“Safety’s got nothing to do with me... has it?”

Young people and safety at work: AND WHY IT INVOLVES YOU

Young workers aged 15-25 are more likely to be injured at work than any other age group. This is mostly due to being new to work and having a busy life.

Young people often think safety is someone else’s problem – like the boss or a supervisor. Bosses and others can only do so much to make a workplace safe. All workers have to take steps to protect themselves and others and to cooperate with workplace safety requirements. If you don’t you can receive a formal warning and even lose your job.

One of the downsides of getting hurt at work is putting your apprenticeship/traineeship on hold. Let’s face it – no-one wants to take longer to get qualified than they have to.

Things that might lead to getting hurt at work

» Not being ‘on the ball’ at work because of a hangover, being tired or feeling stressed.

» Being involved in dangerous pranks.

» Not wearing personal protective equipment (PPE) like a hard hat or gloves for every task – especially for ‘quick jobs’.

» Driving dangerously, especially speeding.

» A lack of sleep – often due to balancing social life, TAFE, sport, family and work commitments.

» Doing tasks before being trained – trying to impress the boss or co-workers.

» Rushing in - not taking the time to plan the job and think about safety.

» Ignoring a dangerous risk and not saying anything – concerned about looking like a ‘trouble maker’.
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5 important ways you can make your work safer

» Get advice from your Field Officer. If you’re concerned about safety at work and you’re not sure what to do, call your Field Officer and talk it through with them. They might suggest ways to talk to your supervisor, or even arrange to come out for a visit.

» Take the time to plan. Not planning well and forgetting important steps in a task can lead to people getting hurt. Use a notebook to write down step by step instructions for new tasks. Make a note of any safety equipment that might be needed and where to find it.

» Wear the protective equipment you’ve been provided with EVERY TIME – even for quick jobs or for jobs you’ve done a thousand times before. If it’s supplied and you don’t wear it you could receive a formal warning or even lose your job.

» Tell your Field Officer if you are struggling with any problem that could affect your work. Field Officers have lots of ways they can help you to stay on track with your apprenticeship. If relationships, family or TAFE are getting to you, if you’re having problems with drugs or alcohol, or if you’re feeling overwhelmed with work, study and life, ask your Field Officer for help.

» Don’t ignore a safety risk – speak up if something is dangerous. Still not sure? Think about how you would feel if you didn’t speak up and someone was hurt or killed.

What other young workers have done...

“They told me so much information at my induction that I forgot half of it. I was really worried about asking where to find the harnesses because I knew I’d been told at induction, but when I asked no-one cared that I’d forgotten and they showed me straight away. I was surprised how serious they are about safety here”.

“When my boss found out I hadn’t been to TAFE for months he told me he was going to sack me. The truth was I have anxiety issues and every week I pulled up in the car park at TAFE I would have a panic attack then I’d turn around and drive home. When I told him this he was really good. He chatted to my Field Officer who worked with my doctor and TAFE teachers to get me extra support with TAFE.”