

Methodological techniques for the assessment  
of immigrant occupational health problems:  
Somerville, MA

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# Thank You!

- Ismael Vasquez, Franklin Dalembert, Heloisa Galvao, Monica Chinanelli, Julia Goldberg, Vera Belitsky, Anne Marie Desmarais, Kwabena Aboagye, Vithal Deshpande, Noreen Burke, Eduardo Siqueira, Lenore Azaroff, and Members of the Project's Advisory Committee and, the founder of the feast, the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health.

# Agenda

- The Setting: Somerville, MA
- The Partners: Community-based Organization, Health Care Provider, University
- The goal: Create and implement an annual on-going needs assessment that will characterize and track changes in the understanding of occupational risks among immigrant populations in Somerville.
- Methods: Both quantitative and qualitative are needed.

**University Partner:**

**Tufts University**

**Health Partner:**

**Cambridge Health Alliance**

**Community Partners:**

**Immigrant Health Services Providers  
Group**

**Community Action Agency of Somerville**

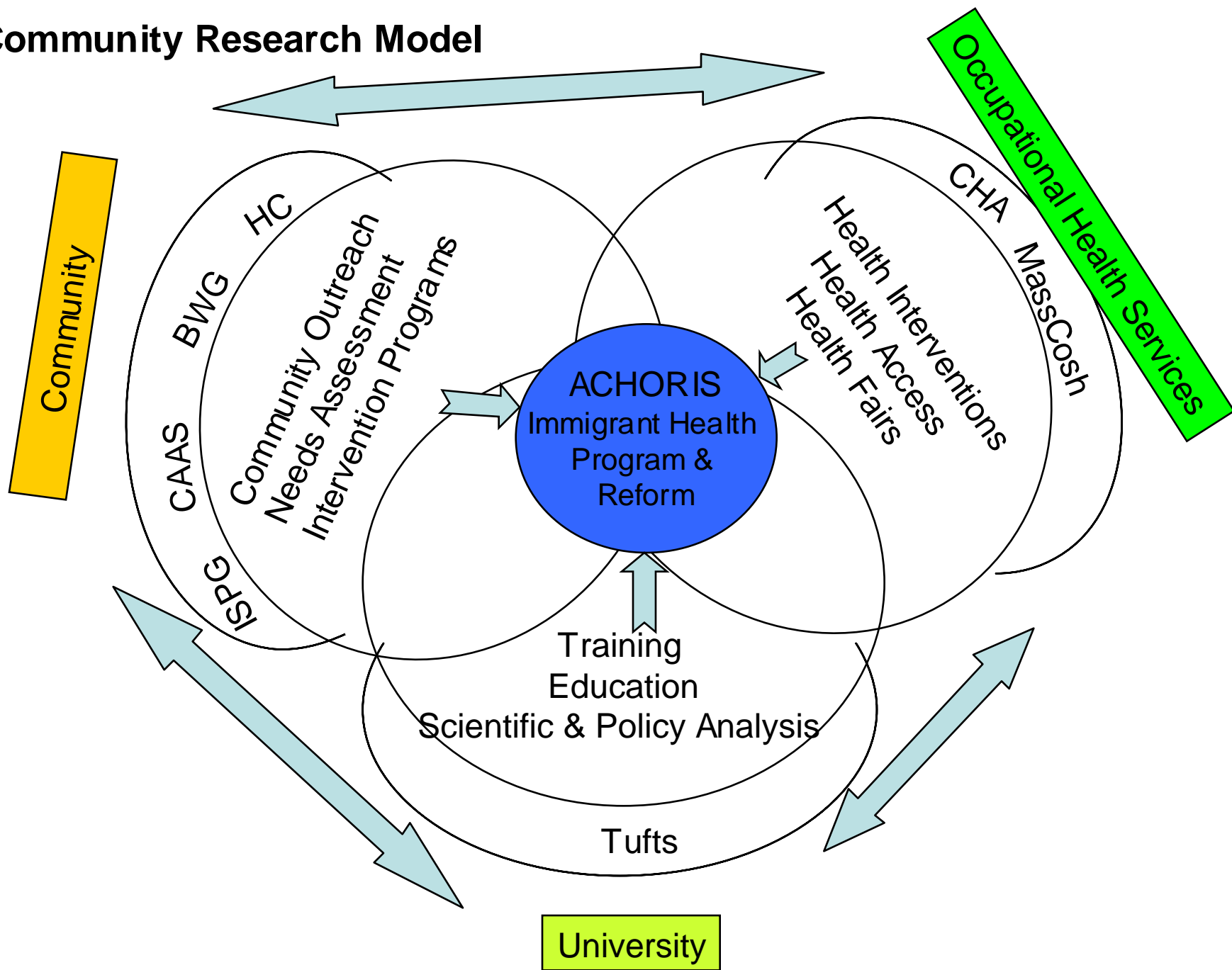
