

10 Tips to keep young workers safe

1. Get to know your new recruits before training begins. Take an informal tour of the workplace and introduce trainees to co-workers and key people including the safety and health manager.
2. Have new and young workers shadow a more experienced worker to learn safe work procedures from watching others. Provide new workers with a mentor they can bring their questions and concerns to.
3. Don't mistake worker silence for quiet understanding. Few young workers will voluntarily ask questions or seek clarification on performing the work safely, so it is up to you to draw those questions from them.
4. Encourage questions from new workers, making it clear that feedback from new and young workers is always valued.
5. Vary your training/instruction methods to ensure all workers understand your message. People learn in different ways so it is important to do more than simply show and tell. Ask workers to demonstrate what they have learned or to provide you with a verbal or written explanation of what they've learned.
6. Explain why certain procedures are in place. Workers who understand the reason behind a policy or procedure are more likely to follow it.
7. Lead by example. Your actions must match your words consistently.
8. Make yourself available to answer questions before, during and after training.
9. Provide examples of unsafe equipment and work conditions and explain why it is important workers report safety concerns to you or another supervisor.
10. Start over with your training when a young worker returns to your workplace for a second summer. Your workplace may have changed, and your young employee has had plenty of time to forget everything he/she was taught during the previous summer at work.