



# **U.S. Department of Labor's Empowering Teens in Their Workplaces National Online Dialogue**

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**April 19 – May 25, 2021  
Summary Report**



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## **Introduction**

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### **Background**

From April 20 to May 25, 2021, the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) hosted the *USDOL's Empowering Teens in Their Workplaces National Online Dialogue* to gather ideas about how the department can better reach teens with important information about their rights and workplace protections. The dialogue was an outgrowth of a social media campaign developed in 2018 by USDOL's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) in partnership with the Wage and Hour Division (WHD) and several other organizations, to engage teen workers and inform influential adults (i.e., teachers, social services, parents, employers) about the types of work prohibited under federal law for teen workers, the time of day and number of hours they are permitted to work, workplace hazards and exposure controls, and related concerns for teen workers. The goal of that social media campaign was to provide awareness of and information about worker rights and workplace safety and health to employers of teens and teen workers employed over the summer and winter breaks. The campaign did not, however, have the desired reach. There were also gaps in the tools and resources used in the campaign that were engaging for teens.

The *USDOL's Empowering Teens in Their Workplaces National Online Dialogue* was developed to augment the outcomes of the social media effort. It utilized ePolicyWorks' crowdsourcing technology to gather input and ideas from the public—including teens, parents, other stakeholders and subject matter experts—about how the department can best inform teen workers of their rights and protections in the workplace. Among the topics explored were ways the department can better educate and provide resources about teen worker rights and how to ensure workplaces are fair and safe for teen workers.

Four agencies within USDOL collaborated to develop and support this important national discussion around teen workers. These included the Employment and Training Administration (ETA), OSHA, the Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) and WHD. Representatives from each agency promoted the dialogue to their constituents and served as moderators by reviewing and responding to participant ideas and comments.

The national online dialogue provided an innovative opportunity for teen workers and their families, educators and mentors, advocacy groups, researchers, employers and business organizations, state and local government officials, and other stakeholders and subject matter experts to play a key role in informing USDOL's efforts to best inform teen workers of their rights and protections in the workplace.

During the national online dialogue, 207 stakeholders shared ideas based on their stakeholder group: (1) Teens and Teen Workers; (2) Parents and Educators of Teens and Teen Workers; and (3) Employers of Teen Workers.

In conjunction with the dialogue, the four USDOL agencies hosted the *USDOL's Empowering Teens in Their Workplaces* @ePolicyWorks Twitter Chat. The @ePolicyWorks Twitter Chat focused on the best practices and efforts of governmental and non-governmental organizations to reach and support teens and teen workers. The chat featured guests from the National Safety Council, YouthBuild USA, Best Buddies and SADD Nation. In addition, USDOL contributed resources that were shared via @ePolicyWorks during the chat.

### **Online Dialogue Topics**

The *USDOL's Empowering Teens in Their Workplaces National Online Dialogue* contained three different campaigns. Each was associated with one of the targeted stakeholder groups—teens, parents and educators, and employers. The agencies hosting the dialogue were responsible for providing the content for the three campaigns and moderating the activity in each campaign throughout the dialogue.

#### **1. Teens and Teen Workers**

Under this campaign, teens and teen workers were asked to share their ideas on the best ways to reach them with important information they need to know about their rights, what jobs they can and cannot do, the hours they may work, pay requirements, workplace hazards they may encounter, and other work-related concerns they may have. They were specially asked to share how they would like to receive information (e.g., short video, audio/podcast) and whom they trusted as a source. Finally, in this campaign they were encouraged to visit [www.osha.gov/youngworkers/](http://www.osha.gov/youngworkers/) and [www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/youthrules](http://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/youthrules) and share their feedback on the two websites, including any ideas they had for making the resources on them more teen-friendly.

#### **2. Parents and Educators of Teens and Teen Workers**

Under this campaign, parents and educators of teens and teen workers were asked to share their ideas on the information, tools and resources that would help them convey important work-related information to their teen children and students. Specifically, parents and educators were asked to submit their suggestions on ways to create more engaging tools and resources, and to share any best practices that they have used to help protect the teens. Like the teens and teen workers, they were encouraged to visit [www.osha.gov/youngworkers/](http://www.osha.gov/youngworkers/) and [www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/youthrules](http://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/youthrules) and share their feedback on the websites, along with any suggestions on how to make the resources on the sites more teen-friendly.

#### **3. Employers of Teen Workers**

Under this campaign, employers of teen workers were asked to contribute their ideas about the types of information, tools and resources that would help employers convey important workplace rules and safety procedures to teens that may be new to the workplace.

Specifically, they were asked to share thoughts about how to create more engaging tools and resources, as well as best practices that they have used to help protect the teens in their workplace. Finally, they, too, were asked to provide feedback on [www.osha.gov/youngworkers/](http://www.osha.gov/youngworkers/) and [www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/youthrules](http://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/youthrules) including what they liked on the websites, as well as ideas for making the resources on them more teen-friendly.

## **Outreach Efforts**

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To ensure a wide range of participants in the online dialogue, the U.S. Department of Labor, along with the host agencies, conducted numerous strategic outreach efforts, including distributing targeted eblasts, posting on social media and hosting a Twitter Chat. In addition, ePolicyWorks conducted its own outreach via the @ePolicyWorks Twitter account and through emails to targeted groups including the registrants of previous youth-focused ePolicyWorks online dialogues, advocacy organizations, faith-based organizations, organizations that represent employers and workers, state and local government officials, and other key stakeholders, including members of the disability community.

### **ePolicyWorks Email and Social Media Outreach**

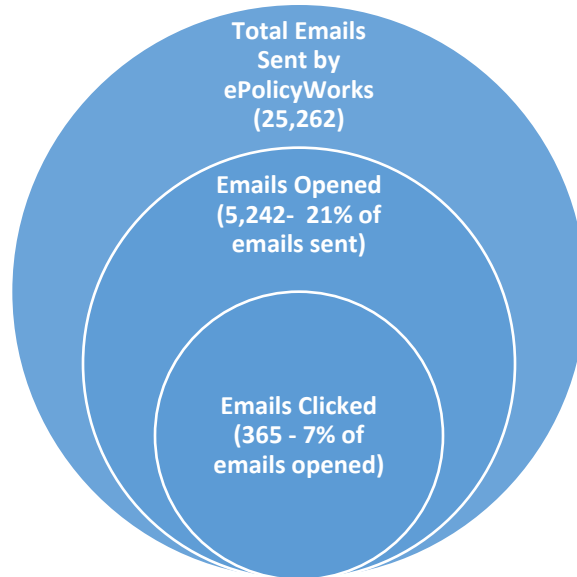
ePolicyWorks conducted eight distinct email campaigns over the course of the dialogue. The emails included the following:

1. Dialogue launch announcement emails
2. "Help us spread the word" dialogue emails
3. Dialogue extension email
4. Twitter Chat announcement email
5. Twitter Chat "mark your calendar" reminder email
6. Twitter Chat "day of" reminder emails
7. Targeted "last chance" email (to dialogue registrants)
8. Dialogue "last day" email

In total, more than 25,000 emails were delivered to stakeholders with an open rate of 21 percent.

- Total Emails Delivered: 25,262
- Total Emails Opened: 5,242

- Total number of clicks on links in emails (excluding multiple clicks of the same link): 365



In addition to the email campaigns, ePolicyWorks posted tweets on @ePolicyWorks throughout the dialogue, including before and after the May 18, 2021, #EPWChat Twitter Chat.

- Number of @ePolicyWorks impressions from online dialogue promotions: (from online dialogue promotion tweets including those that took place during the Twitter Chat): **94,403**

**Independent Online Dialogue and Twitter Chat Promotion**

Over the course of the online dialogue, in addition to USDOL and the host agencies, many other public and private organizations promoted the online dialogue and Twitter Chat through Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, emails, blogs, newsletters and action alerts. Below is a sampling of the organizations and publications that disseminated details regarding the online dialogue and Twitter Chat:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| • Access Compliance                        | • Kentucky OSHA Journal                                  |
| • AskEarn                                  | • MassHire (Mass.gov)                                    |
| • Council Bluffs Chamber of Commerce       | • Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Administration |
| • Council of State Governments             | • National ASPE  |
| • Campaign for Disability Employment (CDE) | • National Farm Medicine Center                          |
| • Direct Employers                         | • National Safety Council                                |
| • Disability Mentors                       | • North State Jobs                                       |
| • Greater Austin Asian Chamber of Commerce | • Oklahoma Department of Labor                           |

- Pahrump Valley Times
- Vocational Rehabilitation Nevada
- University of California San Diego OSHA Training Institute Education Center
- Workforce GPS
- Workforce Solutions Rural Capital
- The WorkPlace Connecticut
- YouthBuild USA

## **Twitter Chat on USDOL’s Empowering Teens in Their Workplaces National Online Dialogue**

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### **Twitter Chat Overview**

In conjunction with the dialogue, the event’s host agencies hosted an @ePolicyWorks Twitter Chat on May 18, 2021, exploring ways the agencies can better reach teens with important information about their rights and workplace protections. Featured guests on the chat included the National Safety Council, YouthBuild USA, SADD and Best Buddies.

