

OREGON HEALTHY WORKFORCE CENTER
A NIOSH CENTER OF EXCELLENCE



PUSHing Young Employees to Total Worker Health: How Focus Groups Go Online

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SNAPSHOT OF YOUNG WORKERS

- ▶ Most teens (14–19) and young adults (20–24) work
- ▶ 13% of US labor force
- ▶ 88% of young workers are in the leisure, restaurant or retail industry



Young Worker Injuries

Young workers are twice as likely to be injured at work than older workers

National Injury Statistics:

- Young worker injury every 9 minutes
- 359 young worker deaths in 2009

Oregon Injury Statistics:

- ~8,300 *reported* injuries each year
- 52 deaths over a 7 year period (2003–09)

Focus Groups in Oregon:

- **Under report injuries**
 - 18% of teens report being hurt on the job
 - 60% report a near miss
 - 1 / 3 of those injured did not report it to employer



OTHER RISK FACTORS



Life vs. Health and Safety:

- ▶ Working adolescents get less sleep and are more tired
- ▶ Increased work (>20 hours/week) associated with emotional distress & substance abuse
- ▶ Know diet and lifestyle have long term impact on health

Young Worker Risk Factors



TALKING | SAFETY

TEACHING YOUNG WORKERS ABOUT JOB SAFETY AND HEALTH



Many young workers:

- Are not offered appropriate training and are inexperienced*
- May lack confidence or understanding of worker rights
- **Are unwilling to ask questions**
- Lack supervision
- Are asked to do more dangerous jobs
- Feel pressure to work quickly
- Have a sense of youthful invincibility

A Curriculum Presented by:
The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH)
The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)



OREGON EDITION 2010

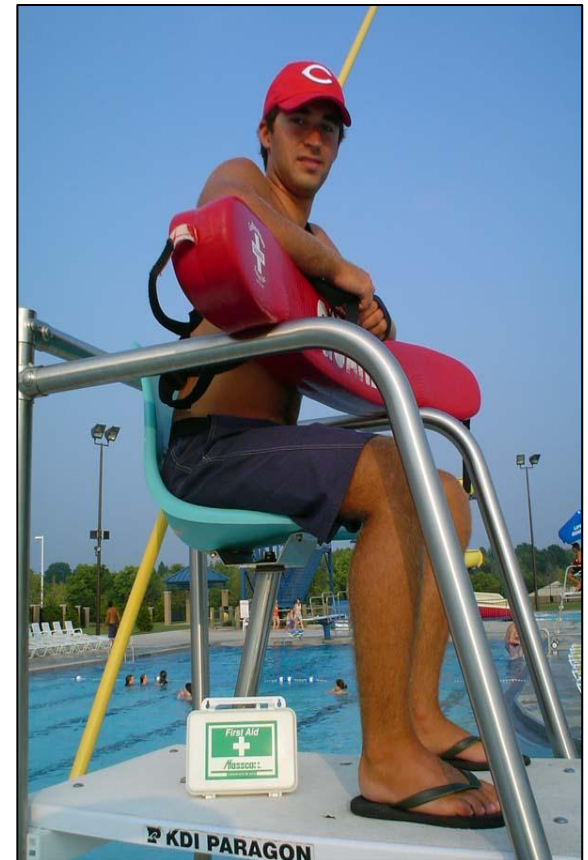
PORTLAND PARKS & RECREATION

Working with PPR's "wet side"

- ▶ Lifeguards, swim instructors, water fitness, cashiers, managers
- ▶ 13 pools divided into 4 "districts" with a district manager

About 600 employees on the "wet side"

- ▶ Approximately 80% under 25 years
- ▶ Majority part-time seasonal workers



Online Activities

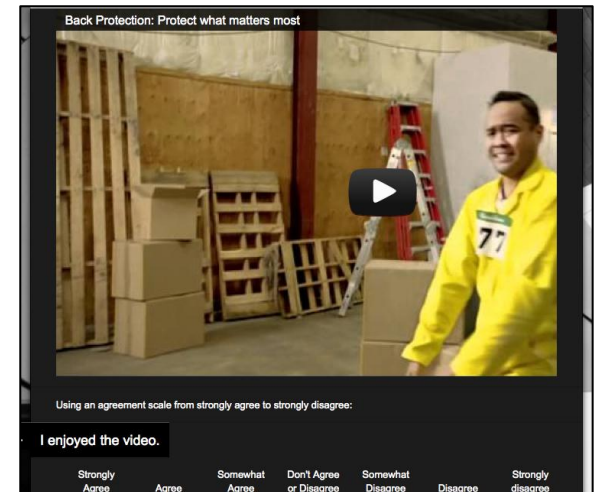
Survey

Characterize the population

Piloting curriculum

Develop online activities

Pilot Social Media



Online Survey

(Who are they? What do they know?)

- ▶ **Summer Survey** (online → SurveyGizmo)

