

# **SAFE JOBS – WORK SAFE!**



**A Curriculum for Continuation School Students and Teachers**

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This curriculum has been adapted from the following sources:

**Youth @ Work—Talking Safety. A Safety and Health Curriculum for Young Workers**

Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention,  
National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health. <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/talkingsafety/>

**Safe Jobs for Youth. A Theme-Based Curriculum Unit for High School Students.**

UCLA Labor Occupational Safety and Health Program (UCLA-LOSH).  
[The two comic handouts.] <http://www.losh.ucla.edu/yw/index.html>

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***This curriculum is dedicated to the 4,500 U.S. workers  
who lose their lives on the job each year. Help your  
students develop the critical thinking skills they need to  
protect themselves and others in the workplace.***

## Introduction

This curriculum is designed for use especially in California Continuation Schools to educate our students to:

- Recognize hazards on the job and understand how to address them.
- Understand their basic rights at work, including child labor law protections and health and safety protections.
- Demonstrate critical thinking and problem-solving skills related to health and safety, including communication and how to access resource and enforcement agencies.

The ability to identify, understand, problem-solve, and effectively address workplace health and safety hazards are **critical life skills**. All high school students need these skills now and in the future.

### Why these skills are important:

- In 2012, 4,628 workers lost their lives on the job, and another 50,000 died from occupational diseases. That's a total of 149 workers dying each day. Another 3.1 million were injured or became ill.
- These deaths and injuries impact families, co-workers, employers and the economy.
- Workers under the age of 24 have the highest rate of job injury and are more than twice as likely as older adults to be injured on the job. This means that 795,000 young workers are injured every year, seriously enough to end up in a hospital emergency room. Permanent injuries for youth have a lifelong impact.
- **Employees who have the skills to take a proactive, solution-oriented approach to workplace health and safety help create safer, better workplaces, are valued by employers, and can protect themselves and others.**

The activities proposed in this curriculum can be used as a complete unit, or the instructor or student can select pieces to study. Estimated times for each lesson have been provided, which instructors can adapt to meet individual system requirements for student credit. Activities can also be adapted for directed lessons. Additional instructions for directed activities are available in the sources listed on the first page.

The curriculum is designed to support the student in an independent setting. It can be implemented within the requirements of English Language Arts, Health, Career/Technical, or Life Skills to ensure that information about teen worker health and safety is delivered to our students, many of whom work, or are actively seeking employment.

We have included alignment with two sets of standards (pp. 2 and 3 below) – the Common Core English Language Arts Standards, and the Core Competencies established by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) for a Safe, Skilled, Ready Workforce.

## **Common Core State Standards Addressed:**

**CCSS Reading 7:** Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

**CCSS Reading 10:** Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.

**CCSS Writing 2:** Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organizations and analysis of content.

**CCSS Writing 3:** Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

**CCSS Writing 7:** Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

**CCSS Listening and Speaking 2:** Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

## **National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH)**

### **Core Competencies for a Safe, Skilled, Ready Workforce**

**(<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/safe-skilled-ready/>)**

1. Recognize that, while work has benefits, all workers can be injured, become sick, or even be killed on the job. Workers need to know how workplace risks can affect their lives and their families.
2. Recognize that work-related injuries and illnesses are predictable and can be prevented,
3. Identify hazards at work and predict how workers can be injured or made sick.
4. Recognize how to prevent injury and illness. Describe the best ways to address workplace hazards and apply these concepts to specific workplace problems.
5. Identify emergencies at work and decide on the best ways to address them.
6. Recognize employer and worker rights and responsibilities that play a role in safe and healthy work.
7. Find resources that help keep workers safe and healthy on the job.
8. Demonstrate how workers can communicate with others—including people in authority roles—to ask questions or report problems or concerns when they feel unsafe or threatened.

# **Safe Jobs—Work Safe! Curriculum for Continuation Schools**

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## Instructor's Notes

### For Lesson 3, Activity F

Use the following tips to assess students' responses in Activity F.

#### Jasmine's Story

Jasmine is a 17-year-old dishwasher in a hospital kitchen. To clean cooking pans, she soaks them in a powerful chemical solution. She uses gloves to protect her hands and arms. One day, as Jasmin was lifting three large pans out of the sink at once, they slipped out of her hands and back into the sink. The cleaning solution splashed all over the side of her face and got into her right eye. She was blinded in that eye for 2 weeks.

#### What solutions might prevent this injury from happening again?

**Remove the Hazard.** Substitute a safer cleaning product. Use disposable pans. Use a dishwashing machine.

**Improve Work Policies & Procedures.** Have workers clean one pan at a time. Give them training about how to protect themselves from chemicals.

