

Tips for preventing young worker injuries

Check out saif.com and orosh.org for safety resources, including training materials.

In the last 10 years, SAIF has seen more than **55,000** claims involving young workers.

More than 75 percent of these injuries fall into four categories. Addressing common workplace hazards can have a big impact in preventing injuries.

Young workers have less experience in workplaces and with workplace hazards. Discuss all potential hazards, even the ones you think are obvious.

Strains

Common causes: Repeated lifting (even if the items are light), bending, and twisting.

What you can do: **Require** use of lifting aids such as carts or dollies.

Provide training on ways to reduce strain when lifting or carrying.

Ask your supplier to send shipments in smaller boxes.

Identify and redesign processes requiring twisting.

Reduce the need to bend by raising work to waist height.

Between 2003 and 2013, young worker injuries caused

more than \$139 million in claims costs and more than 375,000 days missed from work due to injury.

Slips, trips, or falls

Common causes: Falling from ladders, tripping on stairs, being distracted, neglecting spills.

What you can do: **Review** housekeeping procedures, including how to address spills.

Provide hands-on training about proper ladder usage.

Implement a no cell phone policy to minimize distractions.

Ensure stairs are maintained and well lit.

Ask staff to identify hazards such as slippery areas, blind corners, and trip hazards.

Laceration or puncture

Common causes: Most prevalent in kitchens, but can occur anywhere sharp tools are used.

What you can do: **Provide** training on how to properly use each tool and piece of equipment.

Maintain equipment and machine guards, and ensure blades are sharp.

Purchase box cutters and razor blades with safety features.

Consider cut-resistant gloves.

Identify ways to eliminate distractions during the cutting process.

Struck by/ against

Common causes: Working in crowded spaces, dropping tools or materials, materials falling from overhead.

What you can do: **Provide** hands-on training for each tool and task.

Identify opportunities to improve work areas that are crowded or cluttered.

Implement procedures about where and how to store supplies and tools.

Coach employees who are rushing or distracted.

Hold staff accountable for housekeeping procedures.



Young workers tend not to ask questions or speak up when they are unsure about how to do something. Keep them safe with hands-on training, frequent coaching, and consistent enforcement of your policies.