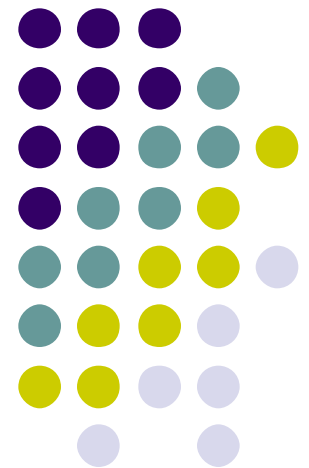


# Workplace Health & Safety Training for Workers with Developmental Disabilities

## A Collaboration Between:

Labor Occupational Health Program (LOHP), UC Berkeley,  
National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health,  
and Walgreens Company

Robin Dewey, MPH, LOHP, UC Berkeley



# What are Developmental Disabilities?



Severe, life-long disabilities attributable to mental and/or physical impairments resulting in substantial limitations in three or more areas of major life activities such as self care, language, learning, mobility, self direction, economic self-sufficiency, and capacity for independent living.

Examples: mental retardation, autism, Down syndrome, cerebral palsy, traumatic brain injury, and epilepsy.

There are 4.5 million individuals with DD in the U.S.



# Employment Patterns

- An estimated 30% of working age adults with DD are employed.
- Of those receiving support from state DD agencies:
  - 56.5% in facility-based settings
  - 22% in integrated employment
- **Common occupations:** janitorial/custodial, stocking, assembly and recycling work
- **Common industries:** warehouses, recycling centers, janitorial and building services, grocery stores, food service, and mail rooms.



# Needs Assessment Project

- Funded by NIOSH.
- No database documenting work-related injuries and illnesses among workers with disabilities.
- Researchers report these workers are at increased risk of injury, partly because of the work they are doing but also because of individual characteristics.
- Several researchers call for increased attention to health and safety issues for workers with DD and to training for this population.
- Almost no one at the national level is addressing this issue.
- Almost no health and safety training being provided.

# What are the occupational safety and health issues?



- Work in hazardous settings
- May bring special risk factors which may affect their health and safety:
  - Distractibility, inattention, impulsivity
  - Poor problem-solving skills
  - Poor communication skills
  - Difficulty reading or learning new things
  - Poor language processing skills
  - Difficulty generalizing to new situations

# Health & Safety Training Project



- Develop a safety training program for Walgreens' workers with DD.
- Conduct a pilot training and TOT for job coaches.
- Develop a generic safety training program for supported employment agencies, school transition programs and other employers.
- Work with 1-2 states and one new employer to integrate the generic training.

# What is the Walgreens' Model?



- 1/3 of employees in Anderson SC distribution center have disabilities, including managers.
- Employees work in a fully-integrated team – same pay, benefits, and expectations.
- Local supported employment agencies establish and operate training center.
- Training for all in disability awareness.
- New DCs are highly automated and use visual prompts.



*Walgreens*  
As far as you want to go.™

# Jobs at Walgreens DC



Case Check-in



# Jobs at Walgreens DC



**Detrashing**

# Jobs at Walgreens DC



Picking

# Walgreens' Current Health & Safety Training Program



Training on the following topics using videos, PowerPoint slides and quizzes:

- **Emergency evacuation**
- **Hazard communication**
- **Hazardous materials**
- **PPE**
- **Blood borne pathogens**
- **Powered industrial trucks and forklifts**
- **Lock-out/tag-out**
- **Hearing conservation**

# New *Safe at Work* Curriculum includes:



## Learning topics, modeled on *Y@W: Talking Safety*:

- Understanding job hazards (including ergonomics and chemicals)
- Ways to make the job safer
- What to do in an emergency at work
- Speaking up when there is a problem

Participatory learning activities include visual aids, demonstration, games, and role plays.