**Haitian Coalition**

**Brazilian Women's Group**

**Occupational Health Advisor:**

**Massachusetts Coalition for Occupational  
Safety and Health, MassCOSH**

# Community Research Model



## Tools for data gathering

Review of publicly available data

Surveys

Focus groups

Key informant interviews

In-depth Worker Interviews

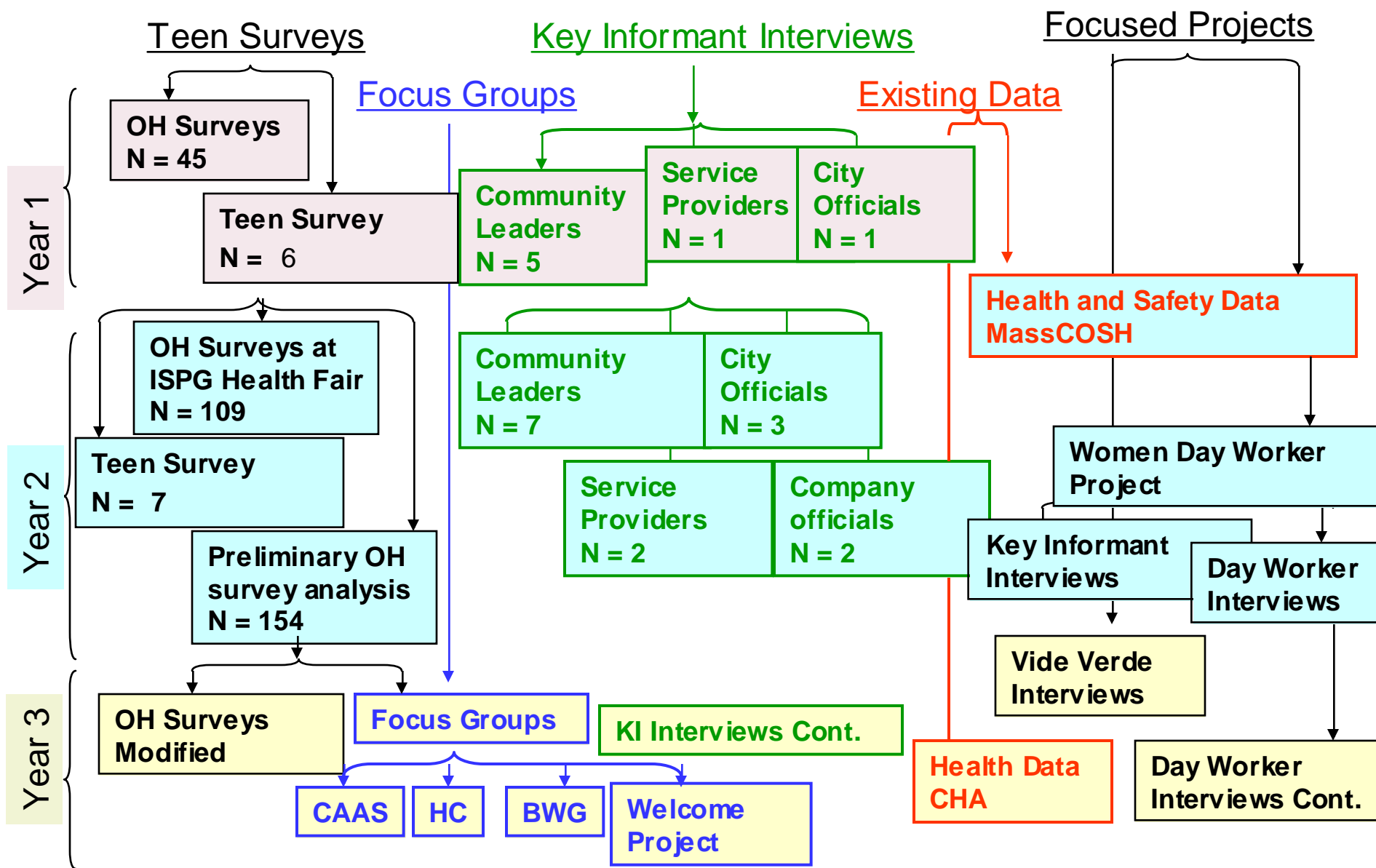
## Interventions

Vida Verde Women's Coop

Teen Education and Training Programs

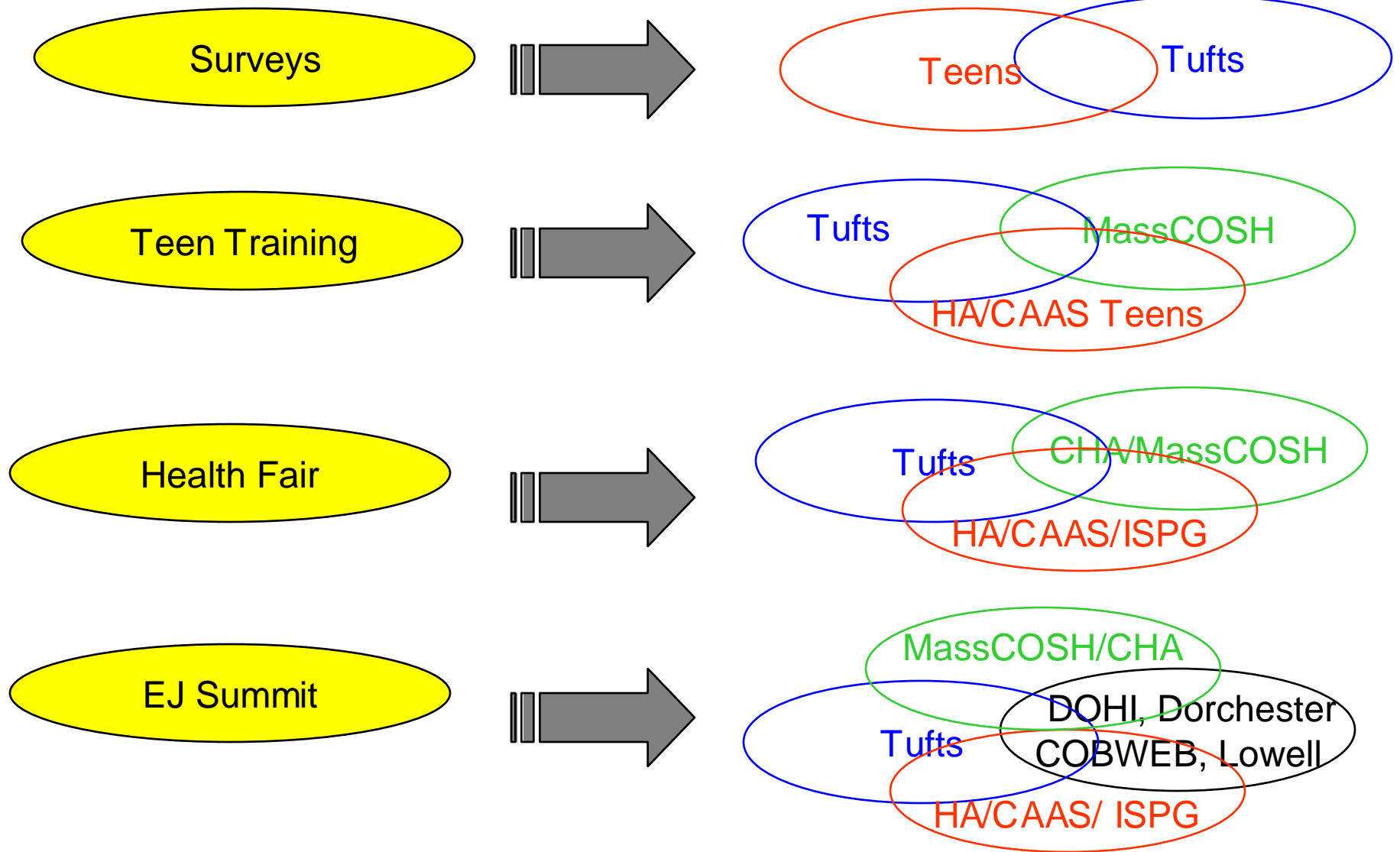
Occupational Health Workshops

## Needs Assessment and Data Gathering Methods



# Haitian Coalition & CAAS Teen Program

## Partnerships





## Somerville Immigrant Occupational Health & Safety Survey

These questions will help us better understand the safety and employment needs of our community members. You will not be asked to sign your name or identify yourself. You can stop the survey anytime you want.  
**Thank you for taking the time to answer these questions.**

### BACKGROUND

1. In what country were you born? *(write in)* \_\_\_\_\_
2. How long have you lived in the United States? *(check one)*:  
 Less than 1 year  1-3 years  4-6 years  7-9 years  10-12 years  13-15 years  More than 15 years
