



Workplace Safety



The Massachusetts Work-Based Learning Toolkit

This is the Massachusetts Work-Based Learning Toolkit. The Toolkit provides information to present to trainees — employers, educators, students and parents — on how to ensure an effective and productive work-based learning experience for the student and for the employer. The Toolkit also offers trainers information on how to produce a solid training program.

The Toolkit contains:

- ★ Five separate, self-contained modules
- ★ A video capturing quality work-based learning experiences
- ★ A CD-ROM which contains reproducible content from the Toolkit
- ★ Various brochures which can be ordered (see order form)
- ★ Hardcopy of overheads for copying onto transparencies and as handouts for use during a training session.

Trainers can customize each presentation by presenting only those modules of interest to the audience and by adding their own material.

The five modules are:

- ★ Training Essentials
- ★ Implementing the Massachusetts Work-Based Learning Plan
- ★ Mentoring and Supervising Teenagers
- ★ Workplace Safety
- ★ Connecting Workplace Competencies with the Learning Standards

Cover photo courtesy of The Boston Private Industry Council, photographed by Marian Harders

Massachusetts Office for School to Career Transition
Department of Education

350 Main Street ★ Malden, MA 02148
tel: 781-388-3300 x361 ★ fax: 781-388-3382
info-stw@doe.mass.edu ★ www.doe.mass.edu/stw



Workplace Safety

While work has benefits, it also has inherent risks. Nearly 200,000 teenagers are injured on the job every year. Some 20% of 11th and 12th grade students participate in work-based learning in Massachusetts, and 80% work part-time in some capacity during their teenage years.

The child labor laws seek to ensure a safe and healthy introduction to the world of work, without limiting employment opportunities for teens. Along with summarizing the laws governing teenage employment, this module provides strategies to help prevent injuries on the job.

This section on student insurance helps you to determine whether the student has medical insurance while on the job, and describes a course of action if the student is not covered.

Contents

Health and Safety in the Workplace	1	Child Labor Laws	4
Health and Safety Checklist	2	Student Insurance Coverage	5

On the CD

- 1 Workplace Safety Overheads (safetyoverheads.pdf) — Print these overheads onto transparencies for use during a training and/or copy them for use as handouts.
- 2 Workplace Checklist (safetychecklist.pdf) — Print this checklist to assess the safety of the workplace.
- 3 Order Form (orderform.pdf) — Print this form and complete it to order any of the brochures in this toolkit.

Using the CD

On the CD, enclosed in the Toolkit, are .PDF files which can be printed using Adobe Acrobat Reader. Since you may already have this program on your computer, try double clicking on the file you want to open. If it opens, you're all set. If it doesn't open, you can load Adobe Acrobat Reader software in one of two ways:

- 1 Adobe Acrobat Reader is on the CD.
- 2 Download this software from the internet at www.adobe.com. Double click on the words "Free Plug-ins and Updates" and then download Adobe Reader.

In the Pocket

In the pocket of this module are several items to help you train participants in workplace safety.

- 1 Workplace Safety Overheads — Copy these overheads onto transparencies for use during a training and/or copy them for use as handouts.
- 2 Workplace Checklist — Copy and distribute this checklist for trainees to use to assess the safety of a work environment.
- 3 Massachusetts Employers' Guide: Young Worker Health and Safety and the Child Labor Laws — Order this brochure for participating employers.
- 4 A Guide for Working Teens — Order this brochure for teenage participants.
- 5 A Guide for Parents: Protecting Your Working Teen — Order this brochure for participating parents.
- 6 Order Form — Copy this form and complete it to order any of the brochures in this toolkit.

Health and Safety in the Workplace

This section provides information about occupational health and safety, as well as offering ways to make the work experience as safe as possible.

- ★ Use this information to make trainees aware of health and safety issues at the workplace.
- ★ Conduct the group activity to identify hazards and explore strategies to make the workplace safer.
- ★ Go through the Checklist with the trainees to expose them to the range of hazards a workplace may pose.

Students are injured on-the-job at a higher rate than adults. This is often true because teenagers:

- ★ tend to work in industries with high injury rates
- ★ do not receive adequate health and safety training
- ★ are eager to prove themselves as good workers
- ★ think they can do anything; don't know their limits
- ★ are less likely to speak up and/or ask for help

However, the majority of student injuries are due to hazards in the workplace, pressure to do the job quickly, and lack of training and supervision.

Ultimately a company is responsible for the health and safety of its employees. While it is important to educate students on health and safety issues and to teach them how to address situations they feel put them at risk, the burden should not fall on the young person to correct unsafe environments.

An Activity for Audience Participation

Divide the audience into small groups, no more than five or six people per group.

