

# Gear Up for Ag Health & Safety™: Young Adult Voices Shape Education Programming

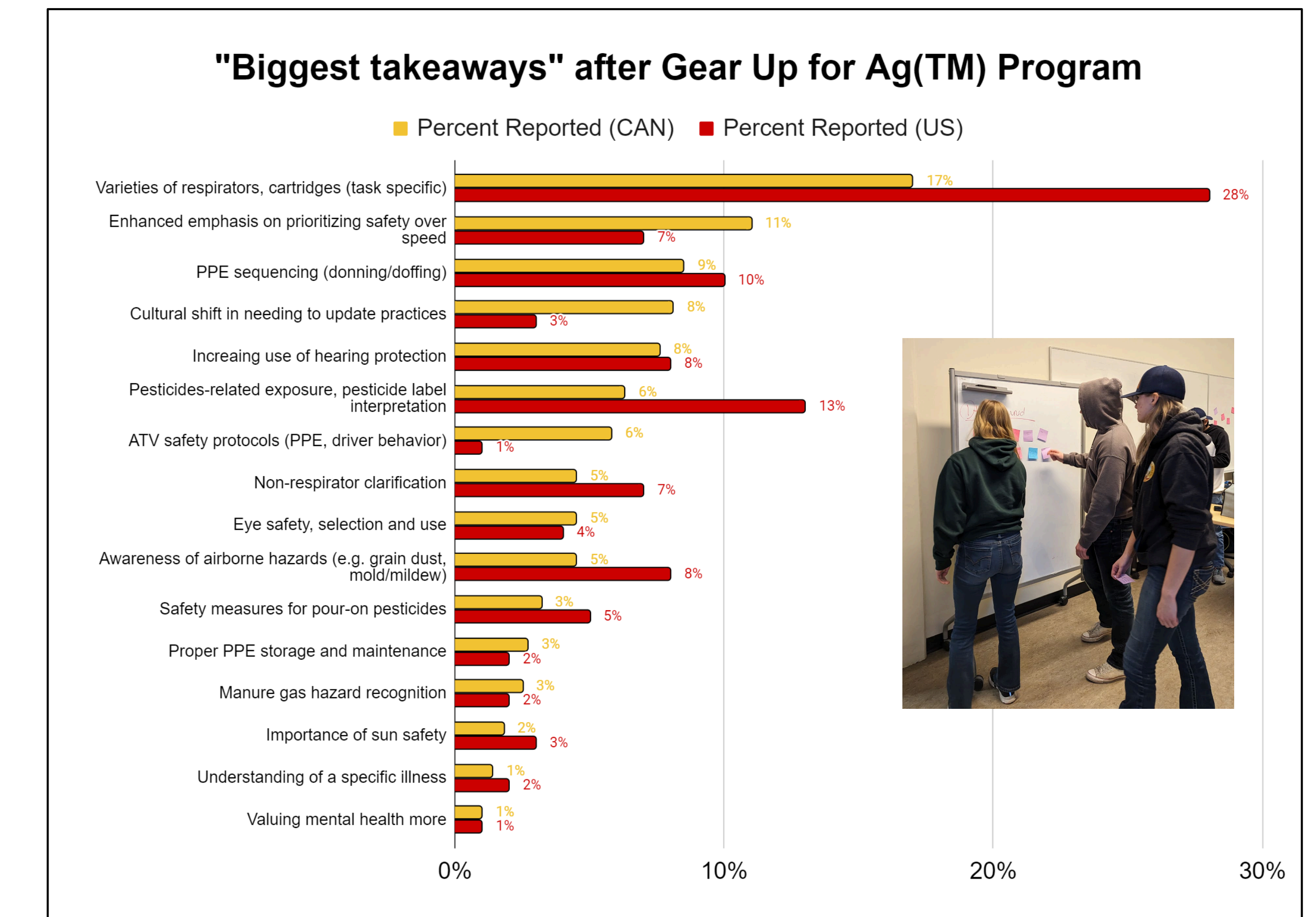
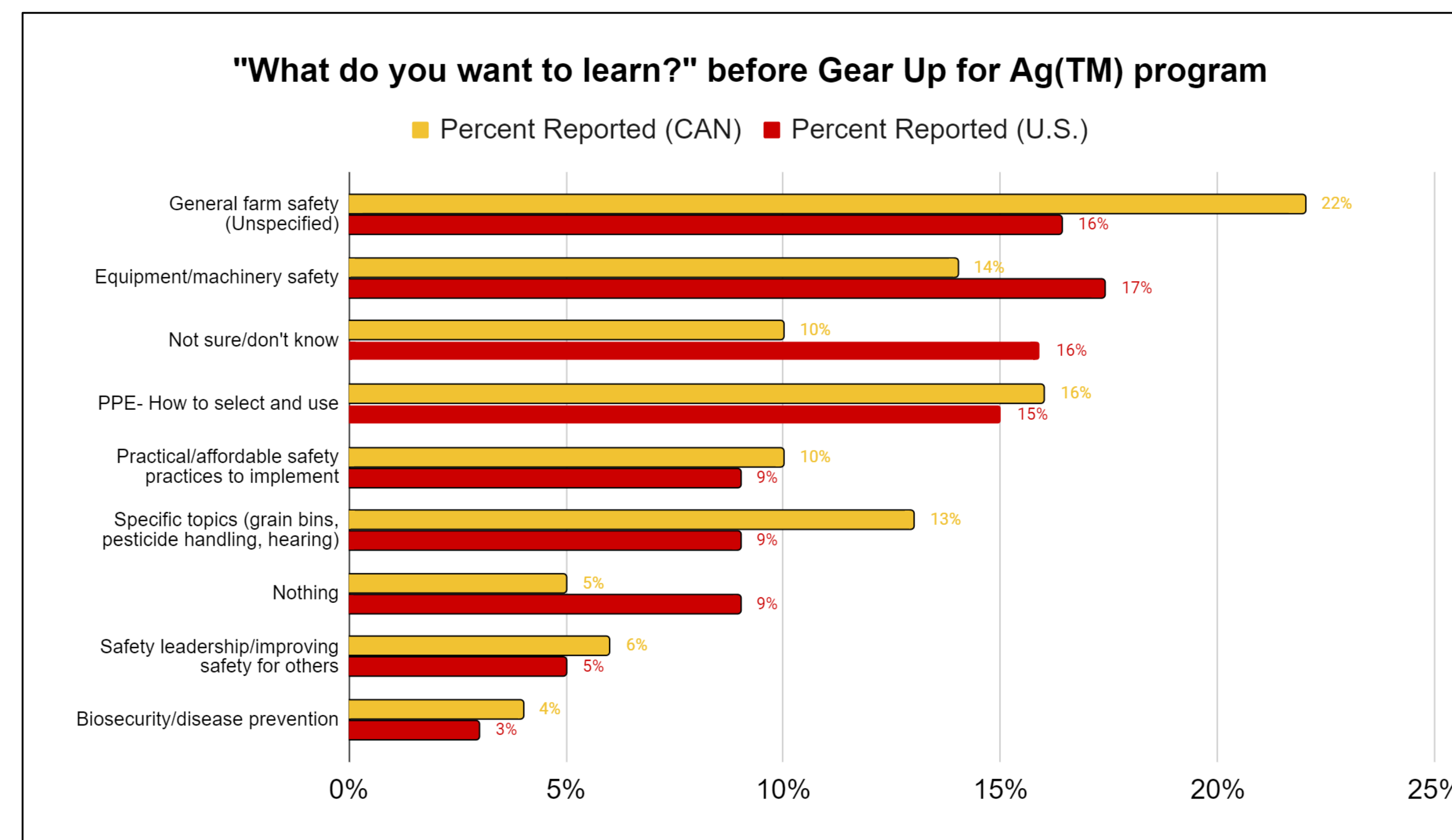
## “What We Want to Know” and “Biggest Take Aways”

