

Learn Safe

Young Worker Safety

Young workers face specific dangers in the workforce. YWCHSB works with young workers, parents, educators and employers to help prevent young worker injury.

Young Worker Facts

Young workers are 15 – 24 years old.

Since young workers are typically unfamiliar with many common workplace hazards, they may be more likely to be injured by them.

- Hazards are anything that could damage, harm or have adverse effects on someone or something.
- Hazards can be physical, chemical, biological, ergonomic or psychosocial.

Young workers may be at higher risk of injury than older, more experienced workers.

- Young workers are less likely to have had the training or experience to recognize hazards and know what to do to prevent injury.
- Young workers are more likely to feel pressured to impress others and less likely to challenge authority figures.
- Young workers are more likely to take risks and less likely to ask questions if they don't understand.

Young workers work in just about every workplace and type of job.

There is no legal minimum age for working in Yukon, except in mining, where the minimum age is 16 for surface mines and 18 for underground mines.

Workplace Rights and Responsibilities

Young workers have the same health and safety rights and responsibilities as all other workers.

Rights

- The right to know about health and safety hazards and the training to perform the job safely.
- The right to participate in workplace health and safety programs by, for example, serving on safety committees, taking part in inspections.
- The right to refuse to perform unsafe work.

Responsibilities

- Follow health and safety rules.
- Wear required safety clothing and personal protective equipment (PPE).
- Correct hazards, if possible, and if not, to report them to supervisors.
- Refrain from horseplay, fighting or practical jokes in the workplace.
- Stay off the job if they are impaired in any way, including being drunk, stoned or hung over.
- Report all accidents and injuries right away to supervisors and quickly to YWCHSB.

Employer responsibilities

- Pay special attention to the orientation and training of young workers since they are at greater risk of injury than older, more experienced workers.
- Advise workers of potential or actual hazards.
- Train workers and offer competent supervision to ensure work is done safely.
- Check to ensure that workers wear and use personal protective equipment (PPE) correctly.
- Provide written instructions describing how to work safely.
- Follow the Young and New Workers Code of Practice

Young and New Worker Code of Practice

- YWCHSB introduced a code of practice in 2009 to explain the minimum orientation, training, and supervisory requirements of employers towards their young and new workers, and to provide practical guidance to employers to help them meet these requirements.
- The Young and New Worker Code of Practice Backgrounder and Guidelines for Employers is a practical guide to improving young worker health and safety. This document explains why the Code of Practice is necessary for young workers and discusses hazard assessment, orientation, training and supervision of young workers.