Use a large sheet of paper to draw a floor plan (see sample at right) of a work area, such as a restaurant kitchen, gas station, office, grocery store, or hospital, etc. Include doors, windows, equipment, etc.

Have each group indicate on the floor plan the location of potential health and safety hazards.

Remind them that they are to identify hazards to the workers, not hazards to the customers. Use the list below to help them.

Safety: Are there hazards from machinery, tools, electricity, slippery floors, or lifting?

Chemical: Are there vapors, gases, liquids, or other chemical hazards? Is there poor ventilation?

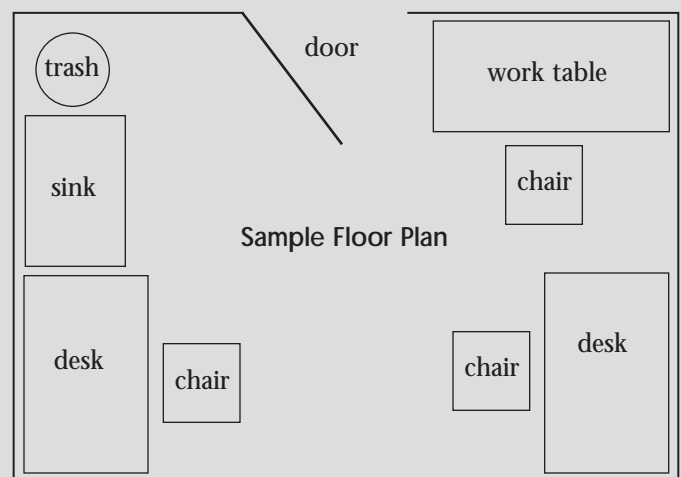
Biological: Are there biological hazards, such as bacteria and viruses, unsanitary conditions, mold, or hazards from animals and plants?

Physical: Are there problems with noise, heat, cold, radiation, or lighting?

Stress: Are there problems/pressures due to pace of work, supervision, customers, or inadequate training?

Tape the maps to the wall. Have one person from each group describe the elements on the map, identify the hazards, and help them focus on the most important hazards.

Have the group discuss how to address the problems. For example, could the situation improve through better equipment, redesign of the workspace, restructure of the task, proper education or training, etc.





Health and Safety Checklist

page 1 of 2

This checklist can be used by adults who place students at jobsites and by students, to assess the safety of a workplace.

Floors and Walkways

- yes no Are exits marked and walkways kept clear?
- yes no Do you know where to get buckets and mops to clean up spills?
- yes no Are non-slip mats, grates, or slip-free coatings used in wet areas to prevent falls?
- yes no Are stairways clear?
- yes no Do stairways have handrails?

Ladders

- yes no Do ladders appear to be in good condition?
- yes no Do ladders have safety feet?
- yes no Are non-metal ladders used when there is a possibility of electric shock?

Fire Safety

- yes no Are there at least two fire emergency exits for each work area?
- yes no Are fire exits clearly marked and pathways to the exits cleared?
- yes no Have you been told what to do in case of a fire?
- yes no Is there a fire extinguisher close to your workstation?

Electrical Hazards

- yes no Have you been told how to recognize when a machine has been locked out (electrical power turned off)?
- yes no Are electrical cords in good condition (no fraying or other defects)?

Ventilation

- yes no Have measures been taken to keep dust levels as low as possible?
- yes no Is the temperature, humidity and air movement in all areas kept as comfortable as possible?

Lighting

- yes no Is there adequate lighting throughout the plant or workplace?
- yes no Are the areas around all machines well lighted?

Health and Safety Checklist

page 2 of 2

Sanitation and Housekeeping

- yes no Are toilet facilities kept clean and ventilated?
- yes no Do toilet facilities have sinks with hot and cold water and disposable hand towels?
- yes no Are insects and rodents adequately controlled?
- yes no Are there eating areas that are separate from work areas?
- yes no Are eating areas and drinking facilities kept clean?
- yes no Are there enough waste containers and are they well-maintained, leak proof, and emptied regularly?

Machine Guarding and Mechanical Safety

- yes no Are machines securely attached to the floor?
- yes no Do machines have guards on them to protect workers from being accidentally injured?
- yes no Have you been instructed to report missing machine guards to your supervisor?
- yes no Do you know how to turn off the machines in your area in case of an emergency?
- yes no Have you been trained in how to work safely around machines?

Noise

- yes no Do you feel your work area is too noisy?
- yes no Do you know where hearing protection is necessary in the plant?

Chemical Hazards

- yes no Are chemicals (including pesticides) properly labeled and stored?
- yes no If you use chemicals (including pesticides) have you:
 Been trained in how to use them safely?
- yes no Been provided protective clothing, gloves and/or respirator as needed?
- yes no Is smoking forbidden near chemicals?
- yes no Are smoking and non-smoking areas clearly marked?