**Wear Personal Protective Equipment.** Goggles.

#### Andre's Story

Andre is a 17-year-old who works in a grocery store. One day while unloading a heavy box from a truck onto a wooden pallet, he felt a sharp pain in his lower back. Andre tried to keep working. His back continued to bother him, so he finally went to the doctor. Andre had to miss work for a week to recover. His back still hurts sometimes.

#### What solutions might prevent this injury from happening again?

**Remove the Hazard.** Use a mechanical lifting device. Pack boxes with less weight. Unload trucks in a sheltered area so workers aren't exposed to weather, wind, or wet surfaces.

**Improve Work Policies & Procedures.** Assign two people to do the job. Train workers how to lift properly. Enforce a policy that teens never lift more than 30 pounds at a time, as recommended by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH).

**Wear Personal Protective Equipment.** Wear non-slip shoes. (Note: A recent NIOSH study found that back belts do not help. For more information see [www.cdc.gov/niosh/belting.html](http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/belting.html).)

#### Molly's Story

Molly is a 16-year-old who works in the deli department at a grocery store. Her supervisor asked her to clean the meat slicer, although she had never done this before and had never been trained to do it. Molly thought the meat slicer was turned off before she began cleaning it. Just as she started to clean the blades, the machine started up. The blade cut a finger on Molly's left hand all the way to the bone.

### **What solutions might prevent this injury from happening again?**

**Remove the Hazard.** The machine should have a guard to protect fingers from the blade. The machine should have an automatic shut-off.

**Improve Work Policies & Procedures.** A rule should require that the machine be unplugged before cleaning. No one under 18 should use or clean this machine because it is against the child labor laws.

**Wear Personal Protective Equipment.** Have workers wear cut-resistant gloves.





## **Safe Jobs—Work Safe!**

### **Worksheet #1: Intro to Job Rights and Safety**

(1 hour)

- A. Have you ever been hurt on a job, or know someone who has? On a separate piece of paper, write a paragraph about the experience. (If not, pick one of the stories from the *Are You a Working Teen?* fact sheet, and write a paragraph about what you think might have happened leading up to the incident, or what it might have felt like.)

*(CCSS Writing 3)*

- B. Read the fact sheet: *Are You a Working Teen?*

*(CCSS Reading 10)*

- C. Answer the following questions.

1. How many teens die each year due to work injuries?
2. What are three (3) reasons injuries often occur?
3. Teens have many rights on the job. What three (3) rights are most important to you? Explain.
4. How can teens protect themselves on the job?
5. What kind of jobs are teens not legally allowed to do if they are under the age of 18? List at least three.
6. How late can a 17-year-old work on a school night?
7. If you are 16 or 17 years old, how many hours can you work on a school day?
8. If you get hurt on the job, what should you do?
9. What did you learn about Workers' Compensation?
10. What agency would you contact to make a health or safety complaint?



# Are You a Working Teen?



## Could I Get Hurt or Sick on the Job?

Every year nearly 30 teens under 18 die from work injuries in the United States. Another 27,000 get hurt badly enough that they go to a hospital emergency room.

- » 18-year-old Anna caught her hand in an electric cabbage shredder at a fast food restaurant. Her hand is damaged for life and she'll never have full use of it again.
- » 17-year-old Joe lost his life while working as a construction helper. An electric shock killed him when he climbed a metal ladder to hand an electric drill to another worker.
- » 16-year-old Donna was attacked and robbed at gunpoint at a sandwich shop. She was working alone after 11 p.m.

**Why do injuries like these occur?** Teens are often injured on the job due to unsafe equipment, stress, and the rushed pace of work. Also they may not receive adequate safety training and supervision.

Teens are much more likely to be injured when they work on jobs they are not allowed to do by law.

## What Hazards Should I Watch Out for?

Type of Work	Examples of Hazards
Janitor/ Clean-up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>» Toxic chemicals in cleaning products</li><li>» Blood on thrown out needles</li></ul>
Food Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>» Slippery floors</li><li>» Hot cooking equipment</li><li>» Sharp objects</li></ul>
Retail/ Sales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>» Violent crimes</li><li>» Heavy lifting</li></ul>
Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>» Stress</li><li>» Harassment</li><li>» Poor computer work station design</li></ul>

# PROTECT YOUR HEALTH! KNOW YOUR RIGHTS!

# What Are My Rights on the Job?

## By law, your employer must provide:

- » A safe and healthful workplace.
- » Training on chemicals and other health and safety hazards.
- » Clothing and equipment that protects the worker.
- » 1/2 hour meal break after no more than 5 hours; 10 minute rest period after each 4 hours.
- » Workers' compensation benefits if you are hurt on the job. These include:
  - » Medical care for your injury, whether or not you miss time from work.
  - » Payments if you lose wages for more than 3 days.
  - » Other benefits if you become permanently disabled.
- » At least the California minimum wage (see table).

