In the US, the term “young workers” has recently expanded beyond teens <18 to include young adults ages 18-24. According to the CDC, nationwide, young workers have twice the rate of nonfatal work-related injury than workers ≥25; annually an estimated 795,000 young workers are treated in emergency departments for work-related injuries.

From 2005-2009, there were 53,891 nationwide hospitalizations for work-related injuries, of which 450,346 (49%) of work-related hospitalizations, followed by open wounds (12%); the leading external cause of injury was cuts/pierces. There was no difference in nature of injury among Hispanic compared to other groups in the ED and ED databases.

The leading nature of ED-treated work-related injury was open wounds (Figure 3), the leading external cause of injury was cuts/pierces. Fractures accounted for nearly half (49%) of work-related hospitalizations, followed by open wounds (12%); the leading external cause of injury was falls.

Since 1993, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health's Massage Therapy Licensing Board has required all massage therapists to complete 50 hours of hands-on training. A study of 300 massage therapists found that 90% had at least 10 years of experience in their field.

During March and April 2013, 20 interviews were conducted. (Figure 4)

We do have to do a lot of heavy things and stuff, but it’s fun. (18 year-old full-time worker)

A few participants had a genuine awareness for hazards on the job.

We have lots of safety talks about what to do in case of an emergency. (18 year-old full-time worker)

All but 1 participant received English language training; the preference was 75%.

Training received both reflected and differed from participant preferences in health and safety training. (Figure 6)

Almost all (98%) participants felt comfortable going to a supervisor with health and safety concerns.

The attitude towards staying safe was largely assessed as a worker responsibility (vs. employer).

A few participants believed that they learned from work-related incidents and could share what they learned.

Any danger [workers] put themselves in, it’s like them asking for it. You just have to find the safer way. (23-year-old equipment technician)

Most (19) participants believed they would feel comfortable going to a supervisor with a health and safety concern.

We have lots of safety talks about what to do in case of an emergency. (18 year-old full-time worker)

Not everyone is comfortable speaking up at work about health and safety concerns.

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