The real-time, interactive Twitter discussion helped inform USDOL about the best ways to connect with teens and reach teens about their workplace rights and protections; successful engagements that have been used by innovative organizations in this area; helpful resources and online information that can better support teens in the workplace; specific tools and strategies that effectively speak to teens; effective communication channels and tactics to reach teens with workplace information; different ideas that USDOL should consider when speaking to teens about their workplace rights; and other work-related information that teens find most pressing.

The chat greatly enhanced the conversation occurring in the *USDOL’s Empowering Teens in Their Workplaces National Online Dialogue*.

Please find a compilation of all tweets from the Twitter Chat at <https://wakelet.com/wake/J3EPe4PjclLMvul41mGxC> (open in Chrome).

Appendix A of this document includes the list of resources shared during the chat.

### **Twitter Chat Metrics**

The following metrics reflect engagement and activity in the Twitter Chat:

- Total promotional tweets prior to the chat from ePolicyWorks: 6
- Total impressions on promotional tweets prior to the chat: 12,499
- Total promotional tweets prior to the chat from other agencies and organizations: 10

- Number of tweets posted with the #EPWChat during chat: (including tweets from ePolicyWorks): 173 (plus an additional 18 posts before the chat began and 24 posts after the chat was concluded)
- Number of impressions received on tweets sent by ePolicyWorks during the chat (total number of views): 47,173
- Number of engagements received on tweets sent by ePolicyWorks during the chat (i.e., clicks anywhere on the tweet, including retweets, replies, follows, likes, links, hashtags, embedded media, username, profile photo or tweet expansion): 746
- Number of active tweeters (i.e., those who posted at least once, including hosts) during chat: 12
- Number of resources shared during the chat: 26 (see Appendix A)

### **Hashtags Used During the Twitter Chat**

In addition to #EPWChat, participants used other hashtags relevant to the discussion about reaching working teens and related topics. This helped widen the online audience and encourage participation with additional stakeholders. Hashtags used included the following:

- #Career
- #Crowdsourcing
- #Disabilities
- #EmployeeSafety
- #InclusionMatters
- #KeepTeenWorkersSafe
- #MentalHealthAwarenessMonth
- #OpportunityYouth
- #Parents
- #SocialMedia
- #Teachers
- #TeenWorkers
- #WorkingTeens

### **Key Stakeholder Groups**

Key stakeholder groups participated in the chat, sharing ideas, resources and links. These stakeholders can be targeted for future teen worker campaigns and events. The stakeholder groups:

- @BestBuddies
- @CDETTweets
- @CSG\_CAPEYouth
- @FarmMedicine
- @NSCsafety
- @NCCRAHS
- @RACContractors
- @SADDNation
- @YouthBuildUSA



## **Twitter Chat Key Themes and Takeaways**

Based on a preliminary analysis of the tweets posted during the Twitter Chat, the following key themes and takeaways emerged:

**Reach teens at school, through each other and through mentorships.** Create programs for working teens at schools. Peer-to-peer voices are important. Parents and supervisors, social media and leadership groups can also reach teens with important employment information.,

**Utilize social media to reach and connect with teens.** Facebook, TikTok, Snapchat and Youtube are all effective ways to reach teens.

**Be present at career days.** Share employment information during job searching opportunities and other career-focused presentations.

**Support peer-to-peer communication.** Raise awareness about employment rights and safety measures by leveraging teen-to-teen communication. Never assume that teens know certain things.

**Never leave out mental health conversations.** Discussion about stressors, mental health and work life balance are vital in any communication for working teens.

**Incorporate messages into existing communications.** Don't create new channels to reach teens; use existing social media and other channels used by USDOL to reach parents, employers and educators. Work with them and provide them with resources to spread the word.

**Cross-promote across agencies.** Include federal agencies that work with schools and transportation providers. Utilize those networks and intertwine messaging.

**Approach employers and workers.** Give both of them checklists and toolkits to utilize in the job.

**Incorporate teens in all aspects of communication.** Have them share their stories by using their voice, quotes and video soundbites and invite them to serve on panels. In addition, include youth input when building websites, online resources and toolkits. Collaborate with teen organizations and teen jobs/sectors.

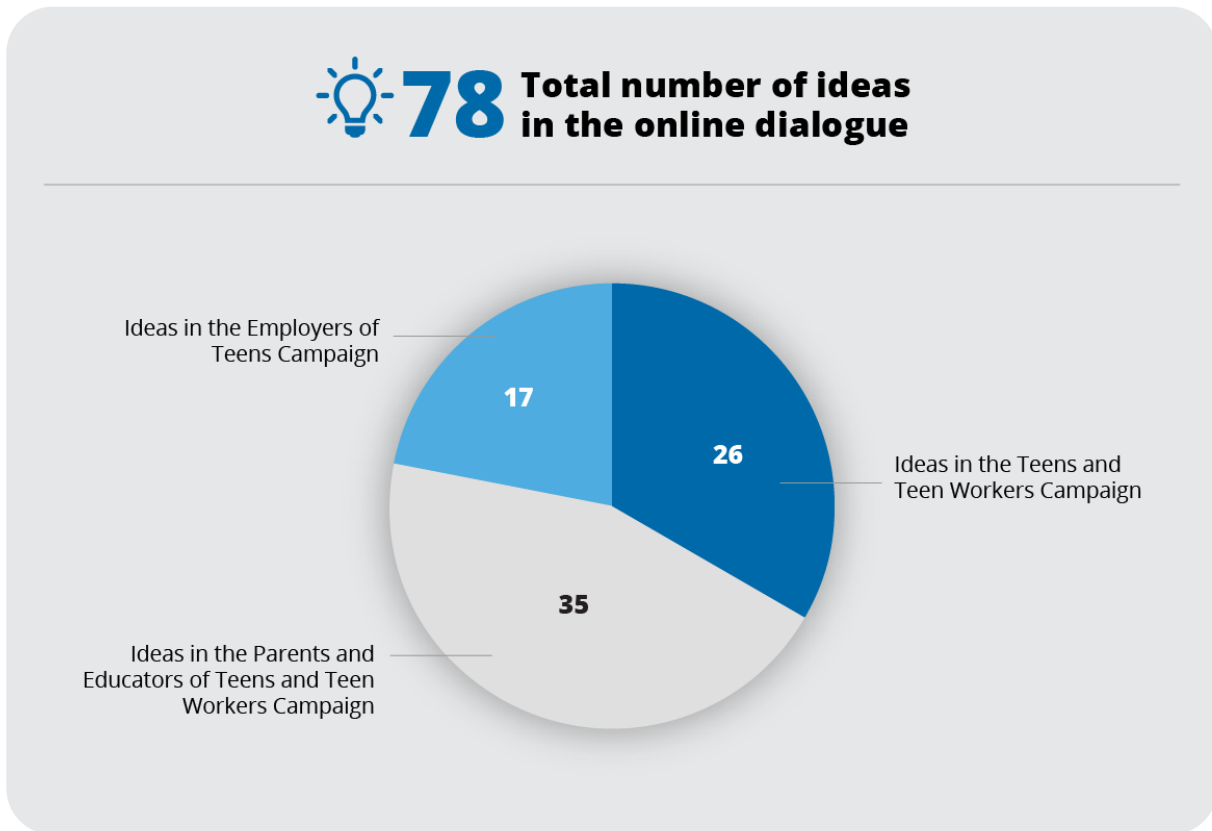
## **Twitter Chat Results**

The multitude of ideas gathered from both the online dialogue and Twitter Chat illustrate that collaboration and crowdsourcing are useful as part of the discussion around how USDOL can best support teen workers including those with disabilities, their employers, their families and educators. USDOL will use the ideas and comments gathered from these two online events to guide both outreach activities and the development of important resources.

## Online Dialogue Participant Summary

The *USDOL's Empowering Teens in Their Workplaces National Online Dialogue* opened on April 19, 2021, and closed at the end-of-day on May 25, 2021. Detailed below is the information on the contributions to the dialogue—ideas, comments and votes, along with the number of online dialogue views, registrants, participation rates, location of registrants and profile information provided by registrants during the registration process.