## You also have a right to:

- » Report safety problems to Cal/OSHA.
- » Work without racial or sexual harassment.
- » Refuse to work if you could be killed or badly hurt by doing the task.
- » Join or form a union.



# What Should I do to Protect Myself on the Job?

## To work safely you should:

- » Follow all safety rules and instructions; use safety equipment and clothing that protects you, when it's needed
- » Watch out for problems that might hurt other workers
- » Keep work areas clean and neat
- » Know what to do in an emergency
- » Report any health and safety hazard to your supervisor
- » Ask questions if you don't understand something

# Do I Need a Work Permit?

**YES. If you are under 18 and plan to work**, you must get a work permit from your school or school district office (unless you have graduated).

## Minimum Wage

Date	For Employers with 26 Employees or More	For Employers with 25 Employees or Less
January 1, 2018	\$11.00/hour	\$10.50/hour
January 1, 2019	\$12.00/hour	\$11.00/hour
January 1, 2020	\$13.00/hour	\$12.00/hour
January 1, 2021	\$14.00/hour	\$13.00/hour
January 1, 2022	\$15.00/hour	\$14.00/hour
January 1, 2023	\$15.00/hour for all	

*\*\*In some cases, employers can pay less than minimum wage during your first 160 hours of work if you have not worked before in the same type of job.*

## Is It OK to Do Any Kind of Work?

**NO. There are laws that protect teens from doing dangerous work.**

In California no worker under 18 may:

- » Drive a motor vehicle on public streets as a main part of the job (17-year-olds may drive in a few specific cases.)
- » Drive a forklift or other heavy equipment
- » Use powered equipment like a circular saw, box crusher, meat slicer, or bakery machine
- » Work in wrecking, demolition, excavation, or roofing
- » Work in logging or a sawmill
- » Prepare, serve, or sell alcoholic drinks
- » Work where the teen is exposed to radiation

**Also, no one 14 or 15 years old may:**

- » Do any baking
- » Cook (except with electric or gas grills that do not involve cooking over an open flame and with deep fat fryers that automatically lower and raise the baskets)
- » Work in dry cleaning or a commercial laundry
- » Do building, construction, or manufacturing work
- » Load or unload a truck, railroad car, or moving belt.
- » Work on a ladder or scaffold

## Are There Other Things I Can't Do?

**YES. There are other rules about the type of work you can and cannot do.** You must be at least 14 years old for most jobs except for informal jobs like babysitting or yard work. Check with your state labor department, school counselor, or job placement coordinator to make sure the job you are doing is allowed.



## Should I Be Working This Late or This Long?

Child labor laws protect teens from working too long, too late, or too early.

This table shows the hours teens may work. (Some school districts may have more strict rules. Also, there are some exceptions for teens in work experience education programs.)

WORK HOURS FOR TEENS		
	Ages 14-15:	Ages 16-17:
Work Hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>» 7 am–7 pm, from Labor Day–June 1</li><li>» Not during school hours</li><li>» 7 am–9 pm, from June 1–Labor Day</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>» 5 am–10 pm when there is school the next day</li><li>» 5 am–12:30 am when there is no school the next day</li></ul>
The most hours you can work when school is in session	<p>18 hours a week, but not over:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>» 3 hours a day on school days</li><li>» 8 hours a day Saturday –Sunday and holidays</li></ul>	<p>48 hours a week, but not over:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>» 4 hours a day Monday–Thursday</li><li>» 8 hours a day Friday–Sunday and holidays</li></ul>
The most hours you can work when school is not in session	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>» 40 hours a week</li><li>» 8 hours a day</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>» 48 hours a week</li><li>» 8 hours a day</li></ul>

# What If I Get Hurt on the Job?

- » Tell your supervisor right away. If you're under 18, tell your parents or guardians too.
- » Get emergency medical treatment if you need it.
- » Your employer must give you a claim form. Fill it out and return it to your employer. This helps ensure that you receive workers' compensation benefits.

## WORKERS' COMPENSATION

### Did You Know?

You can receive benefits:

- » Even if you are under 18.
- » Even if you are a temporary or part-time worker (in most cases).
- » You receive benefits no matter who was at fault for your job injury.
- » You don't have to be a legal resident of the U.S. to receive workers' compensation benefits.
- » You can't sue your employer for a job injury (in most cases).

# What If I Have a Safety Problem?

Talk to your supervisor, parents, teachers, job training counselor, or union (if any) about the problem. If you need help, contact one of these agencies.

