# Who We Are/What We Do

The Progressive Agriculture Foundation (PAF) builds partnerships to secure both funding and resources for the **Progressive Agriculture Safety Day**<sup>®</sup> program.

- Recognized as the *largest rural safety and health education program for children in North America*.
- The program has *reached millions since 1995*.
- > Peer-reviewed curriculum and resources are *geared toward children ages* 4-13.
- Safety Days are hosted annually by volunteers trained as PAF Safety Day coordinators (these individuals work with thousands of community volunteers locally).

**<u>Our Mission</u>**: Provide education, training and resources to make farm, ranch and rural life safer and healthier for all children and their communities.



# Getting a Pulse on Mental Health Concerns Impacting Rural Youth

September 27, 2019 – The Progressive Agriculture Foundation hosted a one-day roundtable in St. Paul, Minnesota focused on a closer look at the mental health of our rural and farming youth.

#### Roundtable Moderator:

**Dr. Susan Jones**, Professor Emerita in the School of Nursing and Allied Health at Western Kentucky University

#### Roundtable Panelists:

- *Monica Kramer McConkey*, Rural Mental Health Specialist at Eyes on the Horizon and Rural Mental Health Specialist with the Minnesota Department of Agriculture
- Thom Petersen, Minnesota Commissioner of Agriculture
- Dr. Josie Rudolphi, Assistant Professor in the Department of Agricultural and Biological Engineering at the University of Illinois
- *Emily Krekelberg*, Farm Safety & Health Extension Educator at University of Minnesota Extension





## Key Findings from Roundtable and Beyond

### <u>Common stressors among youth:</u>

- School (homework/tests/grades)
- Relationships
- Sports
- Parent expectations
- Peer pressure/bullying/social media
- Environment at home (divorce, illness of parent/guardian)
- Making decisions/choices (figuring out who they are)

### Isolation during the COVID pandemic

 60-Minutes segment --- U.S. Kids grappling with mental health crisis made worse by the pandemic (aired 9/4/2022)





## Key Findings from Roundtable and Beyond

Additional stressors unique to farm youth:

- Bad weather (or natural disasters)
- Financial (commodity prices)
- Long work hours, more responsibilities, pressure to complete tasks on time (*lack of sleep*)
- Negative interactions with those that have a disconnect/lack of appreciation of the ag industry
- Pressure to carry on farming tradition
- Inability to have extra-curricular activities due to farm responsibilities





### Roundtable Action Items

Major spotlight on farmer mental health with more resources being created and available; however, <u>no one was really</u> <u>focusing on farm and rural youth</u>.

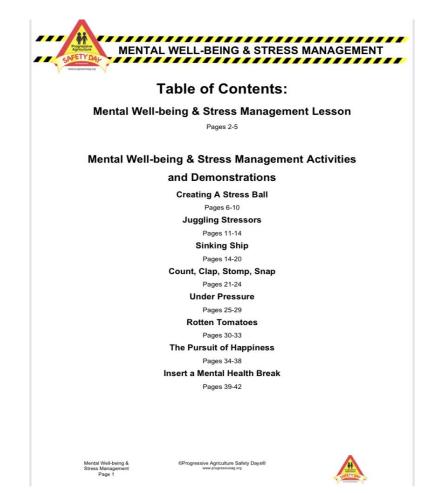
Progressive Agriculture Safety Day<sup>®</sup> programs have had a strong emphasis on farm safety, but not rural health issues.

How could we address this emerging issue in a similar manner as our other safety topics by providing demonstrations and activities that are hands-on, engaging, age-appropriate, and fun?





