year I-CASH provides funds for community grants to youth groups aimed at the prevention of farm-related injury. In addition, I-CASH awards an Outstanding Youth Grant and the winners are invited to present their project at the annual MRASH Conference. Past projects have included distributing safety supplies such as ear plugs and sunscreen, building farm safety hazard displays, and developing agricultural safety and health materials and presentations. Grants are only available for youth groups and organizations in Iowa. Visit [www.i-cash.org](http://www.i-cash.org) for details. **Applications are due April 15th**

**VIRTUAL Agricultural Safety and Health Core Course in June.** The GPCAH has offered the Core Course for over two decades, providing information and skills to physicians, nurses, veterinarians, industrial hygienists, safety and health managers, public health practitioners, and anyone interested in gaining the skills needed to anticipate, recognize, and prevent occupational illnesses and injuries among members of the agricultural community. The virtual course will be held on **June 1, 16, 23, and 30 with an optional in-person farm tour at Iowa State University on June 2.** [Pre-registration is required](#) and the registration deadline is May 26 , 2023. Visit the [course website](#) for details.

The GPCAH is partnering with the Ag Health and Safety Alliance (AHSA) to develop resources promoting safe agrochemical handling and the selection of proper personal protective equipment (PPE). The AHSA trains farmers in their Gear Up for Ag Health and Safety™ program about the requirement that all pesticide containers have detailed labeling information. These labels include important information on selection and use of PPE, and safety recommendations change with different agrochemicals. To improve farmer knowledge about these important resources, the AHSA developed an informational motion graphic video to start the conversation about PPE. This video can be shared before demonstrating how to use information on the pesticide label to protect skin, eyes, and lungs from hazardous chemicals. The motion graphic [The Label is Your Guide: Identify Proper PPE for Handling Pesticides](#) is now available on the [AHSA](#) website along with other resources to share with farmers.

Upcoming Events

March 28-29  
**2023 Public Health Conference of Iowa**  
Ames, IA

April 15  
**I-CASH Youth Grant Deadline**

May 16-19  
**National Rural Health Conference**  
San Diego, CA

May 22-24  
**American Industrial Hygiene Conference & Expo**  
Phoenix, AZ

June 1, 2, 16, 23, 30  
**Agricultural Safety and Health: The Core Course**  
Hybrid Event/Iowa City, IA

June 18-21  
**International Society for Agricultural Safety and Health (ISASH) Conference**  
Tampa, FL

July 9-12  
**ASABE Annual International Meeting**  
Omaha, NE

July 18-21  
**Agricultural Health and Safety Course for Medical and Safety Professionals**  
Omaha, NE

August 1-3  
**Minnesota Farmfest**  
Morgan, MN

August 12-17  
**National Association of County Ag Agents Annual Meeting**  
Des Moines, IA

August 29-31  
**Farm Progress Show**  
Decatur, IL



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