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Improving Entry  
Level Worker Safety

*Eyes, Ears,  
& Voice of Retailers*



## Notes

Most young workers do not have the training and orientation needed to work safely. It is frequently assumed that they already know what is safe. The lack of experience, working in environments with more hazards, and engaged in more physical work than older co-workers, exposes them to unsafe practices. Being a novice on the job and not familiar with the work or hazards leads to an increased risk of occupational injuries. This is why they get injured at a rate 4-5 times more than their older counterparts.

Entry level workers want to show that they are just as capable as their co-workers and may often take on tasks and risks without completely understanding or knowing the safe way to carry out that job. Some characteristics these younger workers exhibit:

- They will be more inclined to take unnecessary risk.
- They don't ask questions for fear of being unwise.
- They want to prove themselves capable.
- They lack experiencing activities that would give them an understanding of consequences of unsafe actions.

# Additional Entry Level Worker Resources

## Washington Retail Association

<http://www.retailassociationservices.com/entry-level-safety-in-retail/>

## Washington Labor & Industries Speakers Program

<http://www.lni.wa.gov/WorkplaceRights/TeenWorkers/SpeakersProgram/>

## Youth Job Safety Resources

<http://www.lni.wa.gov/WorkplaceRights/TeenWorkers/JobSafety/SafetyResources/>

## Health and Safety Awareness for Working Teens (HSAWT) resource website for Washington State

<https://osha.washington.edu/pages/health-and-safety-awareness-working-teens-home>

## Oregon OSHA youth safety

<http://osha.oregon.gov/workers/Pages/Young-workers.aspx>

## Young Workers.org

<http://youngworkers.org/nywsr/>

Nationwide, over 170,000 young workers were injured and 361 were killed in 2012. A serious injury or death of a young person seems more tragic when they are robbed of a healthy future. How can this be reversed? This project will provide a new tool that the younger age group will be more inclined to work with, the smart phone. An app that will enable them to get basic safety training on topics to lead them towards a more accident free career.

We have focused this app from data that Washington Labor & Industries has provided. It shows most accidents in the following areas:

- Manual material handling – moving large heavy objects without help
- Forklift/Pallet jack – not knowing how to operate forklift, losing control of pallet jack
- Struck by - stored energy of strapping bands, cut by box knife, cut by table saw
- Vehicle related – motor vehicle accident as a driver, struck by car in parking lot
- Slips, trip & falls – improper ladder use, not conscious of conditions- spills, ice, door mats

Most people believe that the retail/service sector would be a relatively safe place for young adults to work. But this area has the highest volume of accidents.







### Other Tips

Young adults are more visual learners and their orientation should be given in “chunks”. Giving them a stack of paper to read will not work as well as a hands-on approach. This is why we developed an app with short sessions/modules with mixed instruction built in. This will also give you an opportunity to check back in with them and follow up on progress before you give them the next “chunk” of orientation, which could be how to move heavy objects.

Younger workers often don’t or won’t ask questions. You have to make them feel comfortable asking questions and take the time to make sure you both understand. You should frequently check in with them and make sure they are accomplishing the task while using safe practices. This will also allow the opportunity for questions from either party. Another way is a buddy system where they can be paired up with a more experienced worker who can share tips and knowledge.

This is not intended to replace the employer’s current responsibility to give proper training on the equipment these entry level workers will be using. This app gives the young worker a way to understand how to work safely. This way your young employee is less likely to become an accident statistic.



You can find the SafeMe! app using one of the methods below

[www.wrasafeme.org](http://www.wrasafeme.org)

