

Dear Diary,

January 5, 2003

Today in school there was a presentation about workplace injury and death among youth. The man who was presenting was telling a story of how his son got killed by the machinery in his workplace. He told us that it could have been prevented if his son had received the proper training. This made me realize that in my workplace I did not know how to work the heavy machinery. After school, when I went to work, I asked my employer for extra training in order for me to improve my skills on the machines and to improve my safety on the job. My employer gave me the extra training needed and since then I have felt safer at work. Out of curiosity, I also went on the internet to learn more about workplace safety. I went on the following website, <http://www.ccohs.ca/youngworkers/>, and learned that one in seven young workers is injured on the job. In addition, I learned that most young workers were injured on the job by machinery and electrocutions. To add to this, the website informed me that almost 110,000 young workers were seriously injured in one year. Now that I am more informed about the safety in my workplace I am less likely to become a statistic.

Sincerely,

Mike

Mike (16 year old worker)

In this entry, Mike, like many other young workers, was not properly trained to work with the heavy machinery at his work. This is a common problem which leads to many injuries and deaths in the workplace among youths. To help the youth of today to be better informed of their safety on the job, there should be more programs and presentations about youth rights and safety on the job. For example, workers have the right to refuse unsafe work, the right to participate in the workplace health and safety activities, and the right to know actual and potential dangers in the workplace.

(Government of Canada, <http://www.ccohs.ca/youngworkers/>).

Dear Diary,

January 6, 2003

Tonight I will be going to my first job interview. I do not know what to expect of the interview. In order to prepare myself, I researched the internet on questions I should ask the interviewer. Some examples of questions I found are:

- Are there any dangers I have to worry about in this job?
- Will I receive the proper safety training and will I be expected to wear safety gear? When?
- Will I be informed on where to find fire extinguishers, first aid kits, and other emergency equipment? Will I be trained on how to use these pieces of equipment?
- What are my health and safety responsibilities?
- Who do I ask if I have a safety question?

(Government of Canada, <http://www.ccohs.ca/youngworkers/>)

Now I have a better understanding of what to ask at the job interview. These questions will inform me on whether or not this job is safe for me to work at. I am now more confident about this job interview. Wish me luck!

Yours truly,

Anna

Anna (17 year old interviewee)

In this entry, like many teenagers going to their first job interview, Anna does not know what questions to ask to ensure their safety on the job. However, Anna was proactive by researching what questions to ask the interviewer. On the other hand, not all teenagers have the opportunity, time, or discipline to research this information necessary. A solution to this would be to have competitions within high schools to test their knowledge on workplace safety and how to be prepared for work.

Dear Diary,

January 7, 2003

Today, I went to a school to do a presentation on tips for workplace safety. I am a forty year old employer who takes extra precautions to make sure the young workers that I hire receive the proper training and feel safe on the job.

Some tips that I gave the students were:

- When completing an interview, keep an eye out for signs that the workplace is safe, and that the employer takes safety seriously. For example look for warning signs in hazardous areas, employees wearing protective equipment, or safety posters.
- Always ask for a copy of the safety rules at the workplace.
- When you are being trained, make sure to ask experienced employees about safety hazards.
- Make sure that before you start working, you can recognize the WHMIS hazards symbols and know what they mean.
- Know how to wear your personal protective equipment properly, and also make sure it fits properly.
- Follow all the safety precautions that are given to you.

(Government of Canada, <http://www.ccohs.ca/youngworkers/>)

It is sad to see so many young workers injured on the job, and I feel that it is my duty as an employer to help educate young workers about workplace safety.

Sincerely,

Bob

Bob (40 year old employer)

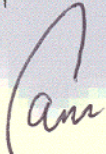
Young workers should look for employers like Bob because he makes sure that they are in a safe working environment. It is also important that young workers recognize if their workplace is hazardous and requires extra training. Even employers should research the internet on things that they can do and what laws they need to follow. For example, the age regulations in Ontario are, minimum age of employment is 14, minimum age of employment is 15 for factory work, minimum age of employment is 16 for logging and construction projects, and minimum age of employment is 18 for underground mining. Furthermore, employers should have a supervisor to ensure young workers are properly trained on all aspects of their job and safety in their workplace. The responsibilities of a supervisor is to be qualified by knowledge, training, or experience to organize work and its performance, to know the laws and regulations that apply to the job, and to know the potential and actual hazards in the workplace.

Dear Diary,

January 8, 2003

Being a fifteen year old boy, many of my friends already have jobs. For the past couple of days I have been thinking about whether or not I should get a job. My parents have not told me to get a job yet, so if I can find a job that pays me pretty well, I will work. However, I did not know what the minimum wage was so I went on the internet and found out that the minimum wage for adults and youth are different in Ontario. Furthermore, I learned from the website that the minimum wage is set by the *Employment Standards Act, 2000*. The website states that general workers earn \$6.85 an hour, where as students less than eighteen years of age earn \$6.40 an hour. On the other hand, students that work more than twenty-eight hours a week during school are entitled to \$6.85 an hour for all hours worked. I know that adults earn a higher hourly rate because their cost of living is higher due to the fact that they have to support themselves, whereas students have their parents to depend on. Therefore, I think I can accept the lower hourly rate and I think I will find a job that is best suitable to me in the near future. (Ministry of Labour, <http://www.worksmartontario.gov.on.ca/>)

Yours truly,



Cam (15 year old boy, unemployed)

Like most people, Cam was trying to get a job for monetary reasons. He was going to try and find a job but he did not know anything about minimum wages. Since he was uninformed, he went on some websites and found that minimum wages for adults and students under the age of 18 are not the same. He knew the reason behind this and decided that the minimum wage was reasonable so he is going to go out and try and find a job in the near future.

Dear Diary,

January 9, 2003

As a parent of a sixteen year old girl, I was worried that my daughter did not know enough about workplace safety in order to begin work. Today I had a good conversation with her about workplace safety and we discussed the following:

- What types of jobs and workplace options are available to her?
- What the nature of her tasks on certain jobs would be?
- Talking to her future employer about health and safety policies and training.
- The dangers of working alone or at night.
- Making sure she asks her future employer questions and seeks help if she is uncertain about work practices or activities.

(Government of Canada, <http://www.ccohs.ca/youngworkers/>)

After the conversation with my daughter, I am more confident that my daughter will make the right decision about safe working conditions and I know I do not have to worry as much about her when she begins to work.

Sincerely,

Melinda

Melinda (43 year old mother)

Many parents think that their kids are ready for work and informed about workplace safety. However, more parents should be like Melinda and talk to their kids about taking precautions to prevent workplace injuries. If more parents informed their kids about hazardous workplaces, there would be a higher possibility of workplace injuries decreasing.

## **Works Cited**

1. <http://www.ccohs.ca/youngworkers/> (Pictures and Info)
2. <http://www.worksmartontario.gov.on.ca/> (Info)