

## Washington State Teen Worker Program Activities October 2009

### **School-to-Work/Occupational Safety and Health Steering Committee: 1995 - 1999**

In 1995, with a Ford Foundation grant, Washington State organized the first STW/Occupational Health and Safety Forum with states that had already undertaken young worker safety and health initiatives: California, Kentucky, Oregon, Massachusetts, Minnesota, and Washington; and British Columbia's Worker Compensation Board. L&I invited representatives from labor, business, education, and other labor department staff who worked on those programs from each of the states. In order to assure comprehensive participation from each state delegation, funding was provided by the grant for travel expenses. Federal agency partners, such as NIOSH and OSHA also attended. Washington had representatives from each division at Labor and Industries, as well as the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Workforce Training Board, and representatives of labor and business.

Following this, Washington organized its first steering committee to address the needs identified in the forum. This was essentially the beginning of many of the activities that are listed in this document below. The STW/OSH was initially convened by staff at Labor and Industries and The Boeing Company, plus many other state partners. The intent of the group was to address issues identified by the School to Work Opportunities Act of 1993, mandating that all high school students be introduced to the world of work, primarily with on-site job placements. Those involved with health and safety efforts realized this was an opportunity to include education of high school students on this topic as part of their work-based learning placements.

Three goals of the group were identified and initiated and/or accomplished:

- 1) Develop and provide health and safety curriculum materials to high school teachers – led to the School-to-Work program at UW's Dept of Environmental Health and the development of the curriculum materials listed below.
- 2) Provide outreach and education to employers of youth – led to increased outreach presentations to employer organizations throughout the state, and eventually collaboration with the Washington Restaurant Association (see below)
- 3) Help reduce the liability for employers who accept unpaid student placements – led to the student volunteer industrial insurance coverage for medical costs for students involved in unpaid work-based placements (through grade 12).

### **Members: Young Worker Advisory Network —Reconvened February 2009**

This group was reconvened to address the current overlapping issues of work-based learning, career development, and workplace health and safety. Discussion includes child labor protections; and sharing of resources and strategies that we can all benefit from together in a coordinated manner. The group is coordinated Mary Miller, of L&I, and Steve Hecker, of the UW Dept of Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences, Members are:

Labor and Industries (Employment Standards, DOSH, Apprenticeship); University of Washington; Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction; Department of Health; OSHA; Washington State PTA; Washington Risk Management Pool; SEIU, UFCW; Washington State Farm Bureau; Boeing Company; Jack-in-the-Box; Governor's Industrial Safety and Health Advisory Board; Starbucks; Washington Restaurant Association's Education Foundation; AGC; Washington State Labor Council; Workforce Training Board; Aerospace Machinists Local 751; State Board of Community

and Technical Colleges; Washington Manufacturing Services; Cement Masons Training Center/WASHT; Teacher - Vancouver School District; WIRED training coordinator.

## Activities and Materials

### General Outreach

- **Safe Jobs for Youth Month (May).** Proclamation by the Governor. Posted on the web page.
  - Press releases by Labor and Industries' Public Affairs Office
  - Email announcement to OSPI list serve
- **Governor's Safety and Health Conference** – Since 1997, the School-to-Work student program has been organized by L&I and UW staff to bring 65-100 high school students to participate in an interactive, awareness level health and safety program.
- **Career Days** – These programs are sponsored by counties, industry groups, or high schools – there are many opportunities where staff members from Employment Standards, DOSH and Public Affairs provide a table of information for distribution to attendees.
- **Teacher workshops and conferences** – Employment Standards Teen Worker Supervisor provides presentations and materials to career and technical education teachers at annual conferences and workshops. Discuss the rationale for the curriculum; provide materials, and assistance and guidance for using the materials.
- **Classroom presentations** – Upon request from teachers, the Employment Standards Teen Worker Supervisor provides presentations in high school classrooms about workplace rights for health and safety and wage and hour regulations.
- **Special Publications** – On-going support from L&I Communications to create relevant, bilingual materials, for example:
  - Youth in Construction – Special NIOSH publication adapted to Washington State and as a bilingual document
  - Hiring Teens This Summer? – Summary bilingual flyer developed for handouts, in newspaper ads, and in the Industrial Insurance quarterly report.
  - Teen Wallet Card – provides basic questions about safety when starting a new job; provides email, web address, phone number.
  - Rated R Stickers – handout for employers, teachers and teens.
- **Injured Young Worker Speaker Series** – Reflects the importance of near-peer interaction with teen workers to relate experience of a severe injury to high school audiences. Through September, 2009 it reached 22 schools and 2,000 high school students; organized by L&I Public Affairs Office. Plans are underway to expand this further.
- **Video Contest** - Pilot project at New Market Skills Center with 3 student entries to create safety videos; organized by L&I Public Affairs Office.
- **Professional publications and presentations at professional conferences:** These materials are available from Mary Miller.
- **Teen Worker web page** - [www.TeenWorkers.Lni.wa.gov](http://www.TeenWorkers.Lni.wa.gov)
- **Teen Safety email address** – [teensafety@Lni.wa.gov](mailto:teensafety@Lni.wa.gov)

