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249880 Use of dangerous equipment in the workplace and safety training: Effects on work-related injury in teenagers

Sunday, October 30, 2011

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Background: The primary cause of work-related injury among teenagers is contact with objects and equipment. Many injuries occur in teens working with equipment prohibited by child labor laws. The objectives of this study were to investigate the methods of safety training that teens working with prohibited equipment received and to evaluate whether any specific method of training was protective in preventing teens from working with prohibited equipment. **Methods:** Data was obtained from teenagers in 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 administered. **Results:** Overall, 52% of the teens interviewed had been injured at their current job and 48% said they worry about getting hurt at work. Results from qualitative data showed that the method and amount of safety training received was highly variable and was not dependent on the presence of prohibited equipment at work. Although many teens reported use of equipment prohibited by US child labor laws, injury in those teens was not consistent. **Discussion:** Work-related injury is a preventable contributor to teenage death and disability. Our research has shown a great irregularity in the type and amount of safety training provided to teenagers exposed to dangerous tasks. An alarming number of teens reported use of prohibited equipment by themselves or teenage coworkers. These results show that further investigation is warranted to identify targets for prevention.

Learning Areas:

Occupational health and safety
Public health or related research
Social and behavioral sciences

Learning Objectives:

1. Describe the amount and type of safety training received by teenagers who work with equipment prohibited under US child labor laws 2. Analyze whether any particular method or type of safety training is more protective in preventing teens from working with prohibited equipment 3. Analyze whether any particular method or type of safety training is more protective in reducing the severity of injury among teens working with prohibited equipment

Keywords: Adolescents, Workplace Safety

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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