### Contributions to the Online Dialogue

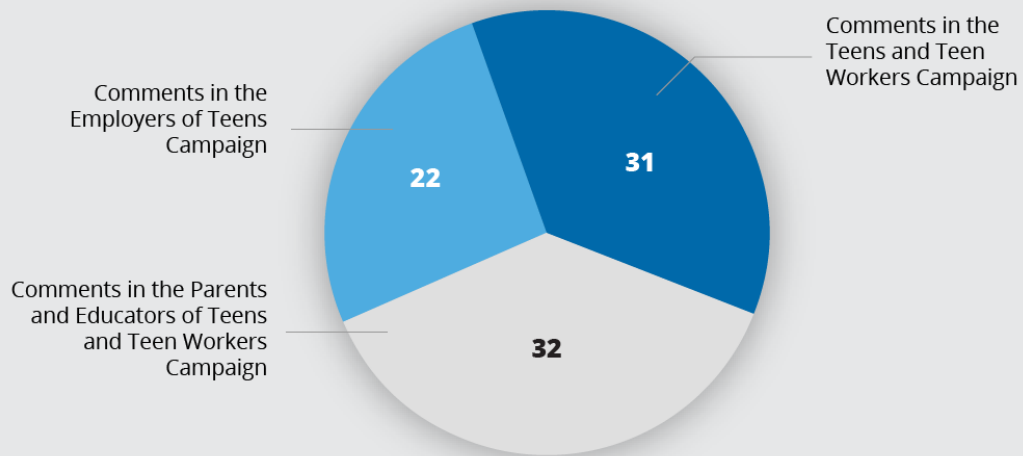


#### Total number of ideas in the online dialogue\*: 78

- Ideas in the Teens and Teen Workers Campaign: 26
- Ideas in the Parents and Educators of Teens and Teen Workers Campaign: 35
- Ideas in the Employers of Teens Campaign: 17

*\* Since any registrant was able to contribute to any of the three campaigns, the numbers provided per campaign may not be indicative of the age group of the participant.*

 **85** Total number of comments in the online dialogue

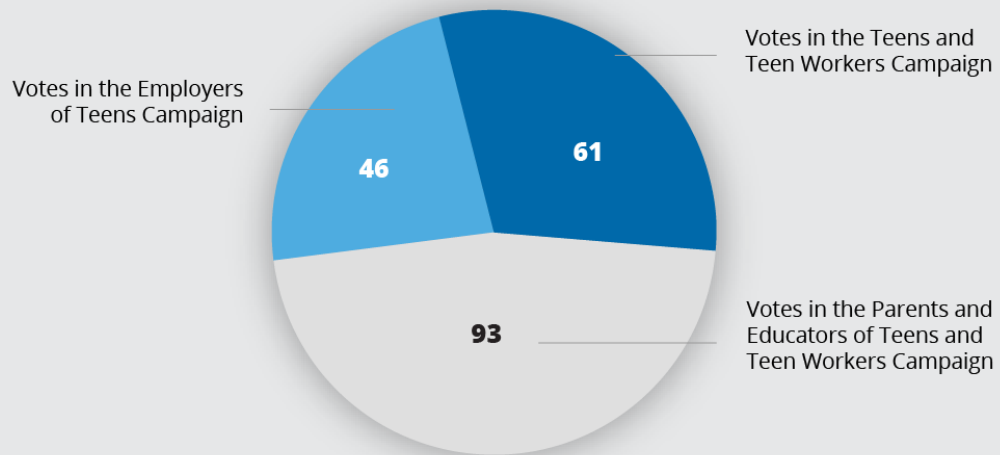


**Total number of comments in the online dialogue: 85**

- Comments in the Teens and Teen Workers Campaign: 31
- Comments in the Parents and Educators of Teens and Teen Workers Campaign: 32
- Comments in the Employers of Teens Campaign: 22

 **200** Total number of votes  
in the online dialogue

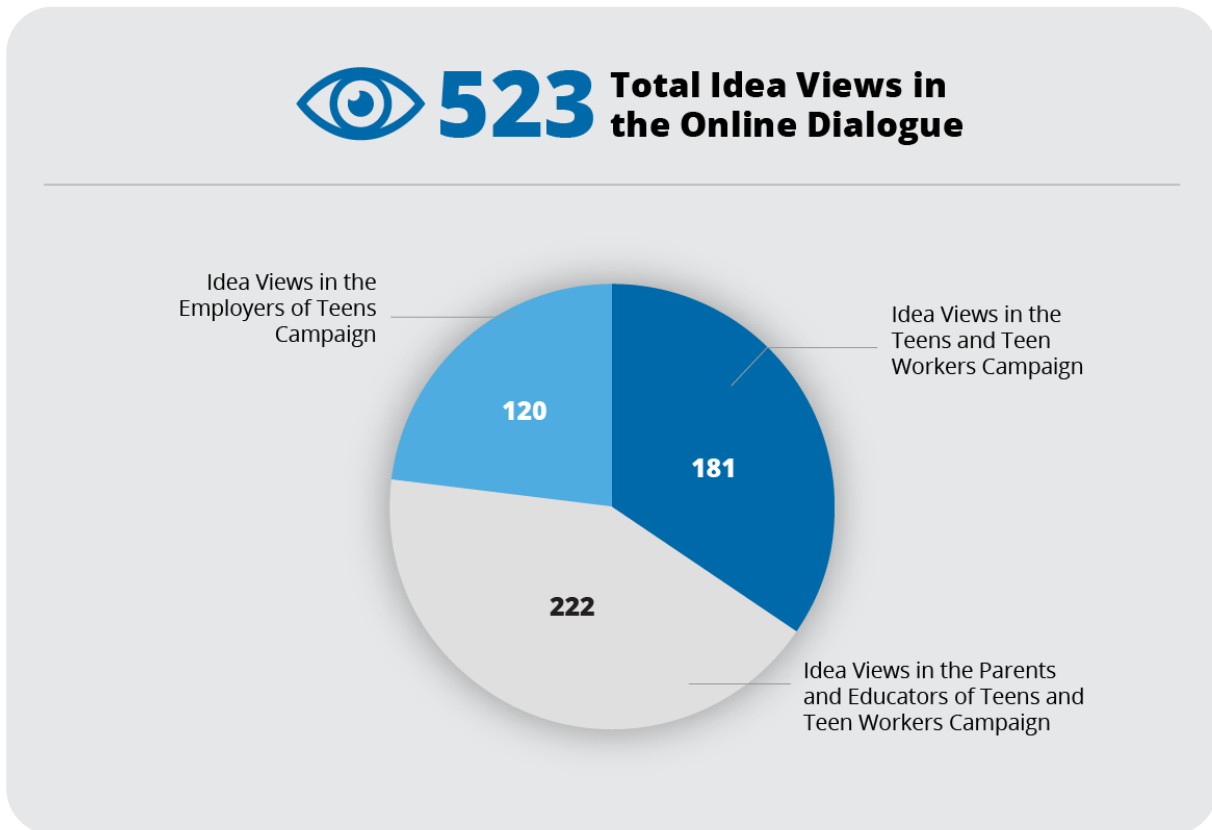
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**Total number of votes in the online dialogue: 200**

- Votes in the Teens and Teen Workers Campaign: 61
- Votes in the Parents and Educators of Teens and Teen Workers Campaign: 93
- Votes in the Employers of Teens Campaign: 46

## Idea Views in the Online Dialogue



### **Total number of idea views in the online dialogue\*\*: 523**

- Idea Views in the Teens and Teen Workers Campaign: 181
- Idea Views in the Parents and Educators of Teens and Teen Workers Campaign: 222
- Idea Views in the Employers of Teens Campaign: 120

*\*\*Idea Views include the number of times a verified registered member of the dialogue, including moderators, opened the idea detail page to view the full description of an idea.*

## **Visitors, Registrants and Participants in the Online Dialogue**

From April 19 to May 25, 2021, the *USDOL's Empowering Teens in Their Workplaces National Online Dialogue* could be viewed by any individual with the URL [TeenWorkers.IdeaScale.com](http://TeenWorkers.IdeaScale.com). Visitors to the URL could access all the links and ideas, comments and votes in the online dialogue.

In order to participate in the dialogue—i.e., add an idea, comment or vote—individuals must have completed the registration process. The registration process entails completing an online form that asked age range, work experience and stakeholder type, and verifying their email address. Once an individual is verified, they can create a password, log in and add ideas, as well as comment and vote on ideas submitted by others.

For the following metrics, “visitors” are defined as all individuals who visited the URL of the dialogue, whether or not they choose to register. “Registrants” are those who successfully verified their email and created a password. “Participants” include anyone who submitted an idea or commented or voted on an idea submitted by another. The breakdown of visitors by location and of registrants by age, employment description and stakeholder type are presented in the next section of this report.