3. In what country or countries were your parents born? *(write in)*: \_\_\_\_\_
4. What language do you use at home most of the time? *(write in, one language only)*: \_\_\_\_\_
5. What other languages do you speak?:  
 Spanish  Portuguese  Haitian Creole  English  Other *(write in)*
6. Are you... *(check one)*  Male  Female
7. How old are you? *(check one)*  18-20  21-30  31-45  46-54  55-65  66-79  Over 79
8. In what city or town do you live now? *(write in)*: \_\_\_\_\_

### OCCUPATION:

9. Who do you work for? *(check one)*:  
 One Regular employer (boss)  Many different employers  Self employed  Currently unemployed
10. Do you work at one job or more than one job? *(check one)*:  One job  More than one
11. What kind of work do you do at your primary job? (examples: teacher, janitor, manual labor: packaging, painter, cleaner etc) *(write in)* \_\_\_\_\_
12. If you work more than one job, what other kind of work do you do? *(write in)*: \_\_\_\_\_
13. Did you receive any type of training for your job or jobs? *(check one)*:  Yes  No
14. If you have a profession that you cannot currently practice, what is it?: \_\_\_\_\_

### HEALTH AND SAFETY

15. Did you receive job training that was specifically about health and safety? *(check one)*:  Yes  No
16. A hazard is anything that can harm you, injure you or affect your health. Are there hazards in the work you do?  
 Yes *(write in type of hazard, use back of sheet if necessary)*: \_\_\_\_\_  No  Don't Know
17. Are you covered by any form of health insurance or health plan? Plan name: \_\_\_\_\_  No  Don't know
18. Do you know your rights under Massachusetts Workers' Compensation laws? *(check one)*:  Yes  No
19. Have you ever been injured at work?  Yes, once  Yes, more than once  No *(if no, end interview now, otherwise)*
20. Was the most recent injury officially reported? *(check one)*:  Yes  No
21. For the most recent injury, did you receive treatment?  Yes  No
22. For the most recent injury where do you go for treatment? *be specific, if possible*: \_\_\_\_\_
23. If yes, how did you pay for treatment?  Workman's Compensation  Self  Employer

**Somerville Immigrant Occupational Health & Safety Survey**

24. Do you have any health problems that you think are work related? Yes  No

If yes, please describe:

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25. Do you have a doctor? Yes  No

If no, why not?

