

It's that time of year when students are finishing up semesters at colleges and universities across Ontario and are venturing out to their summer jobs. Here are a few topics to consider when talking to your children about their job this summer:

### Working on Ladders

Your children may be working with a company that provides construction, maintenance, landscape services, home renovations, window washing, retail jobs or any other jobs that require them to use ladders. Here are some questions you can ask them if they will be on jobs that require them to work on ladders:

- Did the employer or supervisor provide information and training on how to use a ladder and how to work at heights safely?
- Have you asked your supervisor if a ladder is being used as a means of doing work, or should you be using an alternative work platform that may be safer?
- Has your supervisor explained what the dangers are and how to do the work safely?
- Do you understand the dangers and the impact they could have on you?

### Heat Stress

As the spring and summer months approach, everyone is at risk of heat stress, especially when working outdoors. If your children will be working in the landscaping, construction, farming or manufacturing sector, or any other sector that may require they work in high-heat settings, you may want to ask them questions along the lines of:

- It look's like its going to be hot today. Are you comfortable asking your supervisor what the company's health & safety policy is for working outdoors when the temperature is so high?
- Have you talked to your supervisor about the option of taking frequent breaks on days like today where it is so hot or seeing if your work can be scheduled for a cooler part of the day? Don't be afraid to ask!

### Right to Participate, Know & Refuse

Make sure your children are aware 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](#).



## SPARK THE DISCUSSION

### Parent Guide to Talking About Workplace Safety

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

- Remind them that no job or amount of money is worth an injury – difficult as it may have been to find this job, it would be easier to find another job than to replace fingers, eyes or life. A safe work environment should always be a priority
- If your children are already working, find out as much as possible about the conditions in which they work
- Talk to them about their jobs, not just the pay and benefits, but about the actual duties and tasks they take on

Letting our children 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](#) or contact the Ministry of Labour through the [Contact page](#).



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