

Presentation Title	Place in Schedule
Perceptions of Age and Occupational Safety: Can Generational Labels Play a Role?	Poster Session <i>Day 2 – Wednesday – May 9th, 2018</i> <i>8:30am-9:30am</i>
Description of Presentation	Presenter Name(s) And Credentials
<p>Generational labels represent beliefs and stereotypes about the characteristics of a social group, and the legitimacy and usefulness of this phenomenon has been repeatedly challenged. There has been an increase in the use of ‘generational differences’ as the foundation for strategies such as training programs and communication practices in the occupational safety practitioner and popular press literatures; however, little empirical support has been provided to form a foundation for these claims. The purpose of the present study is to examine whether the use of age-related labels in the workplace will be associated with differences in how employees and managers report the safety knowledge, motivation, and behaviors of their coworkers. More specifically, participants were primed with one of three agerelated labels: (a) basic chronological age labels (Condition 1), (b) generational cohort labels (Condition 2), or (c) generational cohort labels and typical information about the generational group (Condition 3). Additionally, the actual (self-reported) perceptions of safety behavior, motivation, and knowledge reported by each generational cohort were compared to the expectations that others have (reported by others) for the safety behavior, motivation, and knowledge within each of these cohorts (e.g., Millennials) and age groups (e.g., people in their 20s and early 30s). The participants in this study are employees and managers at a large organization in the Midwestern United States. Path analysis was used to test the hypotheses in the present study, and Maximum Likelihood Estimation was used to derive parameter estimates and indices of model fit using Mplus version 7.4 (Muthén & Muthén, 1998–2012). Preliminary results illustrate that there are not meaningful differences in self-perceptions across generational groups in safety knowledge, motivation, and behaviors. Additionally, when participants were asked about the</p>	<p>Madison Hanscom, MS <i>Colorado State</i></p>

safety attitudes and behaviors of generational groups within their workplace, minimal differences were reported. When chronological age labels were used to prompt participants, this resulted in the largest perceived differences between groups (more than generational age labels). This is helpful information to practitioners, because although there might be a common misconception that there are large differences in safety knowledge, motivation, and behavior across generational groups, this was not supported empirically by self or other ratings. The present findings have workplace implications by reassuring practitioners that there is not evidence to support developing or treating employees across age groups differently. Time would be better spent to invest in programs or experiences that are beneficial across all employees.