



# Young Workers At Risk

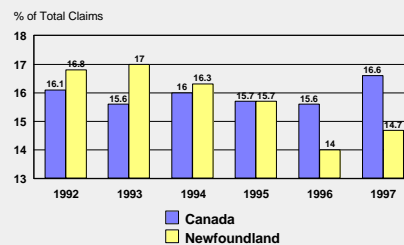
*Teach Safety and They Will Learn*

## Research Brief

Young workers have unique characteristics. Usually they work in part-time, temporary, minimum wage jobs, or as part of a larger team or crew with other workers. They are often unaware of their rights as workers and, due to their inexperience, slower to recognize workplace risks. General reluctance to ask questions, especially in group settings, combined with youthful energy and eagerness to please can result in young workers taking on tasks for which they are neither prepared for nor capable of doing safely. Several U.S. reports suggest that young people generally do not receive adequate injury prevention training. (Children's Safety Network).

The percentage of total lost time claims for young workers - ages 15 to 24 - in Canada was 15.9% from 1992-97. In Newfoundland, the figure was 15.7%. This consistently observed level of injury is troubling, especially considering that total lost time claims decreased 16.6% from 1992 to 1997. What this means is that we are observing a greater reduction in lost time claims from age groups other than young workers.

**Time-Loss Claims: Age Group 15-24, 1992-97**



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The high levels of injury in young workers was responded to by the WHSCC in 1998. Research funds were provided to the Newfoundland and Labrador Employers' Council and the Avalon West School Board to pilot a new High School course in **Workplace Safety** beginning in September 1998. The pilot course will be evaluated in June 1999 to assess the feasibility of launching the course province-wide.

Teach our young people the principles of workplace health and safety early in life and we will build the foundation for a productive, total safety culture. Young workers need your experienced guidance in the workplace.

***Show them that you are dedicated to their health and safety in everything you do!***