

Extreme Safety

Late spring and early summer are peak times for teens to be seeking employment. The Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Administration (MIOSHA) is continuing a special initiative “**Extreme Safety for Working Teens**” to help ensure that young workers have the information they need to stay safe on the job.

Our goal is to provide information to those who help young workers seek employment and ask for their help in sharing this information.

A special brochure for youth, "*Extreme Safety: Important Facts for Working Teens*," ([pdf](#) or [html](#)) is now available online and through the Consultation Education and Training (CET) Division publications library. The brochure provides information on rights and responsibilities under MIOSHA, important safety and health questions to ask when starting a new job, guidance on the types of work appropriate for teen workers, examples of hazards, and where to go for additional information.

A PowerPoint program, "*Extreme Safety*," was available online or on CD from the CET Division. This 31-slide program is intended for audiences of young people who have recently joined the workforce or are about to start a job. The program provides a solid overview of the important role that each person must play in assuring that work is performed safely. It provides basic information on workplace safety and health requirements and encourages young workers to be proactive in learning the hazards and safeguards of jobs they are assigned to perform. The program also contains information on MIOSHA rights and responsibilities, where to go for help, and examples of teen worker injuries.

A special mailing of the CD and brochure was sent to all intermediate school districts (ISDs) in Michigan. MIOSHA encourages teachers, job counselors, civic organizations, churches and other groups working with teens to use the program and brochure in their job orientation and readiness programs.

A second publication providing greater information on many of the typical hazards of jobs routinely performed by young workers, along with teen worker case studies is in progress for distribution in the fall to public, charter, vocational and technical high schools, and other trade schools and training centers.

Work Can Be Dangerous

Most young people work during their high school years, according to a National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) report. According to the report, 50 percent of youths between ages 15 and 17 work at some time during the course of a year and 80 percent of students work at least sometime during high school. This summer in Michigan, it is anticipated that more than 340,000 teenagers aged 16 to 19 will be seeking jobs in Michigan, and that nearly 278,000 teens will find summer work.

For many of these teens, their summer job is their first work experience. And while it is a great opportunity to earn money and learn job skills, it can also present hazards and dangers that they may not be trained to address.

NIOSH estimates each year, at least 100,000 young workers nationwide seek treatment in an emergency room for a work-related injury. And, at least 70 young people are killed nationwide on the job each year, which is double the fatality rate of adult workers.

The Michigan Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation (MIFACE) report on Traumatic Work-Related Fatalities in Michigan for 2004, identifies three deaths of workers under the age of 20. The deaths occurred in Agriculture, Construction, and Accommodation and Food Service Industries.

These tragic statistics highlight the fact that work performed by young workers can be dangerous. Young workers often have little or no work experience to rely on and can be less mature than older workers. They may also be less likely to challenge their supervisors about dangerous tasks and conditions.

Legal Requirements

MIOSHA urges all who work with young workers to help ensure they have the information, skill, and equipment to perform their work safely.

- **Employers** must be knowledgeable of the laws covering child labor and safety, and need to provide safe employment with adequate supervision.
- **Parents** are encouraged to take an active interest in their children's employment decisions. This may include a visit to the employer to learn what work their child will be performing.
- **Educators** must consider safety when signing work permits and preparing young people for work.

The Michigan Youth Employment Standards Act, Act 90 of 1978, provides for the legal employment and protection of youth, 14 through 17 years of age, who work. Youth are restricted in who they may work for and the type of work they may perform. The Wage and Hour Program in the Department of Licensing & Regulatory Affairs administers the Act. Special approval for some restricted work for 16- and 17-year-olds may be authorized. Employers must apply for special approval to the Wage and Hour Program.

More Information

The MIOSHA program is planning a multi-year initiative that will provide outreach to young workers, educators, parents, and other organizations, on the hazards and safeguards of specific types of work. The goal of the initiative is to increase awareness about workplace hazards to ensure that young workers have the knowledge to safely perform assigned work.

For more information or to obtain the brochure, PowerPoint programs, or fact sheets, contact the Consultation Education and Training (CET) Division at 517-322-1809. In addition, CET has consultants who can assist with large group presentations and gatherings.

For more information on types of work, compensation, and permissible hours of work for young workers, contact the Department of Education, Youth Employment at 517-335-6041 or visit their [website](#).

Resources

Landscape & Horticultural Services Industry Fact Sheet ([doc](#) / [pdf](#))

The Construction Industry Fact Sheet ([doc](#) / [pdf](#))

Restaurant/Fast Food Industry Fact Sheet ([doc](#) / [pdf](#))

Retail Industry Fact Sheet ([doc](#) / [pdf](#))

Youth Fatal Facts ([doc](#) / [pdf](#))

[OSHA's Young Workers Safety & Health Information](#)

[An Overview of the Michigan Minimum Wage & Overtime Law \(WHD-9802\)](#)

[Youth Employment Standard](#)

[Links to Other Resource's Websites](#)