

## TOOLBOX TALK #2

### HELP KEEP YOUNG WORKERS SAFE

Having a job can be an exciting and rewarding experience for young people. But according to OSHA, people younger than 25 are twice as likely as older workers to be injured on the job, and more than 170,000 young workers were injured and 361 were killed at work in 2012. To help keep young workers safe, education is the key.

Although young workers can be an asset, they often have little to no experience. Common ways young workers get hurt on the job, according to OSHA, include:

- Insufficient safety training
- Working with unsafe equipment
- Poor supervision
- Performing work that is illegal for young workers, such as operating certain types of equipment
- Being pressured to work quickly
- Working in high-stress conditions

Hazards for young workers vary and you can check out OSHA's website to see what they are. But the Agency also notes that many young workers tend to be "temps" or temporary workers and should be treated the same as any other worker, particularly regarding proper safety training. Employers must ensure the following regarding young workers, according to OSHA:

- Comply with all federal and state child labor laws.
- Establish mentorships. Have experienced workers available so younger workers can better learn the ins and outs of a new job.
- Train young workers on proper work practices and how to spot hazards. Ensure training is done in an understandable way appropriate for the worker's age.
- Create a culture in which young workers are encouraged to ask questions.
- Ensure young workers do not operate dangerous equipment.
- Teach young workers what they should do if they get injured at work.