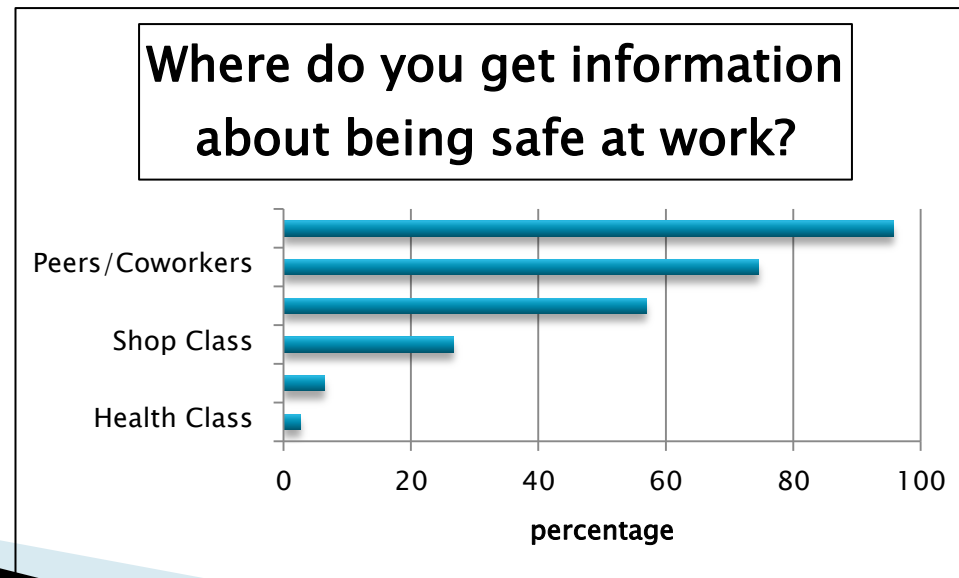
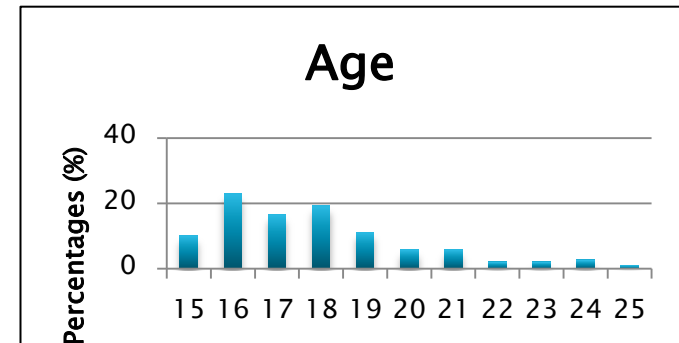


- ▶ Recruited at orientation meeting
- ▶ Sent 348 invitations
 - 73 bounced
 - 275 were invited → 187 completed (68% response rate)



Survey Young Workers (ages 15–25)

- ▶ 65% females
- ▶ First job (46%) (84% <18 years old)
- ▶ Working more than 1 job (30%)



Lifestyle

- ▶ General Health: 94% rate Good–Excellent
- ▶ Nutrition: 27% report never eating fast food
(58% less than 3 times/month)
- ▶ Smoking: 82% never smoked
- ▶ Sleep: 50% reported trouble staying awake at times
(e.g., driving, watching TV, and hanging out with friends)
- ▶ Drinking: 40% drank alcohol in the last month,
and >20% have been drunk in the past month
- ▶ Marijuana Use: 35% have used in the last month

Communication

- ▶ **Communication in the workplace**
 - **80% feel learning to talk with supervisors is an important skill to teach young workers**
 - **50% felt know their rights at work**



Pilot Testing Curriculum

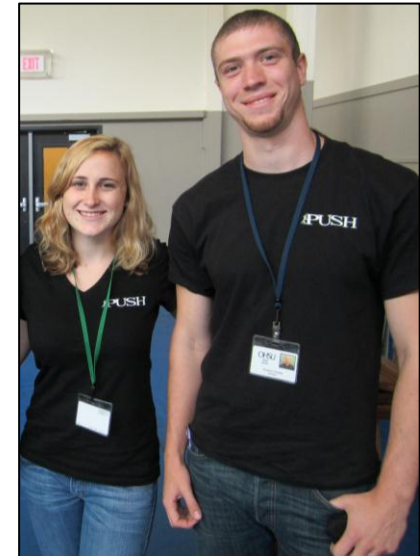
▶ Traditional approach → present curriculum and debrief afterwards

- Acceptability, usability, engagement



▶ Novel approach →

- Activities on Tumblr page
- “If we build it will they come?” and will they like it?



Online Focus Groups

If we build it will they come?

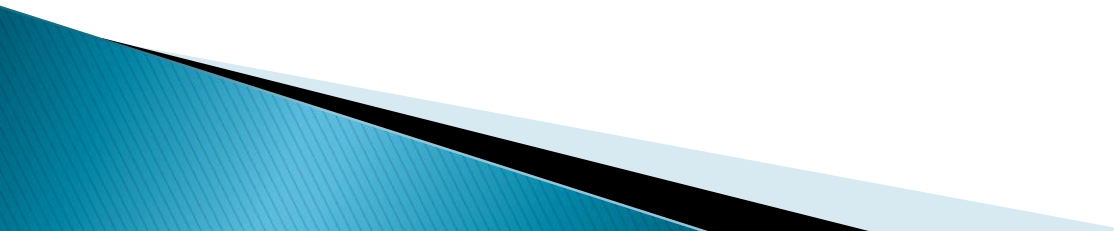
- ▶ In-service Activities
 - Supervisor reads script
 - Brief activity
 - Card with link to PUSH Tumblr
- ▶ PUSH Tumblr page
 - Brief activity
 - Quiz
 - Rated activities
- ▶ Competition across pools



In summary...

- ▶ Almost half were first-time workers
 - Do not start work with safety training
 - less than 10% get safety training at school
 - Rely on workplace to provide training
- ▶ Young workers were generally healthy, but they did have areas for improvement
- ▶ Use social media to get information
 - primarily wellness
- ▶ Recognized importance of communication but were not confident in their abilities

In summary...

- ▶ Online formats (**survey and focus group**) are good methods to reach young workers
 - Achieved rates comparable to mailed survey formats
 - ▶ **Using Tumblr was feasible as a means to pilot potential online formats**
 - Reactions were positive
 - Competition important to driving workers to Tumblr
 - ▶ **Majority would be willing to learn from a online delivered health and safety curriculum**
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Next steps...

- Turn activities into online training
- Videos/materials for training/Tumblr...
- Evaluation study next summer



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