



## TOOLBOX TALK: YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

# Keeping Missouri Youth Safe on the Job

Today's workforce includes employees of all ages, including young people. Through employment, teens can start to earn their own money and they can also learn many valuable skills including responsibility, timeliness, honesty, teamwork, communication skills, and confidence. However, young workers have high rates of getting injured on the job.

## WE CAN ALL HELP KEEP YOUNG WORKERS SAFE

### PARENTS:

Take an active role in the employment decisions of your children:

- Know where your children are working, what they will be doing, and their hours.
- Ask your children about what they did at work and the training and supervision provided by the employer. Discuss any problems or concerns.
- Help your young worker report hazards to managers or, if necessary, to OSHA if a work environment seems unsafe. Hazard reports may also be filed with the Missouri Division of Labor Standards if you believe they are violating a child labor law.
- Watch for signs of concern:
  - Is a job taking too much of a physical or mental toll on your young worker?
  - Signs of concern may include increased stress levels, anxiety, fatigue and depression.
  - How is your child's performance at school?

### SCHOOL OFFICIALS:

As an educator, you can help protect young workers in several ways:

- Teach teen workers their rights and provide safety information.
- Incorporate information about workers' rights and occupational safety and health hazards into the high school and middle school curriculum.
- Integrate health and safety training into your general education and vocational programs. Students can use this knowledge throughout their careers, and it may be the only training they get before joining the workforce.
- Check all aspects of a work certificate prior to issuing it in order to ensure compliance with Missouri child labor law. Contact the Division of Labor Standards if you ever have a question or concern.

## EMPLOYERS:

- Understand and comply with state and federal child labor laws.
- Ensure that young workers receive training to recognize hazards and are competent in safe work practices. Training should be in a language and vocabulary that workers can understand.
- Implement a mentoring or buddy system for new young workers.

- Encourage young workers to ask questions about tasks or procedures that are not clear.
- Ensure that equipment operated by young workers is both legal and safe for them to use.
- Label equipment that young workers are not allowed to operate.
- Tell young workers what to do if they get hurt on the job.

Missouri's Child Labor Law restricts the types of jobs and the hours that youth under 16 can work. 14-15 year old workers may also need a work certificate. For more information on Missouri youth employment requirements please visit: <https://labor.mo.gov/youth-employment>.

## I understand how to keep young workers safe.

**COMPANY:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**EMPLOYEE NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

**EMPLOYEE SIGNATURE:** \_\_\_\_\_

Learn more ways to keep your workplace safe.  
Visit [safeatwork.mo.gov](http://safeatwork.mo.gov).

