

IWH Study Says Newness Is a Bigger Safety Factor than Age



Statistics show that young workers—those under the age of 25—are 33% more likely to suffer a job-related injury or illness than an older worker. But a recent study suggests that this vulnerability may be due less to the age of these workers and more to the fact that they're new to the workplace and its safety hazards.

The study is by a researcher from the Institute for Work & Health. In Ontario, the injury rate of workers age 15–24 has been higher than that of older workers, although the gap has been closing. So instead of focusing on age, the research looked at injuries in relation to the length of time the workers had been on the job.

The researcher found that over a 10-year period, the risk of a workplace injury for workers with shorter job tenure has consistently remained higher compared with those employed at a job for more than one year.

The take-away from the study's findings is that companies must provide proper safety training to *all* new workers—not just the young ones. In addition, other changes can help protect new workers. For example, assign new workers to low-risk jobs before moving them into higher risk positions.

The study will be available in the next issue of the IWH newsletter, *At Work*.

New Worker Resources

If the IWH study isn't enough to get you to address the safety needs of new workers, remember that the OHS laws in some jurisdictions require employers to take steps to adequately protect new workers, including by providing them with a safety orientation.

For more information on how to protect new workers, go to the New & Young Worker Compliance Centre, where you'll find, among other things, a special report that tells you how to protect new (and young) workers.

In addition, attend a webinar, *Effective Safety Onboarding*, tomorrow, July 25, by Pamela Walaski CSP, CHMM, President of JC Safety & Environmental, Inc. In 90 minutes, you'll learn how to create a safety orientation program that trains your new hires to practice good safety starting their very first day.

Remember OHS Insider Pro members can attend for FREE!