

As we gear up for the holiday season, so do seasonal jobs (e.g. retail and restaurants) for teens and young adults. Do you have teens who are working this holiday season? Make sure they are aware of workplace hazards such as:

- Falls from ladders (e.g., while hanging store decorations and product displays or stocking shelves)
- Being struck by objects or equipment (e.g., dropped merchandise or tools, moving dollies or shopping carts)
- Sprains and strains to shoulder, back or neck (e.g., improper lifting and handling of heavy or large objects, repeated bending, stooping or overhead reaching)
- Electrical or burn hazards (e.g., putting up decorative lights)
- Sharp tools (e.g., knives, box cutters) or power tools that can cause cuts, bruises and serious injury
- Slips and trips (e.g., wet or slippery floor surfaces or walkways cluttered with merchandise)

Make sure your teens know that, as workers, they have three basic rights under the [Occupational Health and Safety Act \(OHSA\)](#):

- The "**right to participate**" in the process of identifying and resolving health and safety concerns
- The "**right to know**" about any hazards to which they may be exposed
- The "**right to refuse work**" that they believe is dangerous

They should also be aware that the Act prohibits employers from punishing them if they exercise these rights. They can learn more by completing [Worker Health and Safety Awareness in 4 Steps](#).

How to talk to your teens about health and safety

Sometimes, it is challenging to communicate with teens and young adults about things that concern us as parents. Here are a few tips on communicating with your kids about health & safety at work:

- **Have a two-way conversation.** Many parents worry about their kid's safety. But don't let your fear be the focus or reason for discussing safety. Have a two-way conversation and let them feel responsible for their own health and safety.
- **Remind them that no job or amount of money is worth the risk of injury.** Tell them that other job opportunities will come along, but being safe at work should be their number one priority.
- **See how much they know about the job.** Ask your kids specific questions about what potential hazards they may face on the job and if they know who to speak to about any concerns they may have.
- **Spot fatigue.** Do they look tired from work or social activities over the holidays? Remind them that lack of rest can create stress and fatigue, leading to increased risk of injury at work.

Letting our kids earn a living is a great way to help them to become responsible adults. As parents, it is our responsibility to find effective ways to communicate with them about health and safety and their [workplace rights](#).

For more information and resources, please visit the Ministry of Labour [Young Worker page](#).



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