Ergonomic Hazards

- yes no Do you lift more than 30 pounds alone?
- yes no Have you been instructed about proper lifting methods?
- yes no Are job tasks requiring repetitive movements varied or rotated?
- yes no Is the temperature comfortable?



Child Labor Laws

We know that working gives young people skills, confidence, money and exposure to careers. It is an important learning experience.

Child Labor Laws seek to protect the health and safety of the student worker by determining the maximum number of hours a student can work, and the type of work they can perform.

With child labor, both state and federal laws apply. When the laws differ, the stricter law applies.

For example, the federal law allows 16- and 17-year-olds to perform any non-hazardous job for unlimited hours (in accordance with overtime requirements).

Massachusetts law says that 16- and 17-year-olds, when school is in session, can work no more than 48 hours a week, nine hours a day, six days a week.

In this case, state law applies since it is the stricter law.

The three publications in this module provide a thorough summary of the laws that apply to minors who work: *A Guide for Working Teens*, *A Guide for Parents*, and *A Massachusetts Employers' Guide*. Review for your trainees the laws that apply to them.

The employer guide folds out into a poster which summarizes the laws on one page. Urge employers to post it, or keep it handy.

Note: The Child Labor Laws are subject to change at the federal and state level. The three publications and the information in this section are current as of October 1999.

Legal Work Hours for Teens in Massachusetts

14- and 15-Year-Olds

Work Hours

- ★ Only between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. during the school year
- ★ Not during school hours
- ★ Only between 7 a.m. and 9 p.m. during the summer (from July 1 through Labor Day)

Maximum Hours When School Is in Session

- ★ 18 hours a week
- ★ 3 hours a day on school days
- ★ 8 hours a day Saturday, Sunday, holidays
- ★ 6 days a week

Maximum Hours When School Is Not in Session

- ★ 40 hours a week
- ★ 8 hours a day
- ★ 6 days a week

16- and 17-Year-Olds

Work Hours

- ★ Only between 6 a.m. and 10 p.m. (except in restaurants until midnight on Fridays, Saturdays, and during school vacation)

Maximum Hours of Work – Whether or Not School Is in Session

- ★ 48 hours a week
- ★ 9 hours a day
- ★ 6 days a week



Student Insurance Coverage

Insuring unpaid work-based learning students remains uncharted territory for insurance companies, with a few exceptions. Unless there is a specific clause in the school's insurance policy, the typical school policy does not include unpaid internships.

It is important to make sure that students are medically insured while at the workplace.

There are two different insurance categories for students in work-based learning: paid students and unpaid students. This section provides information to help you medically insure all work-based learning students.

Reporting an Injury

The supervisor should tell the student what to do if hurt on the job: Who do I report to? What is considered an injury? How severe must my injury be to report it?

It is highly unlikely that students will initiate questions about these topics. It is the responsibility of the workplace mentor, or the adult placing and/or preparing the student for the job, to explain company policy for injuries while on the job.

Furthermore, students are usually reluctant to report injuries unless they are explicitly instructed to report them. Reporting an injury should be done immediately and it should be made clear that it does not reflect negatively on the student as a person or an employee.

Paid Work-Based Learning

Students who are paid for their work are considered employees under the state's workers' compensation laws. Should a paid student get injured on the job, the student is medically covered through the workers' compensation system, just as any employee would be covered.

By law, all companies, regardless of their size, are required to provide workers' compensation coverage for their employees. Some career specialists require the employer to produce proof that they carry workers' compensation.

To learn whether a company has workers' compensation for its employees, call the Massachusetts Department of Industrial Accidents at the Workers' Compensation Board at 1-800-323-3249 ext. 404 or 405. They will check for you immediately.

Unpaid Work-Based Learning

Standard insurance policies that cover students while at school — including after-school activities such as sports events, band or play practice, field trips and other special events — rarely cover medical costs for an injury during an internship. School administrators often incorrectly assume that a school's insurance policy covers the student at the workplace. They reason that a work-based learning experience is considered an extension of the classroom, and occurs during the official school day.

Take it upon yourself to call the school's insurance carrier to confirm whether the student is covered at the worksite. Unless a clause in the policy specifically addresses internships, it is unlikely the student is covered for work-based learning. Medical insurance coverage needs to be bought specifically for students on internships. Otherwise an injured student will need to rely on her/his family's insurance, assuming the family has insurance.

The Metro South/West Regional Employment Board crafted an insurance policy to specifically cover unpaid students engaged in work-based learning. For less than six dollars per student, the student receives \$1 million of medical coverage for the year.

Note: A bill currently in the Massachusetts legislature (as of October 1999), if passed, will define unpaid students in "school-to-career" internships as employees — the same as a paid employee — for the purpose of insurance under the workers' compensation system.