



Are you an employer or parent of a **teen worker?**

The facts

- Injuries to workers under age 18 occur at a rate double that for adults.
- Nearly 50 percent of injuries occur during the first six months on the job.
- Teens get injured when they do jobs they are not trained to do, lack adequate supervision, or work with dangerous equipment the law prohibits them from using.
- While the majority of injuries are burns, cuts, slips and falls, some injuries result in lifelong disability.
- Disability can change the course of a teenager's life, even closing the door on an intended career.
- In the summer of 2003, three 16-year-olds in Washington State were killed on the job.



What employers can do

- Know the rules for hiring and employing teens. These rules cover the hours that teens can work, meal periods, rest breaks, prohibited duties and minimum wage. Some requirements for 14- and 15-year-olds differ from those for 16- and 17-year-olds.
- Provide safety orientation and training to all new employees, including teen workers. They don't know the risks in your workplace unless you tell them.
- Provide extra supervision to teen workers when they are new to the job. Teen workers need lots of repetition.
- Encourage teen workers to ask questions. They may be more reluctant than adults to speak up.
- Create a buddy system with experienced workers you trust can do a good job explaining to teen workers how to work safely.
- Give positive feedback for work done safely.
- Treat every young worker with the same care you want your child to receive at work.

Resources for employers

L&I will present a free workshop, "Supervising for Safety," to interested employer organizations. Contact L&I's child labor specialist, 360-902-6041, for more information.

More information for employers, parents and teens

- Visit L&I's web site for comprehensive information on hiring teens, including printable publications: www.LNI.wa.gov/WorkplaceRights/TeenWorkers.
- Contact your local L&I office for assistance. (Telephone numbers are listed in the government or white pages of your telephone directory.)
- Contact L&I's Employment Standards Program in Tumwater, 360-902-5316, or e-mail teensafety@lni.wa.gov.