## For health and safety information and advice:

- » California Partnership for Young Worker Health and Safety.  
Materials available in English and Spanish.  
[www.youngworkers.org](http://www.youngworkers.org)
- » UC Berkeley Labor Occupational Health Program  
(510) 642-5507  
[www.lohp.org](http://www.lohp.org)
- » UCLA Labor Occupational Safety and Health Program  
(310) 794-5964  
<http://losh.ucla.edu/yw/>

## To make a health or safety complaint:

- » Cal/OSHA  
(800) 963-9424  
[www.dir.ca.gov/DOSH](http://www.dir.ca.gov/DOSH)
- » OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health)  
(800) 321-OSHA  
[www.osha.gov](http://www.osha.gov)

## To make a complaint about wages or work hours:

- » Labor Commissioner's Office  
(415) 703-5300  
[www.dir.ca.gov/DLSE](http://www.dir.ca.gov/DLSE)
- » US. Department of Labor  
(866) 487-9243  
[www.dol.gov/whd/](http://www.dol.gov/whd/)

## To make a complaint about sexual harassment or discrimination:

- » California Fair Employment and Housing  
(800) 884-1684  
[www.dfeh.ca.gov](http://www.dfeh.ca.gov)
- » US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission  
(800) 669-4000  
[www.eeoc.gov/youth/](http://www.eeoc.gov/youth/)

## For information about benefits for injured workers:

- » California Workers' Compensation – Information and Assistance  
(800) 736-7401  
[www.dir.ca.gov/DWC](http://www.dir.ca.gov/DWC)



**LOHP**  
LABOR OCCUPATIONAL  
HEALTH PROGRAM

[youngworkers.org](http://youngworkers.org)

## You have a right to speak up!

It is against the law for your employer to fire or punish you for reporting a workplace problem or injury, or for claiming workers' compensation.

The information in this factsheet reflects your state and/or federal labor laws, whichever are more protective. The more protective laws usually apply. Check with the state agencies listed above.

## **Safe Jobs—Work Safe!**

### **Worksheet #2: Your Rights on the Job**

(1.5 hours)

A. Read “Your Right to a Safe Workplace” comic.

*(CCSS Reading 7)*

B. Write a dialogue. Imagine yourself in a job where the boss wants you to stay later than you should, or use a machine that you haven’t used because he/she was short-handed. On a separate piece of paper, write out the scene using dialogue between you and the manager. How would you handle the situation?

*(CCSS Writing 3)*

C. Read “Wages & Hours” comic.

*(CCSS Reading 7)*

D. Research: What is the current minimum wage in California? What will happen to the minimum wage on January 1, 2016?

*(CCSS Writing 7)*

E. Draw your own comic about a workplace health, safety, or teen worker concern.





# YOUR RIGHT TO A SAFE WORKPLACE

Produced by the UCLA-LOSH Program  
1001 Gayley Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90024



LATER THAT EVENING...

¿Qué pasa mi sobrino favorito?

Well Uncle Victor, I was wondering if you can give me some advice. I've been having a lot of problems at the grocery store.

I know, I know. But what can I do if I'm not ready to go that route?

Other workers are complaining too.

Then what you should do is talk to all the employees who are experiencing problems, and make a list of changes you need.

Go to your supervisor as a group.

-But I don't want to be seen as a troublemaker!

¡Qué malo mi sobrino! Well, you know what I always say: **Join the Union!**

Jose, there are laws protecting your rights as a worker. I'm not even a U.S. citizen, but these laws apply to me too. Think of how much your co-workers will appreciate it! Not to mention your **aching back!**

THE NEXT MORNING...

Wait up, D!

Hey, what's up José?

I got some info you might like to hear.

Actually, he does, because we have rights. We have the right to work without getting hurt or sick, and we can talk to a health and safety person about problems. You could get gloves to protect your hands.

Now you're talking. But what about robberies in the area?

We've been held up at gunpoint before! What can some health and safety expert do about **that?!?**

I talked to my uncle last night, and he suggested that I talk to the other guys I work with, and we can approach the manager with our concerns.

I think you could do the same thing at the burger stand.

Yeah, but what would that do? The boss doesn't have to listen!

Well, I don't have all the answers, but maybe you could talk about the need for some kind of security system. Cal/OSHA is the government agency that can help us with these kinds of questions.

# WAGES & HOURS

Produced by the UCLA-LOSH Program  
1001 Gayley Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90024

TUESDAY EVENING, LUIS WORKS  
LATE AT THE PIZZERIA...



WEDNESDAY MORNING IN ENGLISH  
CLASS...



Oh...  
sorry, Mr.  
Lee!

Luis,  
you're one of  
my best  
students.  
What's  
going on  
with you?