- Total number of visitors to the online dialogue: 783 individuals
- Total number of visits to the online dialogue: 1,630
- Total number of page views: 5,092 pages
- Average number of times visitors came to the online dialogue: 2.08
- Average length of time they spent visiting the online dialogue: 4.31 minutes
- Average pages they viewed during a visit to the online dialogue: 3.12 pages
- Total number of registrants in the dialogue: 207 individuals
- Total number of registrants who participated by contributing an idea, comment or vote: 78 (38% of registrants)
  - 2 registrants who participated were 13 -15-year-old
  - 13 registrants who participated were 15 – 18 years old
  - 1 registrant who participated was 19 – 21 years old
  - 4 registrants who participated were 22 – 25 years old
  - 5 registrants who participated were 26-30 years old
  - 43 registrants who participated were 31+ years old
  - 10 registrants who participated did not supply their age
- Total number of registrants who contributed ideas: 48
- Total number of registrants who contributed comments: 24
- Total number of registrants who contributed votes: 71
- Total number of states represented: 48 and the District of Columbia



## **Visitors to the Online Dialogue**

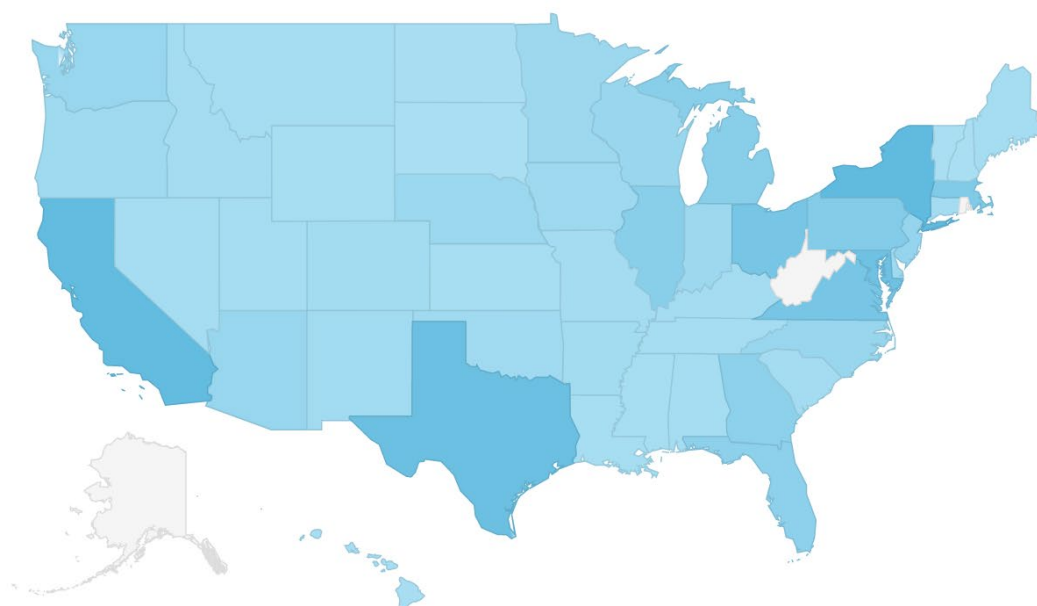
In total, 783 individuals visited the *USDOL's Empowering Teens in Their Workplaces National Online Dialogue* during the time it was open for participation. Below is the state affiliation of the visitors to the dialogue.

<b>State</b>	<b>Total Number of Visitors</b>	<b>Percentage of Total</b>
District of Columbia	112	14.30%
New York	56	7.15%
California	55	7.02%
Texas	48	6.13%
Maryland	45	5.75%
Ohio	39	4.98%
Virginia	39	4.98%
Massachusetts	32	4.09%
Pennsylvania	30	3.83%
Illinois	26	3.32%
Michigan	26	3.32%
Georgia	23	2.94%
Florida	22	2.81%
New Jersey	16	2.04%
Arizona	15	1.92%
Washington	15	1.92%
North Carolina	14	1.79%
Wisconsin	13	1.66%
Nebraska	12	1.53%
Indiana	11	1.40%
Minnesota	11	1.40%
Iowa	10	1.28%
Delaware	9	1.15%
Oregon	9	1.15%
Oklahoma	8	1.02%
New Mexico	7	0.89%
Arkansas	6	0.77%
Colorado	6	0.77%
Connecticut	5	0.64%
Idaho	5	0.64%
Kentucky	5	0.64%
Missouri	5	0.64%
South Carolina	5	0.64%
Alabama	4	0.51%
Maine	4	0.51%
Montana	4	0.51%



<b>State</b>	<b>Total Number of Visitors</b>	<b>Percentage of Total</b>
Nevada	4	0.51%
Tennessee	4	0.51%
Utah	4	0.51%
Kansas	3	0.38%
Louisiana	3	0.38%
Mississippi	3	0.38%
Wyoming	3	0.38%

**Map of State Affiliation of Online Dialogue Visitors\***

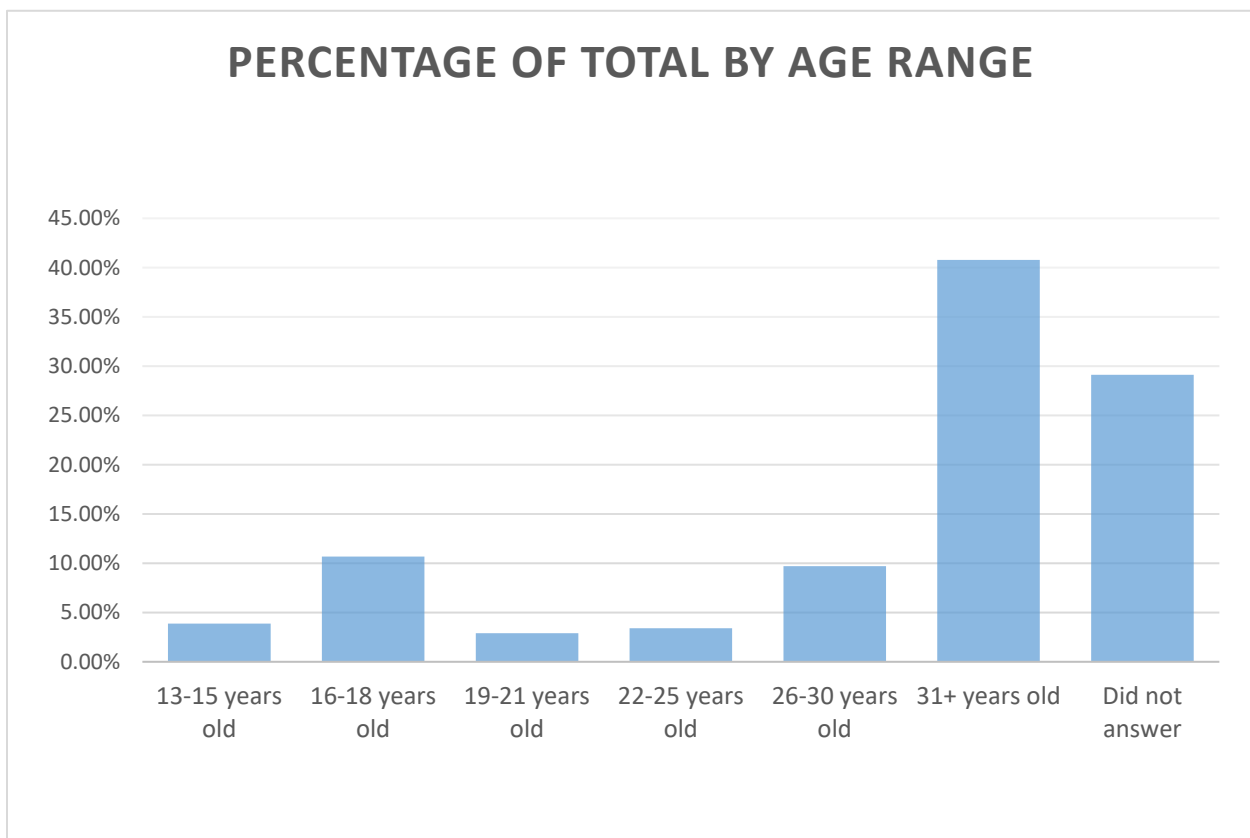


*\* Map depicts Google Analytics reported state affiliation of online dialogue visitors as portrayed in the table in the section above.*

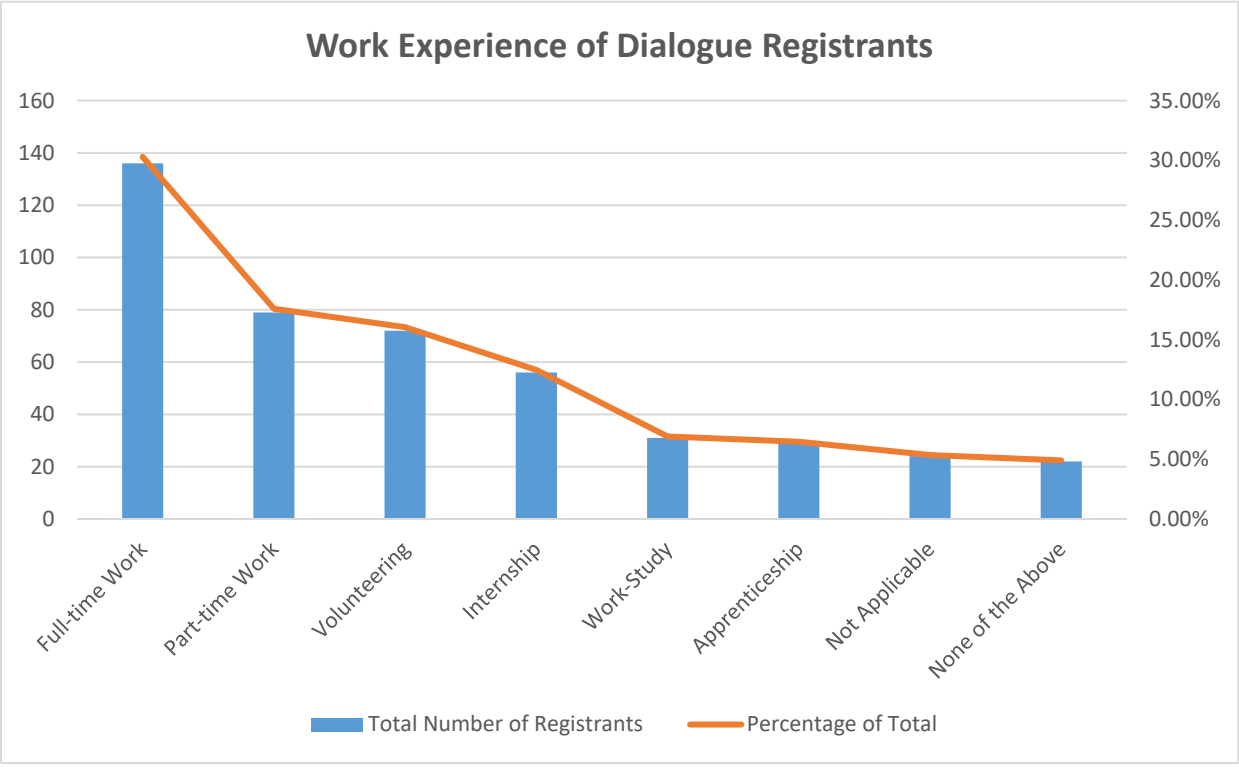
## **Online Dialogue Registrant Profiles**

