



### SJ4YM 2020 Teaching Activities

## **Speaking Up About Health and Safety at Work: Coronavirus and Beyond Learning about Your Health and Safety Protections from Home**

### **Overview:**

We are living and working through an unprecedented global pandemic. While many are lucky enough to work from home during this time, there are millions of essential workers that risk their health each day to stock grocery stores, drive buses, work in warehouses that manage online orders and all of the workers involved in planting, growing, harvesting, transporting and cooking the food that sustains us all.

Many young workers are essential workers. This year for Safe Jobs 4 Youth Month (SJ4YM) we created 4 distance learning activities for young workers to learn more about their right to advocate for improved health and safety conditions at work. The first two activities focus on COVID-19 and the second two look at other kinds of workplace health and safety issues.

### **Activity 1: Know the Basics: Protecting Workers from COVID-19**

#### Instructions:

- A. Watch the LOHP Webinar: [Protecting Workers in the Service Industry During the Coronavirus Pandemic](#)
- B. Answer the following questions.
  1. In what ways can workers be exposed to Coronavirus?
  2. What must employers do to protect workers?
  3. What can workers do to reduce their risk?

4. What are the health effects of common disinfectants, what must employers do to protect workers from chemicals, and what can workers do to stay safe while cleaning?
5. Describe key rights that protect your health and safety at work, and steps you can take if your employer is not protecting you.

## Activity 2: COVID 19 Essential Employees Strike for Safer Working Conditions

### Instructions:

- A) Watch the [Good Morning America Report](#) about Instacart, Amazon and Whole Foods workers going on strike. And the [news clip about McDonald's workers going on strike](#).
- B) Review the vocabulary.
- C) Answer the questions below.
- D) If you know anyone who is an essential worker, interview them about what their working conditions are like and if they feel they are protected from COVID 19. If they do not feel protected, what actions could they take to advocate for better safety precautions at work?
- E) Watch video clips about what other essential workers (like healthcare workers or bus drivers) are doing to effectively change their working conditions.

Vocabulary: **Hazard Pay**- Hazard pay means additional pay for performing hazardous duties or work involving physical hardship. Work duties that causes extreme physical discomfort and distress and are not adequately alleviated by protective devices are deemed to impose a physical hardship. <https://www.dol.gov/general/topic/wages/hazardpay>

After watching the [Good Morning America](#) and [McDonald's](#) news clip, answer the following question.

1. Why are workers going on strike? What are their demands?
2. Are the striking workers and other service workers that are essential at higher risk for contracting COVID-19? If yes, explain why?
3. Why are workers demanding that sick leave be expanded beyond workers that have been diagnosed with COVID-19?

4. Are you or your friends or family members essential workers who are still working during COVID-19? If so, what precautions are being taken to keep employees safe at the workplace?
5. What steps can you or other essential workers take to stay healthy?

### Activity 3: Elena's Story

#### Instructions:

- A. Read Elena's Story
- B. List any laws that were broken in the story, use the "Are you a Working Teen Factsheet" as a reference for the laws that protect young workers like Elena.
- C. Read the questions in the table and add to the options Elena can take to address the laws that were broken assuming she wants to keep her job.
- D. Think about how Mr. Johnson might respond to the different approaches Elena might take. What would be the most effective way for Elena to approach Mr. Johnson based on how you think he would respond?
- E. Rewrite the skit with Elena taking the 3 steps you think would be most effective from the chart you filled out.

Who can Elena ask for help?	What resources does Elena have?	How can Elena approach Mr. Johnson?
At work:	The "Are You a Working Teen Fact Sheet"	Alone or with coworkers
At home:	Her work permit agreement	Suggesting alternative work that she is old enough and trained to perform.

## ELENA'S STORY HANDOUT

*Narrator: The scene is set in a sandwich shop. Elena is a 15-year-old high school student. Mr. Johnson is her supervisor, and Joe is one of her co-workers. It is Thursday evening.*

Mr. Johnson: Elena, Andre just called in sick so I need you to work extra hours. I'd like you to stay until 10 tonight.

Elena: But Mr. Johnson, I have a test tomorrow and I need to get home to study.

Mr. Johnson: I'm really sorry, but this is an emergency. If you want to work here you have to be willing to pitch in when we need you.

Elena: But I've never done Andre's job before.

Mr. Johnson: Here's what I want you to do. First, go behind the counter and take sandwich orders for a while. Ask Joe to show you how to use the meat slicer. Then, when it gets quiet, go mop the floor in the supply closet. Some of the cleaning supplies have spilled and it's a real mess.

*Narrator: Later, Elena gets the mop and goes to the supply closet.*

Elena: Hey, Joe! Do you know what this stuff spilled on the floor is?

Joe: No idea. Just be careful not to get it on your hands. You really should wear gloves if you can find any. Andre got a rash from that stuff last week.

### Activity 4: Teens Lead @ Work: Workplace Violence Video

#### Instructions:

- A. Watch [Teens Lead @ Work: Workplace Violence](#) Video
- B. Answer the questions below.
- C. Watch the video clip about Service Employees International Union United Service Workers West ["Ya Basta" Campaign](#) to end sexual harassment within the janitorial industry.
- D. Write a paragraph, poem or song about what they accomplished and the laws they helped get passed to end sexual harassment in their industry.

After watching ***Teens Lead @Work: Workplace Violence*** answer the following questions.

1. In the first scenario the boss took workplace bullying seriously and took steps to handle the situation. If the boss had not taken him seriously what could Thomas have done?

2. What would you do if a coworker was being harassed by a supervisor, colleague or customer?
3. How would your response change based on who the person doing the harassment might be?