

By Michael Lynders a student at Shelton High

Promoting Young Worker Health & Safety

Fast Facts:

- 44% of CT teens work a paying job during the school year.
- 12% of CT teens reported having a work-related injury.
- From 2001-2007, the annual CT Emergency Department costs associated with teen worker injuries have nearly doubled to \$1.4 million per year.
- Nationally, 74% of children under age 15 who were killed on the job from 2003 to 2010 were employed in agriculture.
- Federal regulations prohibit teens <18 years of age from working in high-risk occupations such as manufacturing, automotive, mining, operating heavy equipment, motor vehicle driving or as an outside helper on a motor vehicle for the purpose of transporting or delivering goods.
- Young workers 15-24 years-of-age have approximately twice the rate of non-fatal injury as older workers nationally.

How many teen workers are injured each year in CT?

In 2008, the Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH) reviewed youth injury and illness data from various sources available to provide the most complete and accurate picture of teen workers' injured each year in Connecticut.

The 2007 Youth Risk Behavior Survey indicated that approximately 78,000 high school students in Connecticut had a paying job outside their home, and over 20,000 teens were injured at work.

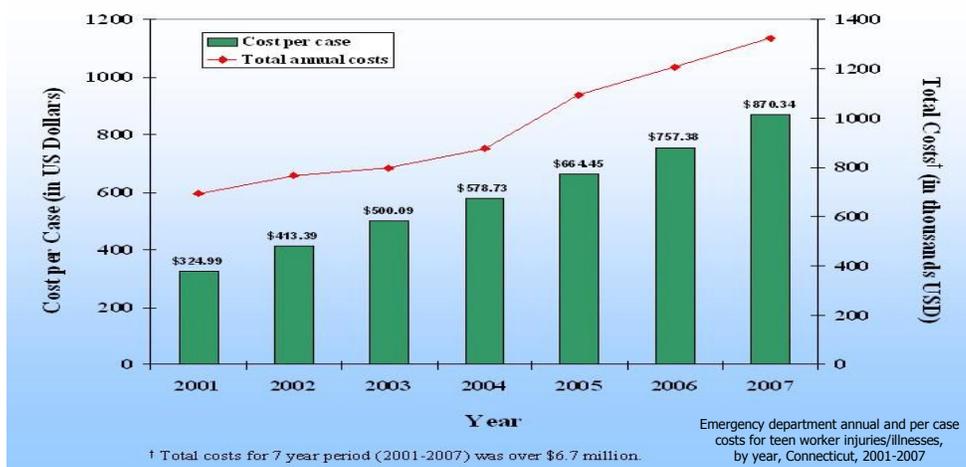
Emergency Department (ED) cost data consistently increased each year since 2001, to the point where total annual emergency department costs associated with teen worker injuries and illnesses in CT have almost doubled and the cost per case has nearly tripled.

Despite a wide variation in the number of injuries and illnesses captured by the Workers' Compensation Commission, Emergency Department and Hospital Discharge, both females and workers of Hispanic/Latino ethnicity appeared to be consistently overrepresented in comparison to their representation in the state's teen workforce.

The percentage of injured/ill teen workers in Government, Health Services, Retail Stores and Restaurants appeared to be over-represented based on the percentage of young workers in these industries.

These findings confirm that no single data source can adequately determine the current and overall burden of teen worker injuries and illnesses. Analysis of young worker data in Connecticut also highlights the need for continuing young worker outreach activities.

CT Annual Costs for Teen Worker Injuries/Illnesses



What is hazardous work?

Hazardous work is “work which, by its nature or by the circumstances under which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety, or morals of children.”

Connecticut Young Worker Health & Safety Team

The Connecticut Young Worker Health & Safety Team is made up of members representing various state and federal programs and agencies, including State Department of Education, Capitol Region Education Council, CT Department of Labor, U.S. Department of Labor, U.S. OSHA, CT Department of Public Health, CONN-OSHA, and ConnectiCOSH. Members meet once a month to discuss current safety issues, plan events and outreach activities to promote youth worker safety. Some team members also give talks to students, teachers, parents, and employers about health and safety in the workplace.

We encourage all educators to become train-the-trainer advocates to help promote workplace health and safety for teens. The training curriculum is a toolkit consisting of with resource information, links to health and safety websites, and provides students an opportunity to participate in important conversations about health and safety hazards in the workplace through role play scenarios. If you are interested in attending a training session, please contact Judith.Andrews@ct.gov For more information on the CT Young Worker Health & Safety Team contact Deborah.Pease@ct.gov

Sexual Harassment: An Ongoing Hazard for Youth in the Workplace

Last spring, the Connecticut Women's Education and Legal Fund administered a one-time, anonymous survey electronically (using Survey Monkey) to students via their Cooperative Work Experience instructors. The survey was designed to ask about student knowledge of what constitutes sexual harassment, student experiences of being harassed, any reporting of the harassment, comfort level with discussion of sexual harassment, and training/materials related to sexual harassment.

Students in the sample could identify the behaviors that constitute sexual harassment, especially the most offensive acts such as physical touch or when something is given in return for something else (pay raise for sexual acts). Yet, knowledge of the kinds of behaviors that constitute a hostile environment are not as apparent. And more importantly, students are experiencing sexual

harassment. While rates are lower for most types of harassing behaviors in school sponsored workplaces than in non-school sponsored workplaces, all students are experiencing these behaviors with some frequency.