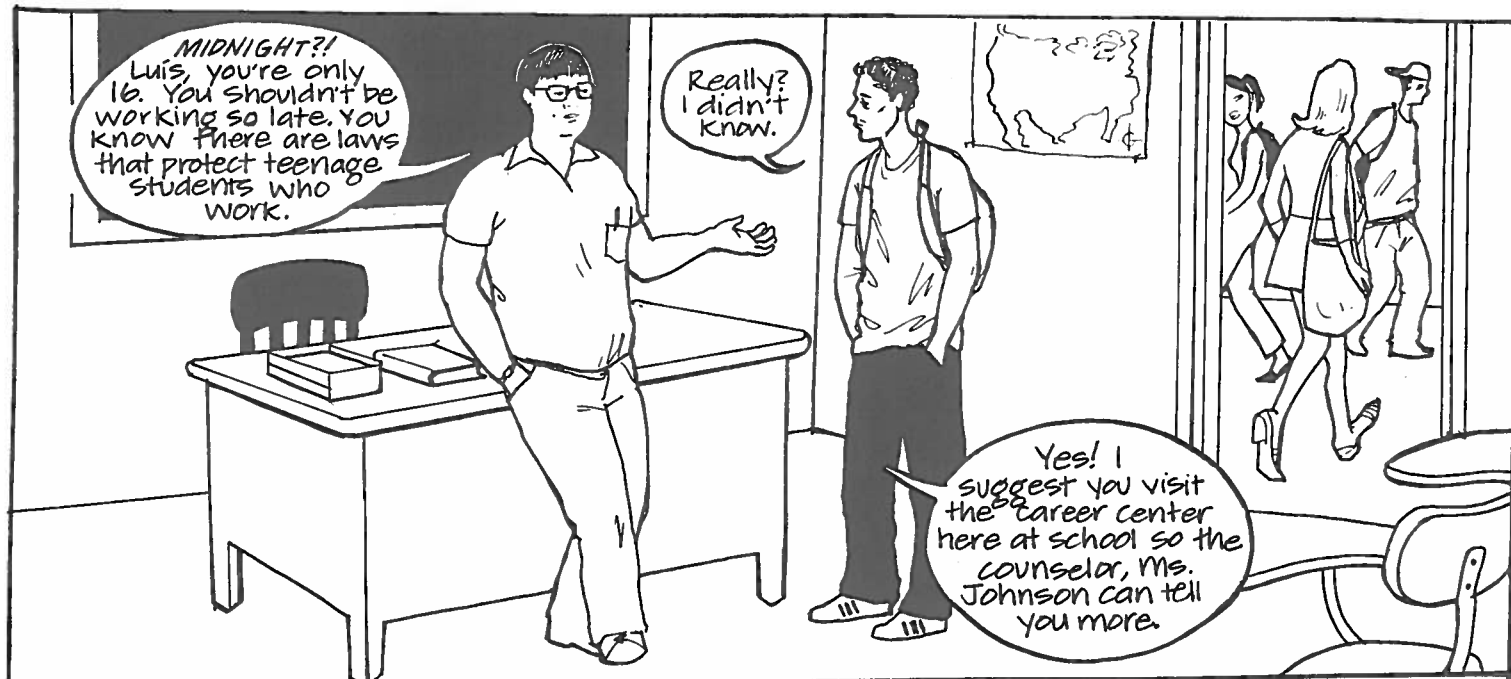


I'm sorry  
Mr. Lee. I've  
just been a  
little tired  
lately.

A little  
tired? Luis, you  
were fast asleep  
in class!

Well,  
that's because  
I've been working  
until  
midnight.

ideal '1997'



## Safe Jobs—Work Safe!

### Worksheet #3: Recognizing and Solving Health and Safety Problems on the Job

1.25 hours

- A. Read the handout “Hazards on the Job”.

*(CCSS Reading 10)*

- B. Look at the drawing of the restaurant. Circle all of the hazards you can find.

- C. Create a list below the picture of the hazards you have identified, putting them in the categories where they belong.

Safety Hazards	Chemical Hazards	Biological Hazards	Other Health Hazards
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- D. Pick another workplace. Create a drawing that shows the hazards in that workplace, and create a similar chart with all of the hazards you have shown in your picture.

- E. Read the handout “Making the Job Safer: Use the Safety Pyramid”.

*(CCSS Reading 10)*

- F. For each story, describe at least three (3) things that could have been done to prevent that injury from happening again. Include at least one from each category of the pyramid.

*(CCSS Writing 2)*

1. Jasmine’s Story

What could have been done to prevent her injury?

2. André’s Story

What could have been done to prevent his injury?

3. Molly’s Story

What could have been done to prevent her injury?



# Hazards on the Job

**Definition:** A job hazard is anything at work that can hurt you, either physical or mentally.

- **Safety hazards** can cause immediate accidents and injuries.
  - *Examples:* hot surfaces or slippery floors
- **Chemical hazards** are gases, vapors, liquids, or dusts that can harm your body.
  - *Examples:* cleaning products or pesticides.
- **Biological hazards** are living things that can cause sickness or disease.
  - *Examples:* bacteria, viruses, or insects.
- **Other health hazards** are harmful things, not in the other categories, that can injure you or make you sick. These hazards are sometimes less obvious because they may not cause health problems right away.
  - *Examples:* noise or repetitive movements.

