

# GENERATION

**SAFE & HEALTHY**



International  
Labour  
Organization



28 April 2018  
World Day  
For Safety and Health at Work

12 June 2018  
World Day  
Against Child Labour





**A**s part of a joint global campaign throughout 2018, the World Day for Safety and Health at Work (SafeDay) and the World Day Against Child Labour (WDAKL) will focus on the need to end child labour and to improve the safety and health of young workers.

All children have the right to be free from all forms of child labour and all workers have the right to safe and healthy workplaces. Globally, 541 million young workers (between the ages of 15 and 24) account for 15 per cent of the world's labour force. They sustain up to 40 per cent more non-fatal occupational injuries than do adult workers (workers older than 24) and workplace hazards can even pose a threat to their lives. An estimated 152 million children (aged 5-17) around the world are in child labour, of whom 73 million perform work which is hazardous because of its nature

or the circumstances in which it is carried out. Many factors contribute to hazardous child labour and the high rate of work-related injury and ill health among children and young workers. What is certain is that much more can and must be done.

The campaign aims to accelerate action to achieve Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Target 8.8: "protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers" by 2030; and SDG Target 8.7: "take immediate and effective measures to ... secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour and, by 2025, end child labour in all its forms". Reaching these goals requires renewed commitment and integrated approaches to eliminating child labour and promoting a culture of prevention on occupational safety and health, particularly for young workers.

## The campaign calls for coordinated action to:

- Promote the universal ratification and application of key ILO Conventions on occupational safety and health (OSH) and on child labour, in particular:
  - Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155);
  - Safety and Health in Agriculture Convention, 2001 (No. 184),
  - Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006 (No. 187);
  - Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138); and
  - Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182).
- Promote integrated strategies at all levels to end hazardous child labour and address the specific safety and health risks faced by young workers.
- Ensure quality education for all children and integrate occupational safety and health into general education and vocational training programmes.
- Strengthen the evidence base for improved policies and actions to eliminate hazardous child labour and improve the safety and health of young workers.
- Ensure that young workers gain access to trade union membership and are able to exercise their right to freedom of association, collective bargaining, and safety and health at work.
- Address the specific vulnerabilities of the youngest children and prevent their entry into child labour
- Build stronger tripartite action to improve occupational safety and health for young workers and eliminate hazardous child labour, drawing on the experience of employers' and workers' organizations.

## Young workers and children face very significant risks at work

Young workers and children are especially vulnerable to workplace hazards. They are much less able than adults to assess risk and, because they are still growing, are more vulnerable to hazards. Of course, children should not perform types of work for which they have not reached the legal minimum age for the type of work concerned. However, children above

the general minimum age for work and under 18, and young workers up to the age of 24, continue to develop physically and psycho-socially. Their stage of development, limited work experience, and lack of job skills together increase the risk that they face of suffering harm on the job. Moreover, young workers and children are the least able of all workers to speak



up in the face of danger at work. Consequently, workplace safety and health must be promoted for workers of all ages, and most urgently for those who suffer disproportionately because of their youth.

Eliminating hazardous child labour and improving the safety and health of young workers will make it

possible for the next generation to start their working lives as productive, fairly-remunerated workers capable of contributing to social justice and economic growth. It will also improve the safety and health of all workers and help secure the livelihoods of parents and family members, thereby helping prevent child labour.

## **Ending child labour and promoting safe and healthy work for young people requires an integrated strategy:**

### **For children under the age of 18:**

- Children in child labour must be withdrawn from all forms of work for which they have not reached the minimum age, and ensured access to quality education. Hazardous child labour must be prioritized as part of an integrated approach to eradicating all child labour. More attention must be paid to the youngest children (5-11 year-olds) for whom progress has stalled and among whom hazardous work has increased since 2012. We will never end child labour while children continue to enter child labour in the first place.
- National lists of hazardous work that is prohibited for children should include work which is hazardous by its nature or because of the circumstances in which it is carried out.
- All children below the age of 18 and engaged in work designated as hazardous should be removed from that work. If the work is inherently hazardous or if there is general or ambient risk, the child should be removed from the workplace altogether. Otherwise,

protecting a child above the legal minimum age for work may require re-assignment to other, non-hazardous work in the workplace. In either case, the child has the right to complete basic education and, where appropriate, to receive quality vocational education and training.

- With tripartite agreement, national authorities may authorise types of work listed as hazardous for those 16 years or older on condition that their health, safety and morals are fully protected and that they have received adequate instruction or vocational training in the relevant branch of activity. This enables young workers, for example, to learn occupations that require the use of potentially dangerous tools. However, personal protective equipment – besides being the least preferred means of workplace protection – is inappropriate for children: a small helmet cannot make underground mining acceptable for a child nor can a small hazmat suit permit a child to safely spray pesticides.

### **For young workers (18 to 24 years old):**

- In principle, similar provisions should apply to young workers aged 18-24, who, like all workers, have the right to refuse to perform work that presents immediate danger to their safety or health. Their engagement in permitted hazardous occupations should be subject to strict risk management, supervision and training.
- All young workers should, in any case, be protected by an integrated strategy that promotes a culture of prevention for their benefit and seeks to identify and eliminate occupational safety and health hazards

or, using age-appropriate interventions, control the risks of identified hazards:

- Young workers should receive basic OSH training before being assigned to perform job tasks
- Young workers should be fully trained in their job tasks and provided appropriate on-the-job supervision
- The right of young workers to refuse to perform work that presents an imminent danger to their safety or health must be protected.




## Join us!

The joint campaign to build a safe and healthy generation by eradicating child labour and ensuring safe and healthy work for youth will only succeed if we all play our part.

Add your voice to the global movement to improve the safety and health of young workers and to end child labour.

For more information, visit:

[www.ilo.org/safeday](http://www.ilo.org/safeday)      [www.ilo.org/ChildLabourWorldDay](http://www.ilo.org/ChildLabourWorldDay)

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