

problem

Here's the toll for the past five years in the four industries that employ the most young people.

> Construction

2,171 back injuries, muscle tears, broken bones, and more

Many young workers tend to find jobs as helpers or labourers in residential construction. You picture them just hammering nails and carrying boards, but it's all too easy for them to fall from a height, or be hit by something like a nail from a nail gun.

> Manufacturing

2,119 muscle tears, amputations, broken bones, and more

Young people in manufacturing suffer more than their share of injuries – from getting caught in equipment, to being hit by objects, to straining themselves.

> Retail

1,747 broken bones, muscle tears, back injuries, and more

You don't expect much to happen working in a store. But it can be risky business for young wage-earners, whose jobs include lifting heavy merchandise, working on high ladders, and dealing with angry customers.

> Hospitality

1,386 burns, broken bones, serious cuts, and more

You may expect young people to do familiar work here, like helping prepare food or clean up. But these kitchens are nothing like yours – they're bigger and busier, with hazards like deep fryers and industrial mixers.

DO YOUR HOMEWORK

As you try to keep your children safe on the job, WorkSafeBC and other organizations offer resources, information, and advice.

WorkSafeBC Online

> WWW.WORKSAFEBC.COM Our home page will help you with injury prevention information, the claims process, and the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation.

> WWW2.WORKSAFEBC.COM/TOPICS/YOUNGWORKER/HOME.ASP This portal is dedicated to young and new workers. It includes direct links to resources, answers to frequently asked questions, information on specific industries, and more.

> WWW.RAISEYOURHAND.COM Read stories of over 3,000 young workers sharing their experiences about safety. This site also includes a variety of resources and cool contests for young workers.

WorkSafeBC by Phone

If you have any safety-related questions or concerns, call our Prevention Information Line at 604 276-3100 in the Lower Mainland, or toll-free at 1 888 621-7233. To report after-hours safety emergencies, call 604 273-7711 or 1 866 922-4357.

Industry Information

Encourage your child to look for health and safety information provided by employers, industry, and labour organizations in places where they work.

this could happen to your child



we have a serious

Workers 15 to 24 years old have the worst on-the-job injury record in B.C. No other age group suffers more injuries.

About **46** young people are **injured every working day**, with **three** permanently **disabled every week**.

Tragedy happens fast. More than **half** of young workers' **serious injuries** or deaths happen in the **first six months** on the job. The majority of these injuries are a direct result of poor training or supervision and the fact that many young workers do not question risky situations at work, even if they feel really unsafe.

Not counting minor cuts and bruises, more than **7,400** young workers were **badly hurt over the last five years**, enough to fill roughly **200 classrooms**. These were serious injuries requiring medical attention and a month or more off work.

Oh, so I don't have to just worry about joy-riding on Friday night. I have to worry about when they go to work on Monday morning or after school. The workplace can be a really dangerous place. I want parents to know that.



– Kathleen Higgins of Delta

Her son, John, broke his back working at a recycling plant. He was 16.

Michael lost his leg working in a sawmill. He was 18.

How parents can help keep their children safe at work

Keeping young workers safe – everyone has a role.



what you can do

BEFORE YOUR CHILD STARTS WORK

Your son or daughter is thinking about their first job. This is an important milestone. You know this experience can be very rewarding, but it also exposes your child to unfamiliar dangers – running machinery, working at heights, even potentially violent situations. Take this opportunity and talk to your child about safety in the workplace.

HERE ARE SOME TIPS:

- > Use your own experience or do some research on hazards in different industries. For help, see the “Do your homework” section of this brochure.
- > Encourage your child to look for information on workplace safety at worksafebc.com or raiseyourhand.com. Both sites include a variety of resources – from real life stories to videos, brochures, and statistics.
- > Perhaps you or your child know someone who was injured in a workplace accident. Use this experience to convey the message: **Injuries can have life-changing consequences.**
- > Encourage your child to ask questions about safety during job interviews. The answers may provide a pretty good indication about the safety culture in that particular workplace.

