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In this Section

[Main Menu and Search](#)

[Browse by Day](#)

[Browse by Program](#)

[Author Index](#)

[Disclosure Index](#)

[Browse Handouts](#)



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249335 Knowledge of US child labor laws and influence on work-related injury among working teenagers

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Background: US child labor laws intend to protect young workers by regulating when teens work and what tasks can be performed, based on age; yet an estimated 70 work-related fatalities and hundreds of thousands of work-related injuries occur annually in youths. To date, no study has investigated how teens' knowledge of and adherence to labor laws influences the occurrence of work-related injury. Methods: Data was obtained from teenagers attending public high schools in Jefferson County, Kentucky, using qualitative and quantitative methods. Focus groups and interviews were conducted with 42 teens in April-May of 2010. In January-February of 2011 a survey of all teens in the schools was conducted. Results: Preliminary results indicate that the majority of the teens possessed general knowledge of child labor laws; however, this knowledge did not extend to dangerous task restrictions. General knowledge of the laws did not seem to be protective for work-related injury. Added analysis of the recently collected data from over 3,000 teens will permit in-depth exploration of the relationship between teen understanding of labor laws and injury. Specifically, the focus will be on differences in ways in which teens are educated about labor laws and whether these differences alter understanding, and thus impact injury. Discussion: Our research shows that many working teenagers have general knowledge of US child labor laws but lack knowledge of dangerous task restrictions. Further investigation should assess why teenagers do not abide by labor laws and why work-related injuries occur in youths educated about child labor laws.

Learning Areas:

Assessment of individual and community needs for health education
Occupational health and safety
Public health or related laws, regulations, standards, or guidelines
Public health or related public policy
Social and behavioral sciences

Learning Objectives:

1. Evaluate whether teens who received information about child labor laws during safety training were more likely to abide by the laws at work regarding hours worked and prohibited jobs 2. Determine if teens really understand specific labor laws or were just generally aware of labor laws; and whether there were differences by ages, races, genders, and jobs 3. Analyze whether general or specific knowledge of US Child Labor Laws reduces the occurrence of work-related injury in working teenagers

Keywords: Adolescents, Injury

Presenting author's disclosure statement:

Qualified on the content I am responsible for because: I am qualified to present because I am involved in multiple aspects of this research project, including collecting the data, analyzing the data, and interpreting the findings.

Any relevant financial relationships? No

I agree to comply with the American Public Health Association Conflict of Interest and Commercial Support Guidelines, and to disclose to the participants any off-label or experimental uses of a commercial product or service discussed in my presentation.

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See more of: [Occupational Health and Safety](#)

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