SAFETY HAZARDS	CHEMICAL HAZARDS	BIOLOGICAL HAZARDS	OTHER HEALTH HAZARDS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• hot surfaces</li><li>• slippery floors</li><li>• unsafe ladders</li><li>• machines without guards</li><li>• sharp knives</li><li>• hot grease</li><li>• unsafe electric circuits</li><li>• lack of fire exits</li><li>• motor vehicles</li><li>• cluttered work areas</li><li>• falling objects</li><li>• violence</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• cleaning products</li><li>• pesticides</li><li>• solvents</li><li>• acids</li><li>• asbestos</li><li>• lead</li><li>• ozone (from copiers)</li><li>• wood dust</li><li>• mercury</li><li>• poor air quality</li><li>• gasoline</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• viruses</li><li>• bacteria</li><li>• molds</li><li>• animals</li><li>• birds</li><li>• insects</li><li>• poison ivy</li><li>• poison oak</li><li>• used needles</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• noise</li><li>• vibration</li><li>• radiation</li><li>• heat or cold</li><li>• repetitive movements</li><li>• awkward posture</li><li>• heavy lifting</li><li>• fast pace of work</li><li>• harassment</li><li>• stress</li><li>• areas too dark or too bright</li></ul>

# Hazards in a Fast Food Restaurant



HAZARD	EFFECT	POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS
<b>Safety Hazards</b>		
Cooking equipment	Burns or electric shocks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep appliances in safe condition</li> <li>• Have guards around hot surfaces</li> <li>• Wear gloves or mitts</li> </ul>
Hot grease	Burns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use grease pans that dump automatically</li> <li>• Have splash guards</li> <li>• Wear protective clothing</li> </ul>
Slicers and powered cutting equipment	Cuts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must be 18 or older to use</li> <li>• Keep guards in place</li> <li>• Get proper training</li> <li>• Turn off when cleaning</li> </ul>
Slippery floors	Slips or falls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clean up spills quickly</li> <li>• Use floor mats</li> </ul>
<b>Chemical Hazards</b>		
Dishwashing products	Skin contact may cause irritation or dermatitis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use safer products</li> <li>• Wear gloves</li> </ul>
Cleaning products	Some vapors cause headaches and other health problems; skin contact may cause irritation or dermatitis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use safer products</li> <li>• Wear gloves when necessary</li> <li>• Have good ventilation</li> </ul>
<b>Other Health Hazards</b>		
Contact with public	Stress; criminal violence; robbery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have adequate security</li> <li>• Schedule at least two people per shift</li> <li>• Use barriers where money is handled</li> <li>• Get customer service training</li> </ul>
Standing for long periods	Back injuries; varicose veins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use floor mats</li> <li>• Take regular breaks</li> <li>• Rotate jobs</li> </ul>
Bending, reaching, stretching, and lifting	Muscle strains or sprains	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep heavy items on lower shelves</li> <li>• Rotate jobs</li> <li>• Use helpers</li> </ul>





Safety Hazards	Chemical Hazards	Biological Hazards	Other Health Hazards



# Making the Job Safer: Use the Safety Pyramid

While every job has hazards, there are many things that can be done to protect workers from those hazards. Three different types of strategies are listed here in the “Safety Pyramid.” Some of these ways are more protective than others, described below.

## 1. Remove the Hazard

The best control measures remove the hazard from the workplace altogether, or keep it isolated (away from workers) so it can’t hurt anyone. This way, the workplace itself is safer, and all the responsibility for safety doesn’t fall on individual workers.

### Here are some examples:

- Use safer chemicals, and get rid of hazardous ones
- Store chemicals in locked cabinets away from work areas
- Use machines with proper safety guards instead of doing jobs by hand
- Have guards around hot surfaces

## 2. Improve Work Policies

If you can’t completely eliminate a hazard or keep it away from workers, good safety policies can reduce your exposure to hazards.

### Here are some examples:

- Training on how to work safely around hazards
- Give regular breaks to keep workers from getting too tired
- Assigning enough people to do the job safely (such as lifting)

## 3. Use Protective Clothing and Equipment

Personal protective equipment (often called “PPE”) is often the least effective way to control hazards. Despite this, you should use it whenever an employer gives it to you. Workers might need personal protective equipment even when other safety measures are in place.

### Here are some examples:

- Gloves, steel-toed shoes, hard hats
- Respirators, safety glasses, hearing protectors
- Lab coats or smocks

### Why is PPE considered the solution of last resort?



- It doesn't get rid of the hazard or make the workplace as safe as it can be.
- Workers may not want to wear it because it can be uncomfortable, hot, and may make it hard to communicate or to do work.
- It has to fit right and be used every time, and at the right time, to work.
- It has to be right for the particular hazard, such as the right type of glove, ear plug, or clothing that protects against the chemical being used.