More than 33% of students in school-sponsored workplaces reported someone staring at or making comments about his/her clothing, body or appearance, and experiences related to sexual jokes and comments; over 20% of students in school-sponsored workplaces reported spreading of sexual rumors, unwanted texts, emails, phone calls and social media messages. In addition, **19.5% of students in school-sponsored workplaces have been touched in an unwelcome sexual way.**

Only 13.5% of students who experienced sexual harassment reported the harassment to someone. This is not a surprising statistic. Students' do not report

that they have been targets of sexual harassment and are more likely to tell friends than any adult.

These are not the work experiences we want students to have as a foundation. During the 2012-2013 school year, CWEALF staff will be surveying a broader sample of students to determine if the respondents' experiences are representative of the students in workplaces.

The results will be used to create and revise training and materials related to sexual harassment of students at their place of employment for all parties-students, teachers, parents, supervisors. We must empower students with accurate sexual harassment information. We must also infuse workplace training in Cooperative Work Experience and other school sponsored work education programs with relevant information and guidance related to sexual harassment.

For more information contact CWEALF@CWEALF.org



The rules regarding CT's Child Labor Laws ensure that our young people are able to work and learn in a safe environment while furthering their education and preparing for future careers.

16 and 17 year olds all need Working Papers in order to be employed.

14 and 15 year olds need Working Papers only in specific Instances.

All minors must be paid the prevailing minimum wage.

Family owned businesses are not exempt from following the regulations outlined above.

Working Papers — The Basics

The issuance of working papers in the State of Connecticut ensures that individuals under the age of 18 are employed in occupations that are acceptable under the law and that are appropriate based on the minor's age.

Our state and federal governments have enacted laws as safeguards so that minors do not perform harmful or hazardous work and so that employers do not hire minors inappropriately or based on falsified information. Depending on the age of the minor, there are limitations on the number of hours/days that can be worked.

Working Papers, officially referred to as the Certificate of Age Form, are used as a verification of a minor's legal age for employment purposes. The superintendent of schools of any local or regional school district, or an agent designated by the superintendent, issues the Working Papers to any resident under the age of 18 who desires employment and has met all the requirements. Working Papers are obtained from a student's public high school or superintendent's office upon presentation of a promise of employment from an employer and documentation of the minor's age.

Connecticut's Certificate of Age Form is not valid for out-of-state work because the laws and regulations for issuing certificates in other states may not be the same as those in Connecticut. If Connecticut minors are looking to find work out of state, they must apply for their employment certificates using the process that is governed by the laws and/or regulations of that state. The reverse is also true, in that employment certificates from other states are not valid for work in Connecticut.

Out-of-state minors hired to work in Connecticut may apply to the school district where his or her prospective place of employment is located.

If the minor is temporarily residing in Connecticut, the school district in which he or she resides also may issue the certificate. Local school districts or superintendents' offices must issue working papers whether or not the minor is enrolled in that school district. Regardless of where the out-of-state minor obtains a certificate, the out-of-state minor must meet guidelines established by the Connecticut Departments of Education and Labor regarding this matter.

The Connecticut Departments of Labor and Education work collaboratively to ensure that all minors are protected and all employers comply with the workplace standards established for minors.

For further information on Working Papers, contact:

Maureen Wagner
Education Consultant
Connecticut State Department
of Education at
maureen.wagner@ct.gov



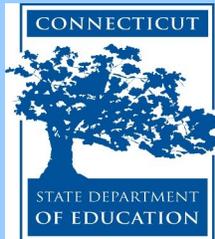


State of Connecticut
Department of Public Health
Occupational Health Unit
410 Capitol Avenue
PO Box 340308, MS#:11OSP
Hartford, CT 06134-0308

Tel: 860-509-7742
Fax: 860-509-7785

deborah.pease@ct.gov

Our Partners:



Connecticut Young Worker Resources:

Connecticut Department of Labor

Wage and Workplace Standards Division - 860-263-6791

(Connecticut laws regulating hours/occupations/industries teens can work, and enforcement of state child labor laws).

US Department of Labor OSHA

(Private employers)

Hartford Office - 860-240-3152

Bridgeport Office - 203-579-5581

US Department of Labor

Wage and Hour Division - 860-240-4160

(Federal labor laws regulating hours, occupations, and industries that teens are allowed to work).

CONN-OSHA - 860-263-6900

(State/municipal worksite enforcement and consultation for state, municipal and private worksites).

OSHA Referral Line (private employees) 1-800-321-OSHA

Connecticut State Department of Education

Bureau of Standards, Curriculum and Instruction - 860-713-6766

Connecticut Department of Public Health

Occupational Health Unit - 860-509-7740

(Provides guidance, educational materials, resources, statistical data, employer, worker, teacher, and teen trainings related to young worker health and safety).

Additional Resources:

CT Young Worker Health and Safety Team Website:

<http://www.ctdol.state.ct.us/YoungWorkerSafety/index.htm>

US Department of Labor, OSHA

Teen Workers Website: www.osha.gov/SLTC/teenworkers/index.html

US Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division

Youth Rules! Website: www.youthrules.dol.gov

CT Department of Labor: www.ctdol.state.ct.us

CT State Department of Education:

Work Based Learning: www.state.ct.us/sde/deps/Career/WB/index.htm

CT Department of Public Health

Occupational Health Website: www.ct.gov/dph/occupationalhealth

National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH)

Young Worker Safety Publications: www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/youth/

University of California Labor Occupational Health Program Young Worker

Health and Safety website: www.youngworkers.org

NIOSH Alert: Preventing Deaths, Injuries and Illness of Young Workers

Promoting Safe Work for Young Workers

www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2003-128/pdfs/2003128.pdf