When registering for the *USDOL's Empowering Teens in Their Workplaces National Online Dialogue*, registrants were asked to provide information about their age range and type of work experience. In addition, they were asked to select the stakeholder groups they represented. The choices were predetermined for all the questions. For type of work experience, registrants were allowed to choose multiple answers, if applicable. Registrants were also given the opportunity to provide additional information regarding their stakeholder group, if they chose. Below is a summary of the responses:

<b><u>Age Range</u></b>	<b><u>Total Number of Registrants</u></b>	<b><u>Percentage of Total</u></b>
13-15 years old	8	3.88%
16-18 years old	22	10.68%
19-21 years old	6	2.91%
22-25 years old	7	3.40%
26-30 years old	20	9.71%
31+ years old	84	40.78%
Did not answer	60	29.13%

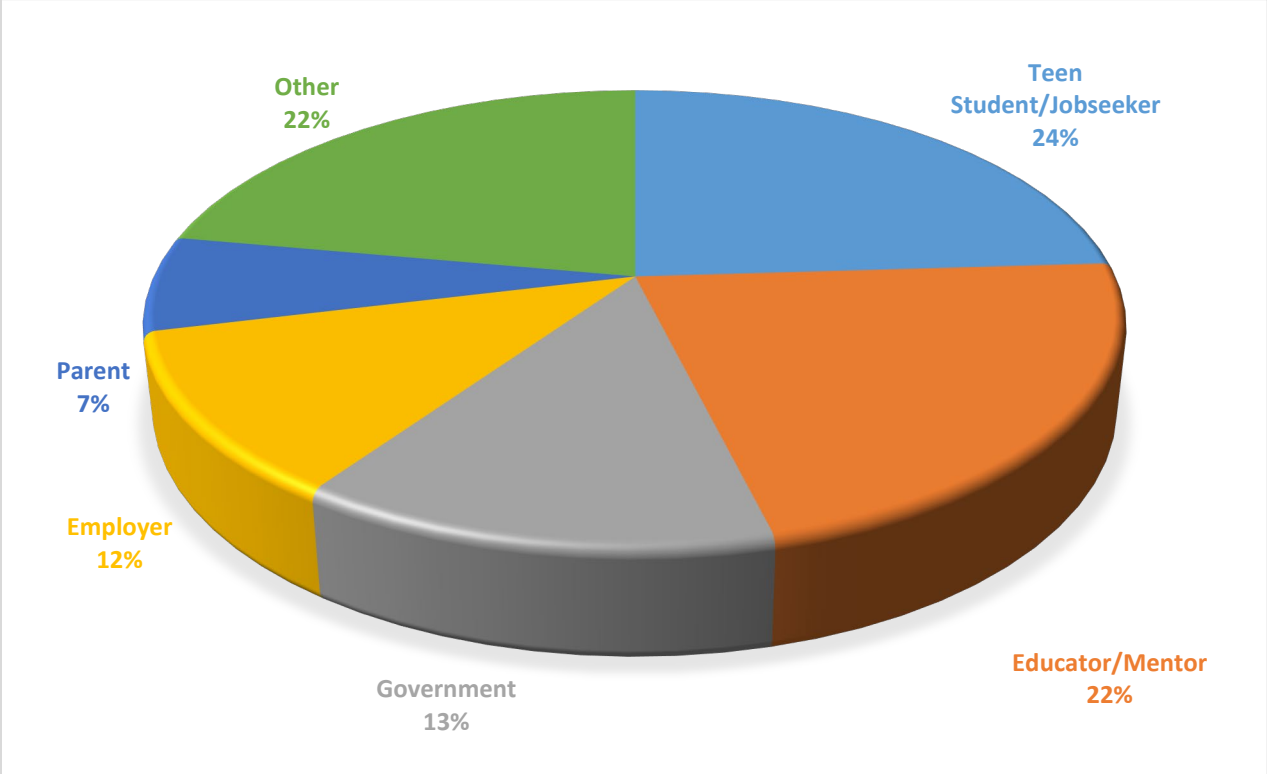


<b>Work Experience</b>	<b>Total Number of Registrants</b>	<b>Percentage of Total</b>
Full-time Work	136	30.29%
Part-time Work	79	17.59%
Volunteering	72	16.04%
Internship	56	12.47%
Work-Study	31	6.90%
Apprenticeship	29	6.46%
None of the Above	22	4.90%
Not Applicable	24	5.35%



<b>Stakeholder Group</b>	<b>Total Number of Registrants</b>	<b>Percentage of Total</b>
Teen Student/Jobseeker	25	12.08%
Educator/Mentor	23	11.11%
Government	14	6.76%
Employer	12	5.80%
Parent	7	3.38%
Other	23	11.11%
Did not reply	103	49.76%

**Stakeholder Groups of Dialogue Registrants**



Registrants were given the opportunity to provide additional information about their stakeholder group and interest in the dialogue. The answers submitted include the following:

- 60-year-old teacher who was a welder for over 15 years
- Alianza Nacional de Campesinas
- As an Employment Program we assist young people getting trained, participating in work experience programs and ultimately obtaining employment
- Case manager AMP program
- Community organizing advocate
- Director of Programs Services and SE Employment @ CICIL
- E&T contractor
- Educator counselor mentor
- Federal Government researcher
- High school teacher- job fair coordinator, personal finance teacher
- I am a teacher - I'm participating to gather information for my students.
- Elected official
- I am both a parent and an OSHA employee.
- I am the program manager for the Summer Youth Program and will place youth in various jobsites
- I don't really have a stakeholder; I'm just interested in helping kids stay safe
- I take a very large part in running a farm in partnership with my father
- I'm represent a youth voice
- Non-profit workforce development
- Online education and situational experience sharing with discussions around corrective actions and prevention ideas
- Public high schooler
- Safety professional
- Starting up my own business
- Structured learning experience Coordinator
- U.S. EEOC outreach and education coordinator
- Union representative of aviation workers
- Volunteer for women's shelter
- Workforce researcher
- Youth apprenticeship coordinator/school to career coordinator
- Youth career counselor

## **Review and Analysis of Online Dialogue Contributions**

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Over the course of the *USDOL's Empowering Teens in Their Workplaces National Online Dialogue*, participants from across the U.S. shared thought-provoking and innovative ideas and recommendations on ways the USDOL can reach working teens with important information. The range and depth of the ideas submitted and discussed during the online dialogue demonstrates the immense value of engaging citizens in collaboration efforts. Teens, educators, parents, employers, advocates, organizations, and state and local government representatives jointly contributed 78 ideas, 85 comments and 200 votes to the dialogue. Based on these contributions, several themes emerged as key ideas among the stakeholders.

### **Key Themes and Takeaways**

Based on a preliminary analysis of the ideas posted to the dialogue, the following key themes and takeaways emerged:

#### **Integrate USDOL messaging into classroom learning.**

Several dialogue registrants provided ideas that focused on integrating teen workers' rights and responsibilities into high school learning. One teen participant shared their experience in high school as a participant in Distributive Education Club of America (DECA), a formal class that focused on business and allowed students to have a job and earn a "work" credit. Though the class focused on work and employment, it did not include any mention of safety. The participant suggested that it would have been helpful to "include things such as PPE, ergo, cleanliness, fatigue etc."

Several safety professionals participated in the dialogue and recommended adding a workplace safety class to the high school curriculum. One professional stated that "if students have the option as they do to take driver's education, developing & implementing a workplace safety option could introduce them to the concepts & mindset of workplace safety. The earlier, the better. The workplace is a new environment & much different from the classroom setting. This option would give young workers the tools for survival and improve workplace safety. It's a win-win for all parties involved & a head start for young workers entering the workforce. By providing students with an introduction & access to workplace safety we have the potential to decrease the number of injuries associated with young workers & beyond."