WHISTLE BLOWERS ARE PROTECTED

If you or your child have any concerns about safety or witness an unsafe act, call the WorkSafeBC Prevention Information Line. You can do this anonymously. Phone 604 276-3100 in the Lower Mainland, or 1 888 621-7233 toll-free.

HERE ARE SOME GOOD QUESTIONS FOR YOUR CHILD TO ASK DURING AN INTERVIEW:

What health and safety orientation will I get before starting work, and who's responsible for supervising me?

Will I need safety gear? If so, who provides it?

Have there been any serious injuries at the worksite?

I don't think any parent wants to get that phone call in the middle of the night... saying they're not going to tell you what his condition is, but you'd better get down there. I could only imagine that it was pretty serious or he would've called me himself.



– Kate Rowbottom
of Mission

Her 18-year-old son, Michael, lost his leg in a sawmill accident.

“Here was my son, so proud to be driving a forklift. It didn't occur to me to ask, ‘Does he know what he's doing?’ ”



– John Higgins Sr.
of Delta

A forklift crushed his 16-year-old son, John, during a shift at a recycling plant, breaking his back and rupturing his spleen.

AFTER YOUR CHILD IS HIRED

Once your child is working, stay in touch with what's happening.

TELL THEM ABOUT THEIR RIGHT TO:

- > On-the-job **training and orientation** on safe work practices, risk reduction, and emergency procedures
- > **Supervision** to make sure they work without unnecessary risk
- > **Refuse unsafe work** without being disciplined or fired for doing so
- > Employer-provided **safety equipment** required for the job (though workers are responsible for providing general purpose work gloves, footwear, and head gear)

ASK YOUR CHILD QUESTIONS LIKE:

- > What are your duties at work?
- > How safe do you feel completing these duties?
- > What kind of training did you receive?
- > Do you know how to operate equipment safely? Ask your child for examples of what they did today and how.
- > What types of personal protective equipment are you using? What condition is this equipment in?
- > Do you know who your direct supervisor is and how to contact that person?
- > Do you know what to do if you are injured on the job?

OFFER SUPPORT:

- > Tell your son or daughter to **trust their instincts**. If they are asked to do anything that feels unsafe, suggest that they always check with their supervisor before going ahead.
- > Talk to your child about the dangers of working while tired, while taking medication, or while under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

ORIENTATION & TRAINING IS A MUST

- > Employers are **required by law** (under the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation) to **provide safety orientation and training** to all workers. This must be completed **before** any worker starts a new job, or a new task, or operates a new piece of equipment.
- > Employers must **keep records** of all orientation and training provided.
- > Employers must **provide additional orientation and training** if a worker requests it.

IF AN INJURY HAPPENS

- > The top priority is first aid or medical attention, with ambulance or other necessary transportation costs covered by the employer. Tell your child to inform their doctor when injuries are job-related.
- > Legally, employers must report any workplace injury or illness to WorkSafeBC.
- > Even if an injury seems minor, your child should file a WorkSafeBC claim as soon as possible; the form is at www.worksafebc.com. If your child needs time off due to an injury, tell them to phone WorkSafeBC's Teleclaim Contact Centre at 604 231-8888 or toll-free at 1 888 967-5377.
- > Remember, it's **against the law** for an employer to tell your child **not to file a claim** or to try talking them out of doing that.

REFUSING UNSAFE WORK

- > Every worker in B.C. has the right to refuse unsafe work. So your child is on solid ground standing up for safety.
- > It's illegal for B.C. employers to punish or fire anyone for refusing unsafe work or reporting hazards to a supervisor.
- > If your child does not feel like an unsafe situation has been resolved, even after they've discussed it with their employer and/or safety committee, tell them to contact WorkSafeBC by calling 604 276-3100 or toll-free at 1 888 621-7233. This can be done anonymously.