## **Employers**

- **Media outreach** - Target employer newsletters with sample articles during Safe Jobs for Youth Month; Hiring Youth campaign with public service announcement radio ads (in the past) focused on the special requirements for hiring minors; advertisements in local newspapers; and special inserts on teen workers included in the industrial insurance quarterly report.
- **Special Emphasis Activities –**
  - **Restaurants** - Employment Standards Teen Worker Supervisor has had a special collaboration with the Washington Restaurant Association to provide focused outreach to Restaurants; also is a member of the WRA Education Foundation Board and provides input on the SHIP-funded ProSafety restaurant-specific health and safety curriculum for high school students. In conjunction with this, Supervising for Safety is a workshop for restaurant employers regarding supervising and training young workers. This will become more formalized by the WRA as a companion for employer placements for students in culinary arts, but will be available for any employer.
  - **Agriculture** – Teen Worker Supervisor receives funding from the NIOSH-grant to the National Children’s Agriculture Safety Center (Marshfield Research Foundation) to develop tools and strategies for reaching employers of adolescent farm workers which included participation the Growers League; the Farm Bureau is also included in special efforts to reach employers of teens. The Teen Worker Supervisor also participates on the Childhood Agriculture Safety Network (CASN) to provide input on issues regarding hired adolescent farm workers.
  - **Construction** - Efforts have been initiated with local Master Builders’ Associations, AGC and other construction-based organizations; more to follow when activity increases with economic recovery.

## **Injury Surveillance, Compliance Follow-up, and Consultations**

Washington State is unique among state departments of labor to have Industrial Insurance, Health and Safety and Employment Standards activities under one agency, allowing for unique collaborations and referrals. L&I is also the only department of labor with a health and safety professional as the child labor specialist.

- **Minor Injury Report** – Monthly review and follow-up of all injury claims filed with the department lead to employer follow-up for lack of a minor work permit; referrals to field agents for child labor investigations, as appropriate; DOSH referrals for health and safety inspections; and audit or contractor registration issues when appropriate.
  - Data updates – On-going review and summary of descriptive injury trends.
- **Compliance Investigations** – Follow-up of referrals from DOSH, Claims Units; Contractor Registration, etc; and other agencies; includes follow-up of complaints from the community or members of the public as well. DOSH inspectors directed to question employers about the presence of minors during investigations and notify Employment Standards Program to assess Minor Work Permit status. Planned for 2010 minor work permit sweep by selected industry.

- **Other Consultations:** Provide input to Apprenticeship Program for clarification of rules for pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs; involve DOSH consultation staff with employers seeking to hire minors in certain circumstances.
- **Policy and Regulations' Updates** – On-going updates for clarifications, needed revisions, and harmonization with federal Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) updates.

### **Collaboration With Other Agencies**

- Department of Licensing - to enhance the Minor Work Permit process with outreach materials to employers with new MWP endorsements; new language on licenses indicating employers NOT authorized to hire teens will occur early in 2010.
- Department of Health – participation in the Injury Prevention work group to include occupation in DOH adolescent injury prevention activities; since 2002 provided 1-3 occupational questions on the Healthy Youth Survey administered to high school students; L&I assisting with funding for this effort.
- OSPI – collaborate with the Career and Technical Education programs to provide curriculum materials; review of materials for consistency with regulations; provide teacher training, etc.

### **Curriculum Development (UW collaboration)**

- **Teen Workers: Real Jobs, Real Risks** – 13-minute awareness video covering job safety and child labor information in WA State; L&I translated this into Spanish for WA State.
  - A new national version of this video has been completed by NIOSH and will be distributed by NIOSH and on the NIOSH web page.
- **Health and Safety Awareness for Working Teens (HSAWT)** – General industry, awareness level curriculum for teachers of high school students. Covers identifying hazards, understanding worker rights and child labor laws, developing solutions to reduce and eliminate hazards, communicating with the supervisor, dealing with and preventing sexual harassment, and applying ergonomics.
  - Revised and updated the curriculum. Not required anywhere. Primarily used by Career and Technical Education and other work experience teachers, and community-based youth employment training programs.
- **Health and Safety Awareness for Working Teens in Agriculture** – General agriculture industry-based curriculum for teachers of high school students; an evaluation of student-learning and safety attitudes was completed in 2009.
- **ProSafety** - Culinary Arts Health and Safety curriculum - through partnership with WA Restaurant Association's SHIP grant
- **OSHA's-11** – Youth-friendly version of the OSHA-10 general industry course completed in partnership with the OSHA-funded Young Worker Safety Resource Center
  - Conducted 2 classes with 54 vocational education teachers who became authorized OSHA-10 trainers and have taught 500 high school students.
- **Woodshop Safety Training web page** – self-paced training using interactive quizzes that cover shop equipment safety.
- **UW Web Page with Curriculum Materials** - [www.uwworksafe.com](http://www.uwworksafe.com) – updated web site includes all curriculum materials listed above, available to download; new brochure available describing all materials as well.

## Possible Future Activities Under Discussion

- Video PSA contest: Possible funding by NIOSH for prizes.
- Social marketing of message: options to be explored through Facebook or Twitter.
- Identify sponsor for Young Worker Leadership Academy - for pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship students – discussed with the Apprenticeship Program Manager.

## Resources/Links

- Washington State Department of Labor & Industries' Help for Teen Workers: [www.TeenWorkers.Lni.wa.gov](http://www.TeenWorkers.Lni.wa.gov)

**Contact:** Mary Miller, Teen Worker Supervisor  
Department of L&I  
[mary.miller@Lni.wa.gov](mailto:mary.miller@Lni.wa.gov)  
360.902.6041

- UW Health and Safety Awareness for Working Teens: [www.uwworksafes.com](http://www.uwworksafes.com)

**Contact:** Steve Hecker, Director of Continuing Education and Outreach (DEOHS)  
University of Washington  
[shecker@uw.edu](mailto:shecker@uw.edu)  
206.543.9540