

# THE STRUGGLES YOU SHOULD KNOW

The 2021 publication explains the multiple struggles farmworker children face including poverty, education, health, covid, financial burden, mental health, migration, human trafficking, and more.

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For this project, AFOP conducted a special survey with farmworker children from 3 different regions (West, East and Mid-Central)

In order to protect the farmworker children surveyed, AFOP changed the children's names, and did not mention the states where they live.



## WHO ARE THEY?

- 75% are age under 15 years old.
- 49% female
- 51% male
- 92% of the children work their parents
- 77% identified Spanish as their dominant language



## EDUCATION & MIGRATION

- 57% of surveyed farmworker children expressed that migrating affects their grades
- 30% expressed that is hard to keep up in class while migrating
- 46% migrate from state to state to work in the fields



## FAMILY & MIGRATION

- 65% live with their mom and dad
- 5 average number of family members living in the same household
- Only 32% have some kind of legal status.
- 46% migrate during the school year



## FARMWORK

- About 95% of the kids surveyed starting working in the fields between ages 5 and 6
- 59% work on Summer Break
- 35% work All Year
- 78% expressed that they liked going to school more than going to work in the fields

# HEALTH & SAFETY

## PESTICIDES



- 94% not sure whether they have been exposed to pesticides
- 63% expressed a lack of knowledge about what pesticides are
- Pesticides described in their own words:**
  - chemicals
  - don't know
  - help plants grow
  - stuff that makes you itch

## INJURIES



- 68% of the children experienced some kind of body pain from working in the fields
- 48% children experienced back pain
- Access to a bathroom**
  - The children mentioned that they usually:
    - Go to a gas station
    - Hold it because bathrooms are very dirty and far away
    - Go in the woods

## HEAT & WATER



- 78% of surveyed MSFW children prefer water over other drinks while working in the fields
- 86% of the children expressed that they wear a hat to protect themselves from the sun
- 89% of the children expressed that they wear a long-sleeve shirt
- 92% of the children said employers encourage them to take a break from the heat

## LIKES & DISLIKES OF WORKING IN THE FIELDS



- That they are able to help the family's finances
- Spending time with family members
- Being to help provide food for their families
- Getting paid



- Waking up early
- Extreme weather conditions (heat/cold)
- No time with friends
- Back pain
- Bathrooms are too far and too dirty

## REASONS FOR WORKING IN THE FIELDS

94%

of surveyed farmworker children said they work in the fields to help their family financially

- Help family
- Help pay bills
- Spend time with parents
- Buy food
- Buy their own things to take away parents' burden
- Buy school supplies and clothes



81%

of the children worry about COVID 19 and the well-being of their parents causing some type of anxiety.



Since agriculture is also the only industry where, legally and illegally, children start working at a very young age, it is a huge and vital section of the US economy primed for the exploitation of children.



Half a million

children are estimated to be working in agriculture in the U.S.

"Being part of a farmworker family is somehow learning to hustle the struggle but never realizing it because your struggle is actually your normal, a normal that is not normal for everyone else."

-Emily, WA.