## Mental Well-Being & Stress Management Curriculum



The focus is on educating and helping rural and farming youth:

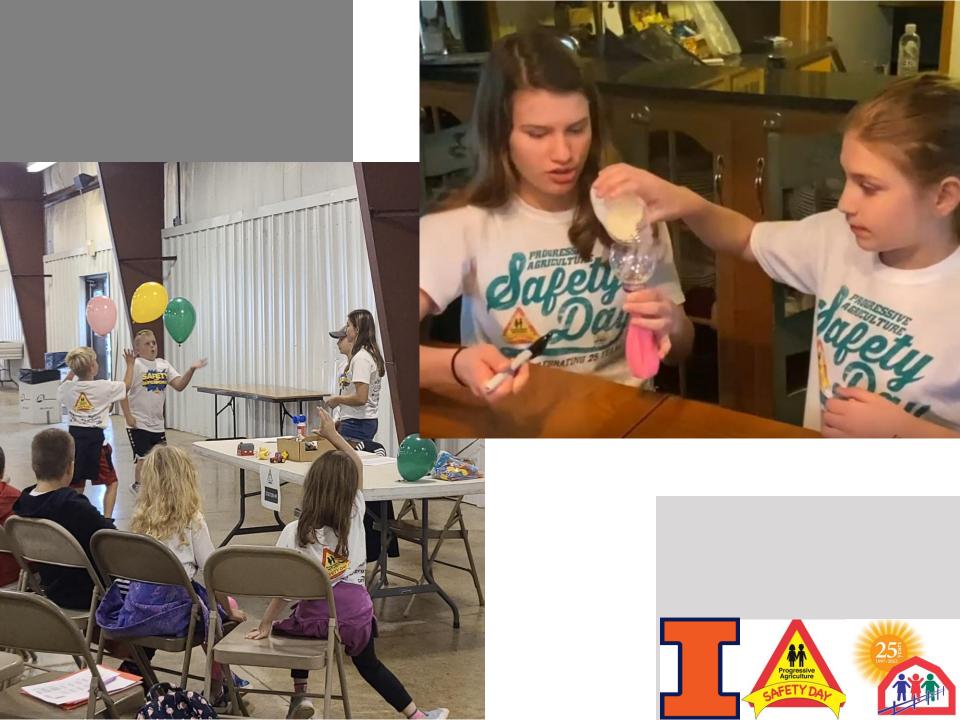
#### Understand stress and their emotions

Make the connection between mental health and physical health (break the stigma)

Identify coping strategies

Gather and share additional resources (take-home bags)





## A Few Small Acts Can Make a BIG Impact

### **Meaningful Moments**

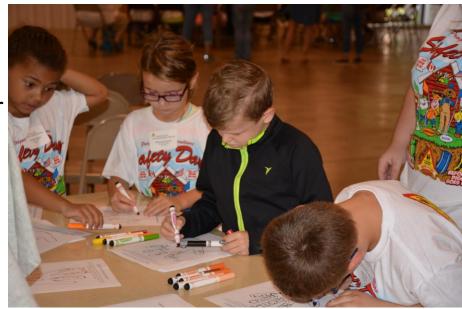
9 vital minutes each day

### Peach & Pit

- Share both the highs and lows of your day
- Listen/build trust

### Role Model

- Practice self-care
- Adopt a coping strategy
- Be kind
- Take a social media/technology break
- Ask for help
- Share your story





### "It Takes a Village" Many thanks to these partners and supporters







North Central Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Center



### Free Resources

#### 2023 NFSHW Webinar Recording

Matthew Crutchman – Enhancing Youth Resilience https://www.progressiveag.org/nfshw

#### 2020 NFSHW Story Hour Recording

Reading of children's book, *When I Feel Sad*, followed by an interview with author, Cornelia Maude Spelman

#### North Central Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Center https://farmstress.org/



### Get Involved

Learn more about the Progressive Agriculture Safety Day program by visiting <u>www.progressiveag.org</u> (visit the Get Involved section)

Safety Days can be offered in three unique delivery modes:

- 1. Community-based (original)
- 2. School-based (most popular)
- 3. Classroom-based (newest)
- 4. Safety Zone (coming soon)

Mental Well-Being & Stress Management is just one of 30+ safety and health chapters available.





### Questions

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