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**26. If we held a free worker's health clinic what health conditions would you like help with?**

	Very Interested	Interested	Not Interested
Preventing and treating lower back pain or strain	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Preventing and treating shoulder, elbow, wrist pain or strain	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Preventing and treating knee, foot, ankle pain or strain	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Preventing chemical exposures	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Preventing and treating lead paint exposure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nutrition and weight control	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Blood pressure check	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Blood sugar check	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Workshop on workers compensation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Workshop on health access and free health care	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**In which country were you born?**

	Country	N	%
North America	USA	26	16.88
	Puerto Rico	1	0.65
	Mexico	1	0.65
		<b>28</b>	<b>18.18</b>
Caribbean	Haiti	35	<b>22.73</b>
Central America	Belize	1	0.65
	Guatemala	1	0.65
	El Salvador	20	12.99
		<b>22</b>	<b>14.29</b>
South America	Brazil	59	38.31
	Colombia	1	0.65
	Peru	1	0.65
		<b>61</b>	<b>39.61</b>
Europe	Portugal	1	<b>0.65</b>
Asia	China	2	1.30
	Korea	1	0.65
	Nepal	2	1.30
	Taiwan	1	0.65
		<b>6</b>	<b>3.90</b>
Africa	Egypt	1	<b>0.65</b>
	Total	154	100.00



# Occupational Health Training



# Health Fair





500

In response to three worker deaths in this industry, DOH (Department of Health) initiated, investigated the problem, wrote a report, and formed a task force which has developed legislation, developed educational materials and provided training on safety in which industry?  
**Floor finishing**

Buffing machines are hard on the back for these workers, according to DOH?  
**Janitors**

True or false: According to DOH, getting workers to talk about worker health and safety at their workplace is the best place for them to talk.  
**False**

DOH learned that: Pregnancy often encourages workers in this industry to start questioning the health effects of their work.

In which cities/towns do Brazilians live in Massachusetts, according to COBWEB research?  
**All of them!**

Which government agency did the Brazilian Immigrant Center form an alliance with, during the COBWEB project?  
**OSHA – the federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration**

How many surveys did the Somerville teen educators conduct with immigrant workers?  
**150**

According to the Somerville project, a good place to do outreach to day laborers for events that offer benefits such as health living, vaccinations, and app, to obtain low-cost food is:  
**The places where they congregate to find jobs.**

True or False: A field trip visit to a local manufacturer by the Somerville Teen Educators resulted in the identification (and immediate remediation) of two minor workplace hazards.  
**True**

The Somerville project discovered this common university-comm. challenge regarding data collection, analysis and dissemination:  
**The community wants it fast, for immediate action; universities often require time for a rigorous analysis.**

How much information about work-related injuries in Somerville is available?  
**Almost none.**



Our goal is to provide a **professional and safe cleaning**

We participate in **training** where we become informed about cleaning alternatives that do not harm the environment or our health.

We **make cleaning products** with natural ingredients using as base: water, vinegar, vegetable soap, borax and essential oils. All products have labels listing the ingredients and providing instructions for use.

We participate in **workshops, ESL and Computer classes** to improves our skills





## Training & Workshops

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Conceição Cardoso, from the state of Mato Grosso: “It is important that we learn how to use the cleaning products. This will change the environment and ourselves.”

Selcino Oliveira, from the state of Minas Gerais: “The training session gave me a jump to start and learn the most important things. I did not know what product to use, what natural product was good.”





# Next Steps

- Administer surveys in under represented populations such as Asian/middle eastern communities
- Conduct focus groups on specific occupational hazards and as a scoping mechanism for an upcoming Worker Health Fair to be sponsored by the Cambridge Health Alliance in Winter 2008.
- Identify community intervention needs from surveys and focus groups.
- Complete women Day Worker interviews.



Support the Fight for Immigrant Workers' Rights  
No to HR4437  
No Border Fences and Racism  
Immediate Amnesty  
Full Legalization - Stop Deportations  
Defend the Rights of all Workers  
Justice for Hurricane Katrina/Rita Survivors  
Jobs For All - Not War



**Full Rights for all Immigrants  
May 1 & May 17th**





# Thank You