Employers and workers should use the "safety pyramid" to think about the best ways to protect workers in the workplace--*How can we "fix the workplace" so we don't have to "fix the worker"* (relying on personal protective equipment, or lots of safety rules that might get skipped.)

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The following stories are based on things that really happened. Use the "Safety Pyramid" to think about what you would do, if you wanted to prevent these injuries from happening.



### **Jasmine's Story**

Jasmine is a 17-year-old dishwasher in a hospital kitchen. To clean cooking pans, she soaks them in a powerful chemical solution. She uses gloves to protect her hands and arms. One day, as Jasmine was lifting three large pans out of the sink at once, they slipped out of her hands and back into the sink. The cleaning solution splashed all over the side of her face and got into her right eye. She was blinded in that eye for 2 weeks.



### **André's Story**

André is a 17-year-old who works in a grocery store. One day while unloading a heavy box from a truck onto a wooden pallet, he felt a sharp pain in his lower back. André tried to keep working. His back continued to bother him, so he finally went to the doctor. André had to miss work for a week to recover. His back still hurts sometimes.



### **Molly's Story**

Molly is a 16-year-old who works in the deli department at a grocery store. Her supervisor asked her to clean the meat slicer, although she had never done this before and had never been trained to do it. Molly thought the meat slicer was turned off before she began cleaning it. Just as she started to clean the blades, the machine started up. The blade cut a finger on Molly's left hand all the way to the bone.

## **Safe Jobs—Work Safe!**

### **Worksheet #4: Emergencies at Work**

1 hour

- A. Read the handout “Emergency Action Plans”.

*(CCSS Reading 10)*

- B. List five things YOU would want to know if you were in an emergency at work. Using the “Emergency Action Plans” handout, add a short sentence after each item describing whether this is a required part of an Emergency Action Plan, and which section required it.

*(CCSS Writing 2)*

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

- C. Read the handout “Emergencies in the News.” Select two of the stories, and answer the following questions:

Story # \_\_\_\_\_

1. What went right?

2. What went wrong?

3. What can be done to better protect and prepare employees?

Story # \_\_\_\_\_

1. What went right?

2. What went wrong?

3. What can be done to better protect and prepare employees?

# Emergency Action Plans

***An emergency is any unplanned event that poses a threat. An emergency can threaten employees, customers, or the public. It might shut down work at a business. It might cause damage, or it could harm the environment.***

Planning can make workers, workplaces, and the place you live safer when emergencies strike. The federal government makes almost every business have a written Emergency Action Plan. The plan covers what's needed before, during, and after an emergency. It also gives steps that everyone should follow in an emergency. The plan should say who will take charge in an emergency. It should list where chemicals are stored and where to find Safety Data Sheets. The plan should also tell how to protect employees, including workers with disabilities.

## **Training and drills**

Employees should take part in training and regular practice drills so everyone knows what to do during different kinds of emergencies. The drills and training should include this information:

- How to report an emergency.
- What workers must do.
- What the alarms sound and look like, and how the “all clear” will be given.
- Where to gather.
- What to do if chemicals spill.
- When and how to use emergency equipment.

## **Alarm systems**

All employees should be able to see, hear, and understand the alarms.

## **Shelters and evacuation**

The plan should say how you will learn what you need to know if an emergency happens. You need to know where inside shelters and exits are. You need to know the best paths to get out, and the rules to follow as you leave. You need to know where to meet outside. The plan should spell out where to go in the building if a tornado or hurricane might hit. Someone where you work should check exits and the paths to get out to make sure nothing is blocking them. The place you work should have enough exits, and they should be wide enough so workers can get out quickly. Everyone should know where to meet outside, so someone can count who got out.

## **Emergency lights**

The paths to get out should have emergency lights in all the places where people work.

## **Emergency equipment**

The plan should list the emergency equipment your workplace needs. This might include sprinkler systems in the building, fire extinguishers, and eyewash systems, if chemicals are used.

## **What to do if someone gets hurt**

The plan should say how many first aid kits will be available, where to find them, and who will be trained to use them. Employees should know who is trained in first aid or CPR and where to get medical help, if needed.

**For more information on emergency action plans, visit OSHA's Web site: <http://go.usa.gov/jvVT>.**



## Emergencies in the News

### Story 1: Grease fire in restaurant burns employee

A fire erupted at Sunny's Family Restaurant Tuesday night, critically injuring an employee and causing \$100,000 in damage to the building. The fire started when a frying pan filled with oil, heating on the stove, was left unattended. The fire spread quickly to dish towels hanging nearby. An employee saw the fire and tried to put it out by pouring water on the stove. This caused the burning grease to splatter his face, arms, and chest. A co-worker, hearing the commotion, yelled for everyone to leave the restaurant right away and called 911. The fire department put out the fire and attended to the burned employee. The victim was taken to Mercy Hospital with serious injuries.