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### Methods

- There were 16 & 19 Gear Up for Ag Health and Safety™ programs delivered in the U.S. and Canada respectively during the 2023-24 collegiate year.
  - 755 college-aged students completed an open-ended pre-survey question, “What would you like to learn?” (U.S. n = 284; Canada n = 471) using SurveyMonkey.
  - 672 students answered the question “What was your biggest takeaway from the program?” (U.S. n = 260; Canada n = 412) after the program. Participants were prompted to report something linked to behavior change on a Post-it note.
- Utilized Monkey Learn for qualitative data analysis on the responses after exporting the responses in CSV format.
  - Coded responses and frequency analysis was performed. Text based responses were identified and organized as a “positive” or “negative”.



### Thematic Analysis Summary

- Overall, there was a significant interest in **specific safety topics** (almost half, 46% expressed interest in specific areas like equipment, PPE, livestock handling, pesticides).
- In some manner, 7% expressed interest in **improving safety for others**, suggesting a sense of communal/family responsibility.
- Significant proportions **were ‘uncertain’ of what they wanted to know** or stated there was ‘nothing’ they wanted to learn, hinting at potential confusion about the importance of farm safety and health.
- Following the program, **respirator use and shift in safety culture** were some of the most influential topics leading to intended behavior change.

### Recommendations

- Continued focus on ‘Body Protection’.** Students were interested in respirators and selecting the “right one”. Hearing protection, sun protection, and chemical protection were also mentioned. Continue offering targeted training on specific PPE types.
- Raised PPE Awareness .** Students recognized the important of PPE in cleaning tasks and hobbies. The discussed the need for learning about PPE specific to tasks, not “broad” or “general” use.
- Feelings of apathy or defeatism.** Investigate reasons behind uncertainty and “nothing” responses in the pre-survey to better understand training needs.
- Recognition of Usability and Comfort.** Participants were concerned about respirator comfort and preferred user-friendly personal protective equipment options like ear plugs over earmuffs.
- Building Safety Culture.** Students expresses a desire to “lead by example” and encourage others to use PPE more often. Videos, stories, and “hands on” elements were frequently mentioned.. Students wanted to encourage a “safety first” culture and include more social/familial responsibility in the training.



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