Another professional recommended that, prior to obtaining a work permit, teens be required to complete an OSHA 10 course for general industries in order to educate teen workers on safety.

Other participants mentioned how the existing career programs in their high schools could be improved with messaging about safety. One student wrote, "our high school already requires a semester-long careers class. Ensure that important information teens need about what jobs they can and cannot do, the hours they may work, pay requirements, workplace hazards they may

encounter, and any other work-related concerns they may have is included as part of that curriculum." In addition, one participant recommended that high schoolers who spend at least part of their school day at a job be required to participate in a seminar on workplace rights and safety.

An OSHA representative stressed the importance of youth understanding the basics of OSHA, "as much as you would learn from an OSHA 30 class." Their suggestion was to start teaching workplace awareness hazards as early as the 6th grade. Again, they reiterated the need to incorporate this into classroom learning, possibly as a part of the existing health class curriculum. They summed up their idea noting that "working smarter not harder is a learned practice. Let's give them the foundations needed to be successful."

**Develop employer-based peer mentoring programs that include information about workers' rights and responsibilities.**

One of the most popular ideas in the dialogue (based on votes) discussed the need for peer-mentoring programs. It was noted that "based on the brain and emotional development of adolescents, they are likely to act on impulse without thinking of the consequences of behavior. This age group is also more likely than others to engage in risky behavior. It makes sense as an employer to pair a younger, less experienced worker with workers with more experience and maturity." The employers could ensure that mentoring included information about workers' rights and responsibilities.

**Create websites and resources that discuss all aspects of employment for teens, including job searching and interviewing, then integrate USDOL safety messaging.**

Several examples of successful job-sharing social media accounts and websites focused on teen workers were shared in the dialogue. Many of the sites offered resources in addition to job postings. One site hosted by a local high school stressed how teens followed the social media account to learn about local job openings, but the site also posts resources about interviewing, resumes and job searches. The dialogue participant mentioned it would be easy to add USDOL resources on workplace safety.

Another idea reiterated the recommendation of an all-in-one website or app targeting teens. It could allow teens to "apply for jobs, get resume help, see the laws and regulations for their age and state, be able to ask questions and get feedback from a community of people or a group dedicated to the app, have resources for interview clothing and other items needed for employment. Just a one stop shop for everything they may need assistance with all-in-one place.

Many ideas mentioned the struggles teen workers have finding the information they need. "Having it all in one place on something like an app as well as it being broken down for them to understand and navigate would be a huge gamechanger."

**Use job fairs as a way to reach teens with information on workplace rights and responsibilities.**

Once COVID-19 restrictions are lifted, many participants felt that job fairs would be a good place to educate teens about their rights and responsibilities in the workplace. One idea stated that “parents, teachers and mentors should encourage teens to attend job fairs that focus on potential careers (technology, healthcare, finance, etc.) that they are interested in pursuing.” They felt that job fairs serve as a helpful show-and-tell of what employers are looking for in potential job candidates. Job fairs can also allow teen workers and employers to discuss how to be successful and show teen workers what they can expect in terms of salary expectations, benefits, where the jobs are typically located, travel and specific skills and/or education requirements. Job fairs can also be used to teach teens about workplace safety and rights.

**Utilize social media and other channels that are relevant to teens to educate them about workplace rights.**

One idea focused on a SnapChat campaign. The idea submitter pointed out that “the idea of educating someone about work seems daunting and, for teens, boring. But what do so many other brands do to educate teens? Small snippets of intel wrapped into a social media campaign. We could do targeted surveys on a platform like SnapChat and then launch a helpful tips page, story, whatever; with either an influencer or someone internal from the DOL. The most important thing is to keep it fun and grab their attention while also making sure that they can keep that information in the back of their mind when they are working. Start with a BLUF statement, say something funny or interesting, back it up with facts and then reiterate the original point. 30 Seconds and \*poof\* one more thing that our teen workers will know about their rights, how to keep them safe, and keep their professional development on track.”

Another idea focused on integrating safety messaging with existing video games. For example, “during games I'd ask my sons and daughter if they were ever trained on how to use all the items like health packs, weapons, tools and vehicles. This sparked discussions about how cool it would be (more importantly okay with them) if the games offered training courses almost like practice runs that showed new gear, vehicles, etc. in exchange for points. I'm a 30-year mentor/educator, and I smiled because professional development courses and workshops are what I create and have offered non-profits who work with young people from 16 to 24. The video game masters should take note!!”

Several ideas discussed the use of online forums or dialogues to reach teens. One suggested “having an online forum where teens can ask questions or get answers to their work-related questions in plain-English would help them understand their rights and advocate for themselves. I have experienced first-hand the difference in many workplaces for teens, especially those



dealing with tips and tip-pools, but the rules are constantly changing and finding an answer can be difficult.”

**Work with community colleges to educate teens about worker safety.**

Several ideas in the dialogue pointed out that “community colleges are crucial pieces of the nation's workforce development infrastructure, and in many states, community colleges help direct the investment of WIOA dollars in programs or agencies.” One idea even discussed how state and local Workforce Investment Boards could build sector partnerships that leverage community colleges and other education and training providers to develop career pathways that align workforce supply and demand.

WIOA emphasizes the value of recognized postsecondary credentials, and the attention given to career pathways in the act provides a way for community colleges to contribute to the growth of skilled and credentialed workers in their local areas. Community colleges in California received state funding for Disabled Student Programs and Services to assist in providing support services and educational accommodations to students with disabilities so they can have full and equitable access to the community college experience. Part of the community college experience can include job training and readiness. The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by WIOA, emphasizes the provision of services to students and youth with disabilities to ensure they have opportunities to receive the training and other services necessary to achieve competitive integrated employment. It also expands the population of students with disabilities who may receive services and the kinds of services that the Vocational Rehabilitation agencies may provide to youth and students with disabilities who are transitioning from school to postsecondary education and employment. Partnering with Disabled Student Programs across every state with WIOA Eligible Training Provider programs at community colleges creates a pipeline of trained/certified workers with disabilities ready for the local competitive integrated job market.

**Work with state departments of labor so that they have the resources and personnel to reach out to schools and other places teens are.**

A representative from the Oklahoma Department of Labor submitted an idea about the role they play in providing services and guidance to help Oklahoma employers provide a safe and healthy workplace for their teen employees. This includes helping employers, parents, students and educators fully understand and successfully navigate the unique opportunities and reasonable safety restrictions for employing teen workers. They also offer OSHA Consultation, which is a free and confidential workplace service to help Oklahoma employers develop and implement a safety and health management system for their workplace.

The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) Phoenix District Office stated in the dialogue that they “are always looking for opportunities to reach teens about their workplace rights and responsibilities, in the classroom or other. We also routinely encourage employers to spend a few extra minutes with teens who are new to the workplace about what to do if someone should treat them inappropriately. We have flyers, a web page for teens and more.”

**Utilize role models and ensure workplace rights and responsibilities messages are reaching BIPOC and teens with disabilities.**

Many ideas brought up the issues that teens and teen workers from underserved communities face. One idea emphasized that improving safety for teen workers “must begin by improving educational outcomes for students of color with disabilities. In public schools across the nation, there are 6.5 million students with disabilities. Out of that number, fully 3.5 million are Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) students with disabilities. In addition, 11.4 percent of students with disabilities nationwide (almost 720,000) also identify as English language learners.”

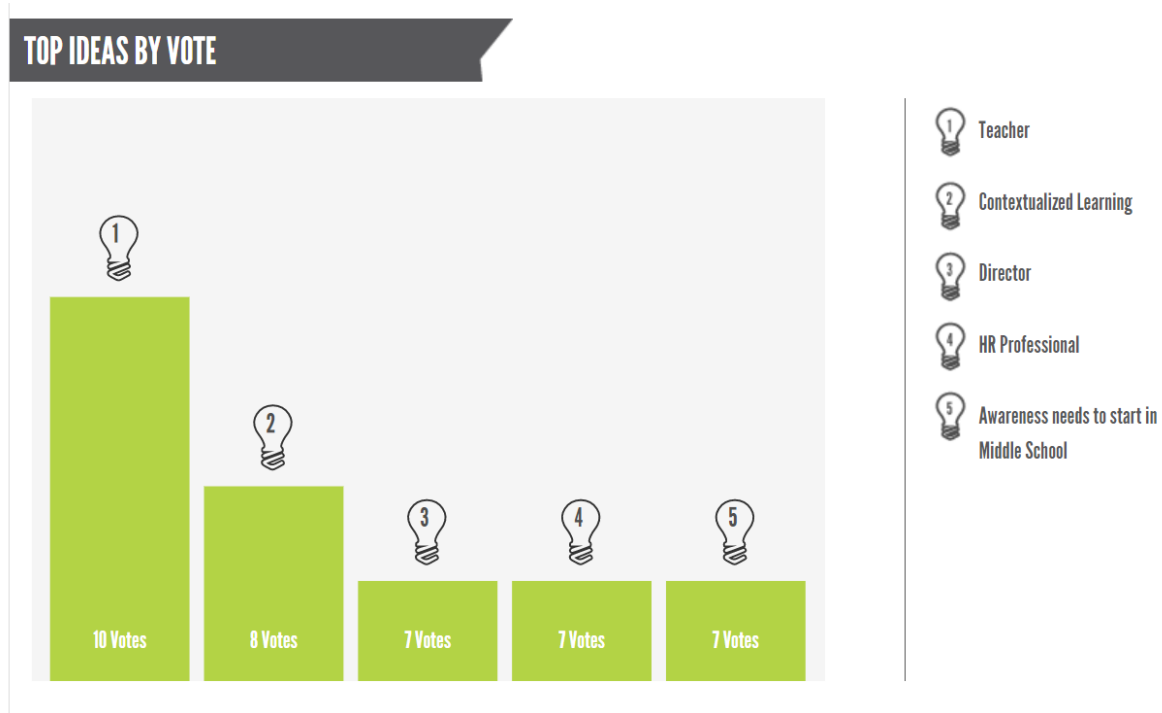
To reach these audiences with USDOL’s messages, many mentioned “the importance of role models to fight stigmas and combat low expectations. Role models, celebrities and narrative change each have a place to play in changing the conversation.”