### Story 2: Robber threatens young employee with gun

A 16-year-old employee of a local convenience store was held up at gunpoint late Thursday night by a masked man demanding money. The employee was working alone, and he was closing the store for the evening. The employee later told police that, after emptying the cash register, the robber tied him up and left with the money. Although the robbery shook up the employee, he was not physically hurt. The name of the employee is being withheld because of his age.

### Story 3: Parents praise quick action of local teen

Parents Charlene Cook and Kelly Nelson, who have children attending the Happy Go Lucky Day Care Center, called the Daily Times this week to praise the quick action of 17-year-old Tamara Thompson, one of Happy Go Lucky's star employees. Tamara noticed that an entire container of bleach had spilled near the janitor's closet and was giving off fumes in one of the nearby classrooms. Knowing that some of the children have asthma, Tamara walked the children to another teacher's classroom so they wouldn't be exposed. She then rushed back with paper towels to clean up the spill. Unfortunately, Tamara herself suffered breathing problems after cleaning up the bleach and had to be taken to the emergency room to be checked. She is currently at home recovering but plans to return to work when she feels better.

### Story 4: Young construction worker falls from ladder

An 18-year-old house painter who was painting the second story of a house fell off his ladder yesterday, breaking both his legs. He also suffered severe cuts when he caught his arm on a metal fence as he fell. Co-workers rushed to help him and called for an ambulance. Local emergency medical technicians (EMTs) said that the co-workers carried the fallen employee to the front lawn and then applied pressure to the open wound to stop the bleeding.

## **Story 5:** Mother of disabled teen worker questions employer's response during earthquake

Office workers at R&D Business Solutions huddled under desks and doorways as a magnitude 6.1 earthquake shook their building. When the earthquake stopped, the workers followed lighted exit signs to the stairwell. They made it down 10 flights of stairs and outside to the street. Gladys Royce, of Washington Township, has a son, Jason, who is an employee of the company. She complained that her son, who has Down syndrome, was left alone to figure out what to do during and after the earthquake. The employees and supervisors had no idea Jason had stayed on the 11th floor. The company pledges to look at its Emergency Action Plan and make sure the plan prepares and protects all employees, including those who may need more help. (The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission [EEOC] offers a Fact Sheet on Obtaining and Using Employee Medical Information as Part of Emergency Evacuation Procedures, available at [www.eeoc.gov/facts/evacuation.html](http://www.eeoc.gov/facts/evacuation.html). This information can help answer the questions for this story.)

## **Story 6:** Tornado breaks windows at local department store

A tornado blew through town yesterday, knocking out power in large areas and damaging many buildings. The tornado blew out most of the windows in Johnson's Department Store, on East 8th Street. As glass went flying, employees herded customers into the center section of each floor in the three-story building. Customer Tom Wilson was thankful for the help that employees gave in getting everyone away from the windows.



## **Safe Jobs—Work Safe!**

### **Worksheet #5: Creating Change through Creativity**

(4 hours)

- A. Select a historical child labor photo taken by the photographer Lewis Hine, available at:

<http://www.historyplace.com/unitedstates/childlabor/>  
<http://www.kentlaw.edu/ilhs/hine.htm>  
<http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/hine-photos/>

Write a paragraph about the photo. Describe as much as you can about what you see, including about the people you see, and the conditions they are working in. In the Are You a Working Teen fact sheet, find two or three protections that workers, especially young workers, now have that would change what you see in the photo. Explain a little about these laws in your paragraph, and how they have made a difference. (0.5 hours)

*(CCSS Writing 3)*

- B. Research: Look on these websites, or others, to see what you can find out about the photographer, Lewis Hine. How did he play a role in helping create laws to protect children from dangerous work? Write a paragraph about this. (0.5 hours)

*(CCSS Writing 7)*

- C. Watch the video: *Teen Workers: Real Jobs, Reals Risks*. You can do this on your home computer, smart phone, or with administrative clearance on your school's computer. You can search for it on YouTube, or find it here: <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/talkingsafety/video.html> (0.5 hours)

- D. Write a Public Service Announcement (PSA) that could be read on a radio about being safe in the workplace. Use the information in the video. Decide on a key message. You should be able to read it in 30-60 seconds. (0.5 hours)

*(CCSS Writing 2)*

- E. Interview a friend, family member or other worker about safety hazards, training, or dangers in his/her workplace. Ask at least five (5) questions about his or her job and how he or she stays safe at work. Compile the data and summarize each person's experience. (1 hour)

*(CCSS Listening and Speaking 2; Writing 7)*

- F. Write a poem, rap or newspaper article about teen worker rights and safety. What is your POV (Point of View)? (1 hour)

*(CCSS Writing 2, 3)*