# Understanding Job Hazards



# Understanding Job Hazards



# Understanding Job Hazards



# Understanding Job Hazards -- Walgreens





# Chemical Hazards and How to Find Out About Them



Training and ask your manager



**POISON**



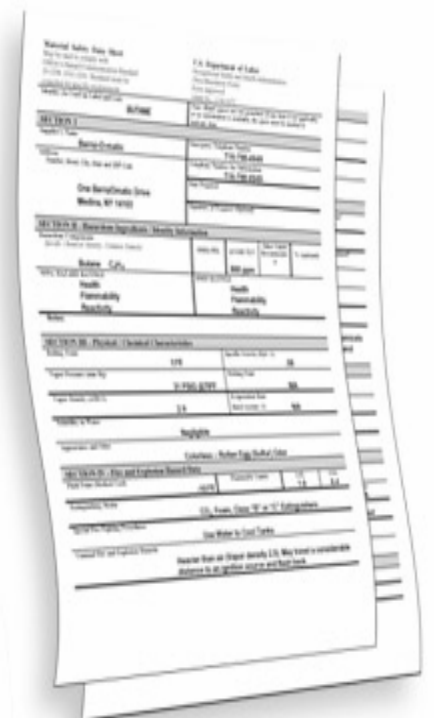
**CORROSIVE**



**EXPLOSIVE**



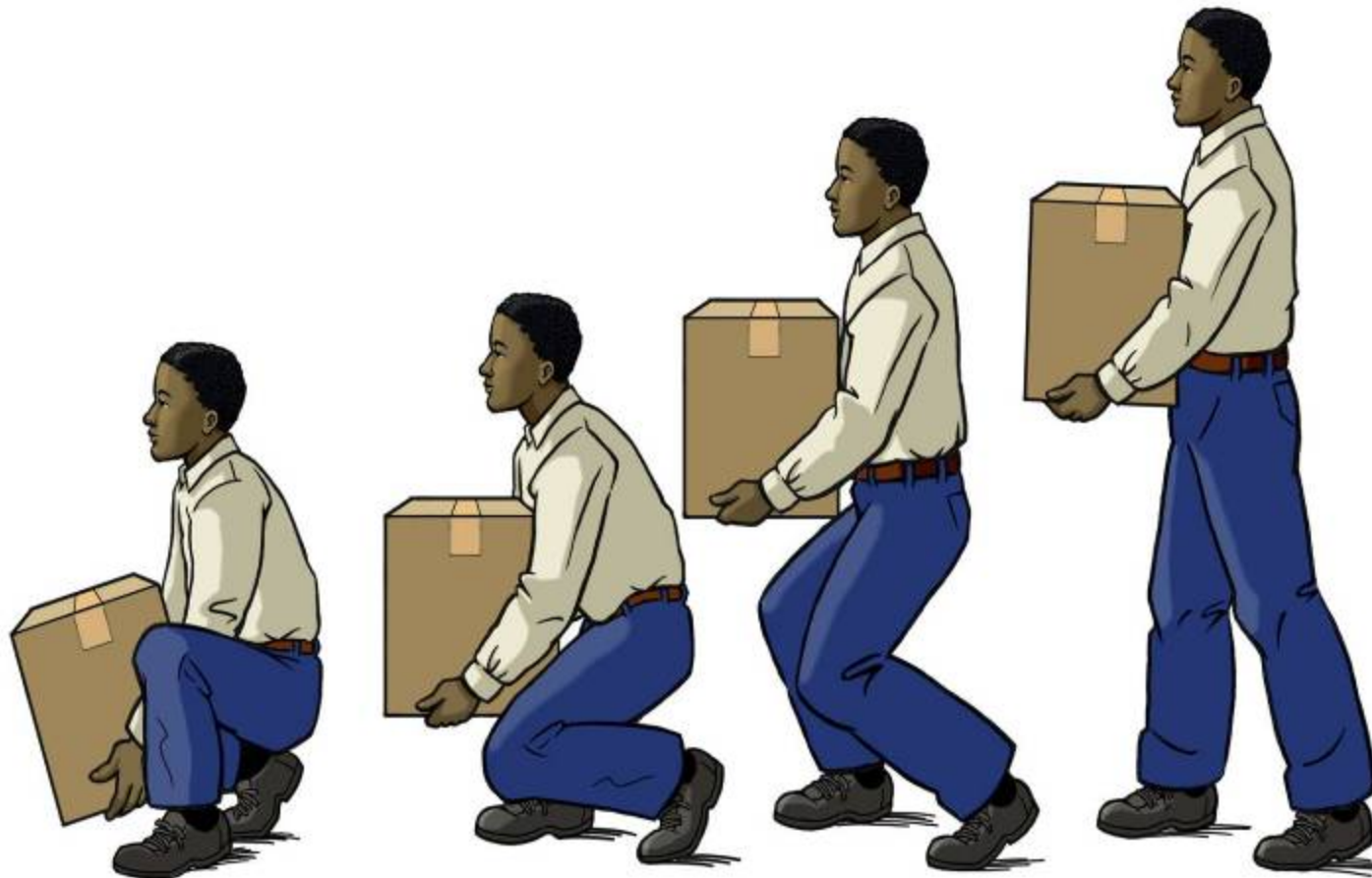
**Flammable**



# Ergonomic Hazards



# Safe Lifting



# Ways to Make the Job Safer

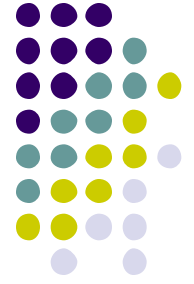


# Ways to Make the Job Safer



# Ways to Make the Job Safer





# Ways to Make the Job Safer

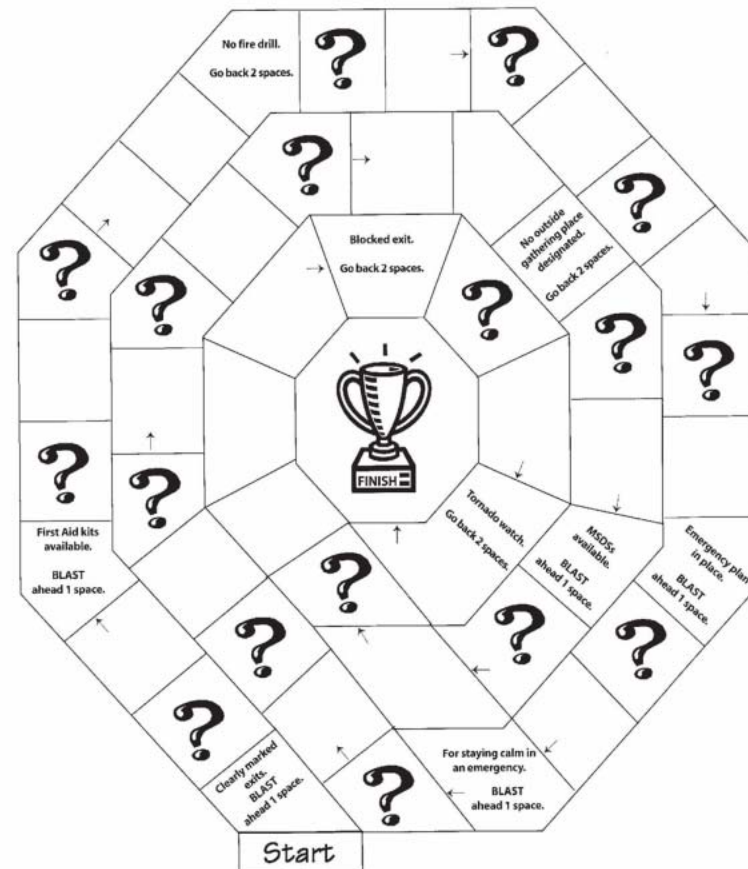


# What to do in an Emergency



Student Handout #B

## Disaster Blaster





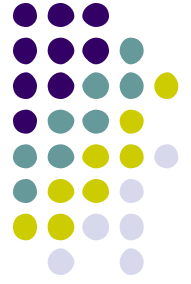
# Speaking Up When There is a Problem at Work



# Results from Pilot-tests



- Visual aids work!
- Job coaches report incorporating training into their “soft skills” classes for all their clients.
- Trainees and job coaches have continued to discuss health and safety.



## Next Steps

- Institutionalize program at Walgreens.
- Adapt curriculum for generic audience.
- Work with one-two states to conduct TOTs for their supported employment agencies, and school-based programs using the generic curriculum.
- Promote generic curriculum broadly.