

A Unique Clinical Experience for RN-to-BSN Students: Providing Farm Safety Education

Agriculture ranks high on the list of hazardous places of employment (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2014). Youth living on farms are often engaged in farm work, and nonfarm children enjoy visiting farms and participating in activities. The number of injuries to youth on U.S. farms has decreased but remains significant. The 2001 national estimate of youth farming injuries was reported as 29,227; in 2006 and 2012, the number of injuries was 22,894 and 13,996, respectively (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2013). Progressive Agriculture Safety Day® is a Progressive Agriculture Foundation initiative that provides farming education and training for children. The Progressive Agriculture Safety Day is offered in 36 states in the United States, nine Canadian provinces, and American Samoa (Progressive Agriculture Foundation, 2015). Collaboration among nursing faculty from a state university in south central Kentucky and community coordinators of the local Progressive Agriculture Safety Day resulted in a 1-day public health clinical experience for RN-to-BSN students.

The RN-to-BSN students worked in peer groups to develop a teaching plan that included content, teaching strategies, and details about how the participating youth would be actively engaged in learning. On the day of the event, the students were given a designated place to present the same topic to groups of fourth grade students who rotated through 10 different safety and health education sessions. The topics from which the students chose were based on frequent causes of

farm injury and local and national health problems.

Following institutional review board approval, faculty conducted a descriptive correlational study using a convenience sample to examine RN-to-BSN students' perceptions about the learning activity. All 28 of the RN-to-BSN students participating in the event as part of the requirements for a nursing public health course volunteered to be included in the study. In addition to demographic questions, the researcher developed a paper-and-pencil questionnaire to collect data. The questionnaire included items to measure students' perceptions of the value of the experience using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*.

The age of the participants ranged from 22 to 60 years (mean = 32.82); years of nursing experience ranged from 1.5 to 30 (mean = 8.33); 20 of the participants reported their area of practice as acute care; 25 indicated living in a rural setting; 17 reported living on a farm at some point in the past; and 16 reported having worked on a farm. When asked whether anyone in their immediate family (i.e., parents, grandparents, or siblings) had been involved in a farm accident, 11 answered yes.

Twenty-two participants strongly agreed or agreed that the event increased their knowledge about injury prevention strategies and farm safety. The mean scores in response to these questions were 3.75 ($SD = 1.24$) and 3.79 ($SD = 1.34$) respectively. Twenty participants indicated they strongly agreed or agreed that the experience increased their ability to develop and implement a teaching plan (mean = 3.71, $SD = 1.36$). Statistically significant correlations ($p < .05$) were noted between age and perception

that the event increased knowledge about farm safety ($r = .430$), age and perception that the event increased ability to develop and implement a teaching plan ($r = .433$), age and perception that the event increased knowledge of injury prevention strategies in the farming population ($r = .422$), and age and ability to apply research in public health nursing practice ($r = .447$).

The results support the activity as a learning opportunity for RN-to-BSN students. Participants perceived that their knowledge about farm safety, injury prevention, and development and implementation of a teaching plan increased. This is an example of a clinical experience for RN-to-BSN students that could be replicated in many geographical areas.

References

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