In addition, one idea stated that “critically, low expectations are one of the biggest barriers, and fighting stigmas should be a significant part of any strategy to engage more teen workers. As such, some celebrities and business leaders are using their voice to share their stories, educating people about both visible and nonvisible disabilities.”

## **Top Ideas by Vote**

Below are the five top ideas by vote from the *USDOL's Empowering Teens in Their Workplaces National Online Dialogue*.

The ideas listed in the following section include minor typographical corrections, which have in no way impacted the substance or the intention of the revised posts.



### **Teacher**

Topic: Parents and Educators of Teens and Teen Workers

10 Up Votes | 0 Down Votes | 10 Net Votes

Comments: 1

Followers: 2

*Posters and flyers are not enough. They are largely ignored by young people, and people in general. Classroom and vocational instructors can conduct lessons. Still, others need to be out in the community where the teens are and can feel they are important enough to warrant that more individualized attention.*

### **Contextualized learning**

Topic: Teens and Teen Workers

8 Up Votes | 0 Down Votes | 8 Net Votes

Comments: 2

Followers: 1

*Contextualized learning as a practice that endeavors to link theoretical constructs that are taught during learning, to practical, real-world context. Students learn better when they see the relevance between what they are learning and the application in the world of work. It also prepares them better for the workplace. For an excellent analysis go to <https://www.efrontlearning.com/blog/2017/06/contextualized-learning-effective-elearning.html>.*

### **Director**

Topic: Parents and Educators of Teens and Teen Workers

7 Up Votes | 0 Down Votes | 7 Net Votes

Comments: 2

Followers: 2

*We should have pre-employment training as well as continued supported employment training additionally. The pre-placement training can review things to assist with job placement and then another 20 hours can be utilized for on-the-job training. We also need to have a peer mentoring program with the employer and employee so that they can be matched up with a skilled worker to help them transition into the job duties smoothly.*

### **HR professional**

Topic: Employers of Teen Workers

7 Up Votes | 0 Down Votes | 7 Net Votes

Comments: 3

Followers: 2

*Enlist the help and collect volunteers of local, regional and national human resources professionals to make presentations about topics such as: How to find and keep a job; how to present yourself when you interview; how to write a resume or fill out an application; Where your perfect job can be found; and so on. HR professionals are interested in doing this kind of group mentoring because they are always looking for prospects to hire. Group mentoring can be fun and informative. Doing role playing such as having the participants do job interviews, talking to an employee who is not acting appropriately on the job; or is late to work frequently; and stressing the importance of showing up for work when you are scheduled to be there. Pointing out the reasons why employers are so strict about certain rules particularly when it involves safety issues. HR professionals are well aware of employee welfare and workers compensation costs. Have them talk at high school seminars, community and church groups and summer programs for teens. Teen group homes, shelters and those who are incarcerated can prepare the latter for a better future given the right focus and tools for a successful hire.*

### **Awareness needs to start in middle school**

Topic: Parents and Educators of Teen Workers

7 Up Votes | 0 Down Votes | 7 Net Votes

Comments: 1

Followers: 2

*Speaking from personal experience, most of what I learned as a young person was from on-the-job training, not what was taught in school. In order to get a work permit, you had to go to the guidance office. The counselor didn't inform you as to what or how to be aware of in the workplace. Most employers that I worked for in the fast-food industry were upfront about the limitations given my age as to what duties and tasks could be performed. Unfortunately, that isn't everyone or every employer.*

*My suggestion is to start workplace hazards awareness as early as the 6th grade. It should be incorporated into the Health class curriculum. As an Industrial Safety and Health Specialist for OSHA, too many adults have had negative experiences with OSHA in the workplace. "OH, you're here to make my job harder to do.", most of them remark when I offer my credentials. Actually, I'm here so that you can be assured you can once again do your job tomorrow. While this isn't every EHS professional's perspective, it certainly receives a more positive response than the alternative.*

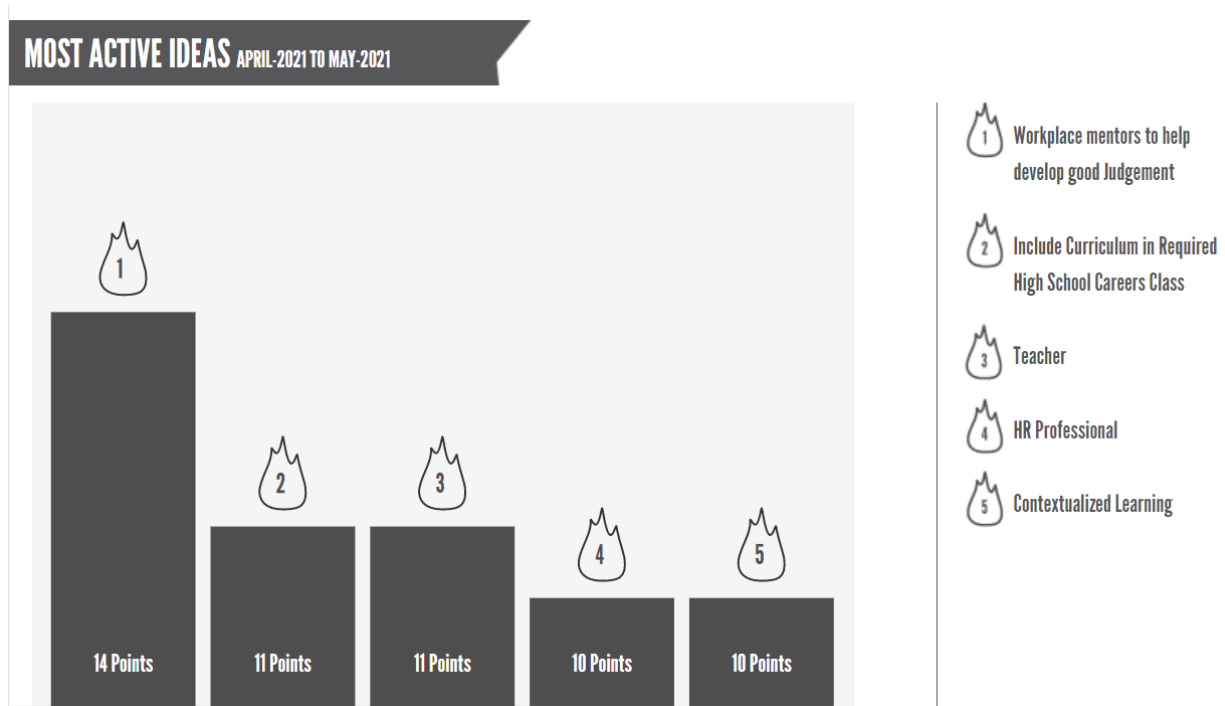
*Children need to know the basics of OSHA, as much as you would learn from an OSHA 30 class, general industry or construction. Evaluation of content testing as well as a certification of the course completion for the young worker can help them embrace the importance of what it means to actually be a "worker." Similar to a GED or High School Diploma significance but specifically tailored to relevant criteria found in the workplace based on approved or presented curricula. This can be incrementally balanced in content and application as the age of the adolescent gets closer to an actual work opportunity. Many jobs of today will not be jobs of tomorrow. The jobs of tomorrow given today have yet to be realized. However, there will be workplace hazards rest assured. While this idea may be a bit oversimplified written in this format, one can never really start too early to understand the expectations of what life may bring to them. Just like in math class, you're not going to start teaching Algebra straight away before simple math facts are mastered. There are so many disruptors with technology and social media for children to miss or misunderstand the importance of their own health and wellbeing in the workplace. Working smarter not harder is a learned practice. Let's give them the foundations needed to be successful.*

### **Most Active Ideas**

Below are the most active ideas from the *USDOL's Empowering Teens in Their Workplaces National Online Dialogue*. Most active is determined based on the idea's total number of views, comments, votes and followers over the course of the dialogue.

Three of the most active ideas, **Teacher**, **HR professional** and **Contextualized learning** were also the top ideas by vote. See the Top Ideas by Vote sections for a full description. Below are the other most active ideas.

The ideas listed in the following section include minor typographical corrections, which have in no way impacted the substance or the intention of the revised posts.



### **Workplace mentors to help develop good judgement**

Topic: Employers of Teen Workers

7 Up Votes | 1 Down Votes | 6 Net Votes

Comments: 6

Followers: 2

*Will Rogers said, "Good judgment comes from experience, and a lot of that comes from bad judgment." Based on the brain and emotional development of adolescents, they are likely to act on impulse without thinking of the consequences of behavior. This age group is also more likely than others to engage in risky behavior. It makes sense as an employer to pair a younger, less experienced worker with workers with more experience and maturity.*

*Reducing the injury rate and associated insurances costs should be enough of an incentive to employers to implement this type of policy.*

### **Include curriculum in required high school careers class**

Topic: Parents and Educators of Teen Workers

6 Up Votes | 0 Down Votes | 6 Net Votes

Comments: 5

Followers: 4

*Our high school already requires a semester-long careers class. Ensure that important information teens need about what jobs they can and cannot do, the hours they may work, pay requirements, workplace hazards they may encounter, and any other work-related concerns they may have is included as part of that curriculum.*

### **Most Popular Ideas**

Below are some of the most popular ideas from each of the online dialogue's three topic areas. "Most popular" is determined based on the idea's total number of up votes, comments and followers at the conclusion of the dialogue.

The ideas listed in the following section include minor typographical corrections, which have in no way impacted the substance or the intention of the revised posts.

### **Most Popular Ideas from the Teens and Teen Workers Campaign**

**1. Contextualized learning** *(the full description of this idea can be found under Top Ideas by Vote)*

8 Up Votes | 0 Down Votes | 8 Net Votes

Comments: 2

Followers: 1

**2. Transportation to and from workplace**

6 Up Votes | 0 Down Votes | 6 Net Votes

Comments: 2

Followers: 2

*How will students get to site workplace?*

*Who will be responsible to injury or damage?*

*Will workplace require drug testing?*

*Will students receive some type of certification?*

**3. Working with local high schools**

5 Up Votes | 0 Down Votes | 5 Net Votes

Comments: 3

Followers: 1

*Many schools in the state of Wisconsin work with students to obtain Youth Apprenticeships with local businesses. Sharing information about workplace rights and responsibilities with local schools would enable the information to get into the hands of the students. When I see information that is pertinent to the workforce and my students, I share them on my MhsJobs social media pages. Students follow social media quite*

*avidly, so I have found this method of communication to be especially helpful with my students*

**4. Empowering means rights!**

4 Up Votes | 0 Down Votes | 4 Net Votes

Comments: 1

Followers: 2

*In our goal to transition our teen workers into the workforce, we should ensure that they are fully aware of their rights as employees. Only then can we call them empowered. Full employment classes that explain labor rights, safety rights and anti-discrimination rights should be a regular "orientation" into the workforce.*

**Most Popular Ideas from the Parents and Educators of Teens and Teen Workers Campaign**

**1. Teacher** *(the full description of this idea can be found under **Top Ideas by Vote**)*

10 Up Votes | 0 Down Votes | 10 Net Votes

Comments: 1

Followers: 2

**2. Director** *(the full description of this idea can be found under **Top Ideas by Vote**)*

7 Up Votes | 0 Down Votes | 7 Net Votes

Comments: 2

Followers: 2

**3. Awareness needs to start in middle school** *(the full description of this idea can be found under **Top Ideas by Vote**)*

7 Up Votes | 0 Down Votes | 7 Net Votes

Comments: 1

Followers: 2

**4. Include curriculum in required high school careers class** *(the full description of this idea can be found under **Most Active Ideas**)*

6 Up Votes | 0 Down Votes | 6 Net Votes

Comments: 5

Followers: 4



## **Most Popular Ideas from the Employers of Teen Workers Campaign**

**1. HR professional** *(the full description of this idea can be found under **Top Ideas by Vote**)*

7 Up Votes | 0 Down Votes | 7 Net Votes

Comments: 3

Followers: 2

**2. Workplace mentors to help develop good Judgement** *(the full description of this idea can be found under **Most Active Ideas**)*

7 Up Votes | 1 Down Votes | 6 Net Votes

Comments: 6

Followers: 2

**3. Hands on learning opportunities**

6 Up Votes | 0 Down Votes | 6 Net Votes

Comments: 1

Followers: 2

*It is critical to provide hands-on real-world learning experiences prior to teens entering the workforce for the first time. This can include learning from a guest speaker from an industry they are interested in, having an internship, job shadowing, or taking a tour of a workplace.*

**4. Job fairs**

5 Up Votes | 0 Down Votes | 5 Net Votes

Comments: 2

Followers: 2

*Parents, teachers and mentors should encourage teens to attend job fairs that focus on potential careers (technology, healthcare, finance, etc.) that they are interested in pursuing. This is a helpful show-and-tell of what employers are looking for in potential job candidates. This helps the teens to see the "real world" of what certain careers demand and want in their successful job applicants. It helps to show what they can expect in terms of salary expectations, benefits, where the jobs are typically located, travel and specific skills and/or education requirements. It also provides the names and locations of companies in that field of work when they are ready to look for their first post-education job. It's a useful way to find internships and employers who will further their next level of education with "golden handcuffs" (a contractual exchange of employer education payments for an exclusive employee work contract for a designated time period).*

## Appendix A: Resources Shared in the Ideas, Comments and Responses of the Online Dialogue and During the Twitter Chat

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### Bank of America Resources

- [Providing the tools to help tomorrow's leaders succeed](#)
- [Promoting small business health](#)
- [Working toward an improved, inclusive world](#)
- [On course to empower women business owners](#)

### National Disability Institute Resources

- [Banking Status and Financial Behaviors of Adults with Disabilities](#)
- [Financial Empowerment](#)
- [ABLEnc.org](#)
- [Able Accounts](#)

### RespectAbility Resources

- [COVID-19 Disability Community Gathering: People Who Use Wheelchairs](#)
- [COVID-19 Disability Community Gathering: People with Developmental Disabilities](#)
- [COVID-19 Disability Community Gathering: Women with Disabilities](#)
- [COVID-19 Disability Community Gathering: Jews with Disabilities](#)
- [COVID-19 Disability Community Gathering: Californians with Disabilities](#)
- [COVID-19 Disability Community Gathering: Millennials and Gen Z-ers with Disabilities and their Allies](#)
- [COVID-19 Disability Community Gathering: Low-Vision and Blind Individuals](#)
- [#RespectTheAbility](#)
- [LGBTQ+ People with Disabilities](#)
- [Hispanic and Latinx People with Disabilities](#)
- [Reading Materials for New Fellows](#)
- [Mental Health Action Day: Raising Awareness and Promoting Change Through Authentic Mental Health Representation in Media](#)

## **YouthBuild USA Resources**

- [For Alumni](#)
- [Our Partners](#)
- [Our Programs](#)
- [The Global Equity Leadership Network \(video\)](#)
- [YouthBuild USA Publishes White Paper on the Benefits, Challenges, and Best Practices for Building a Work-Based Learning Model](#)

## **Federal and State Government Websites, Resources and Reports**

- [U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration Apprenticeships](#)
- [Center for Disease Control and Prevention Support for Teens and Young Adults](#)
- [Occupational Safety and Health Administration Young Workers](#)
- [Occupational Safety and Health Administration State Plans](#)
- [The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health Talking Safety - Teaching Young Workers About Job Safety and Health](#)
- [Teens' Biggest Safety Threat is Sitting on the Driveway by National Safety Council](#)
- [The U.S. Department of Labor's Employer.gov](#)
- [The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health Talking Safety](#)
- [Occupational Safety and Health Administration's Young Workers, You Have Rights!](#)
- [USDOL's Office of the Assistant Secretary for Policy Empowering Teen Workers](#)
- [USDOL's Wage and Hour Division's Young Worker Toolkit](#)
- [USDOL's Wage and Hour Division's Youth Rules](#)
- [The U.S. Department of Labor's Worker.gov](#)
- [Evaluating the Accessibility of American Job Centers for People with Disabilities - Final Report by U.S. Department of Labor \(2017\)](#)
- [Oklahoma Department of Labor](#)
- [New Jersey Department of Education Structured Learning Experiences](#)

## **Other Stakeholder Websites, Resources, Reports and Examples of Successful Efforts Reaching Teens**

- [Contextualized Learning: Teaching made highly effective!](#) (efront Learning)
- [Long COVID Sufferers Are Seeking Disability Benefits. Will They Change the System?](#) (U.S. News & World Report)
- [US National and State-Level Prevalence of Mental Health Disorders and Disparities of Mental Health Care Use in Children](#) (JAMA Network)
- [Young Minds Inspired](#)
- [Teens & Employment](#) (Teens4hire)
- [WorkforceGps.org](#)
- [Explore Safety Technologies \(WORKtoZERO, a National Safety Council program\)](#)
- [National Teen Driver Safety Week](#) (Traffic Safety Marketing)
- [SADD.org](#)
- [CapeYouth.org](#)