

THE PASSPORT TO SAFETY ROLE AND EMPLOYER RESPONSIBILITY

A CONTEXT FOR PASSPORT TO SAFETY

THE STATUS QUO IS NOT AN OPTION

Surveys across Canada show that well over 50% of young people receive no health and safety training at work. In many parts of this country that number is over 70%. These hard facts together with the sheer number of young people who suffer disabling, disfiguring and even fatal injuries in unsafe workplaces tell us we need to strive for a higher level of workplace safety.

We each have a personal choice to make; to accept the way things are or change them. For families, friends and injured young people who suffer the consequences of apathy and denial at work every day the notion that we should settle for the status quo is more than unacceptable. It is not even an option.

But there *is* hope.

New attitudes and behaviors that have evolved toward drinking and driving and toward the environment and recycling prove that cultural sea changes are both possible and attainable. They also demonstrate that young people not only have a role to play but can take a leading role.

But clearly the burden of change is not the sole responsibility of young people. We all share responsibility for encouraging the spread of new values and practices in a positive, proactive way. We all need to encourage young people to take on the challenge of a new culture of workplace safety. Above all we must equip youth with the knowledge needed to bring this change.

Passport to Safety seeks to pull all of these forces together to deliver compelling reasons for young people to inspire all of us as the drivers of a new culture of healthy and safe workplaces. For those already committed to health and safety this is an unprecedented opportunity to push beyond the status quo, to help pull along the rest of the world and to actively drive the agenda forward.

For young people and employers in all sectors Passport to Safety is a call to action.

WHAT PASSPORT TO SAFETY *IS*:

Passport to Safety is a unique, cross-Canada catalyst for change intended to help eliminate needless injuries and preventable deaths of young Canadians aged 24 and under. Passport to Safety supports the vision that our children enter safe workplaces every day, which are therefore safe workplaces for people of all ages.

Remember! Job specific training is always required.



Young people challenge a Passport to Safety 'test' based on learning outcomes developed by health and safety curriculum experts from provincial and territorial jurisdictions across Canada. The goal of this group of dedicated professionals and volunteers was to establish a 'pre-work' foundation of the minimum health and safety knowledge any of us would want a young person to possess. (See Passport to Safety learning outcomes on our website at www.passporttosafety.com.)

Successful participants are awarded a 'transcript' that can be attached to resumés to demonstrate their basic awareness of health and safety. This basic level of awareness becomes a foundation on which to build all the other essentials required to be safer and healthier workers. Moreover they are encouraged to add more credits for other courses that help people manage risk such as first-aid, babysitting, water-safety, snowmobile safety and literally hundreds of others. It is intended to support and add value to their efforts to find a job.

Passport to Safety is also designed to encourage and generate discussion about health and safety education and training across Canada. It is not intended as stand-alone training substituting or replacing the many courses and programs offered by education systems, not-for-profit and other national training providers. Rather, it is specifically designed to reinforce these programs by providing nationally recognized, tangible credit to young people for taking and passing them.

WHAT PASSPORT TO SAFETY *IS NOT*:

Passport to Safety, like the general workplace awareness and safety education offered in school systems does not constitute job specific health and safety training that is required of all employers under provincial, territorial or national jurisdiction. **Passport to Safety is not a substitute for compliance.** All employers are still required to provide the training necessary for each worker to be able to perform their job safely. Young workers and new workers of all ages especially require appropriate levels of training and supervision.

To ensure that employers and young workers understand clearly that Passport to Safety is not a substitute for safe workplace conditions, practices or job specific training, we have done our best to ensure this message is reinforced in virtually every element of the program and its materials.

As examples, specific references to subjects such as job specific training always being required are included in or on:

- The front of the Passport to Safety Card issued to every Youth and Employer Member
- Within the Learning Outcomes and test (Rights and Responsibilities)
- Membership Applications and Recognition documents for Employer Members
- On the transcript and in many other information areas of the website
- The Passport to Safety Videos that explain the program to employers and youth
- In virtually all brochures and promotional documents
- In specific discussions on employer responsibilities, including this document

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Finally we encourage our many supporters in the workplace injury prevention field, including our partners in the regulatory areas, not only to communicate their belief in the value of Passport to Safety but also to remind their stakeholders that Passport to Safety is not a replacement for compliance.

FOR BEST PRACTICE EMPLOYERS, THE FUTURE IS NOW

Best-practice employers understand that training, including job-specific training, is only part of the picture. They perceive and act on the need and obligation to provide safe and health-promoting structural conditions of work; not just the safety of equipment or of work practices but also the way the work is organized. This can include such areas as the general physical environment at work, nature of supervision, shift work, pressures, opportunities for participation and relations with co-workers, managers and supervisors. All of these factors are associated with rates of injury and illness at work.

The advancement of best practices and an improved level of employer responsibility across the board is a key component of the Passport to Safety strategy. We will strive to connect employers to tools and information to help them fulfill these responsibilities as an integral part of our Employer Member services.

Our very best employers in our very best workplaces do not blame people for injuries. They do everything they can to make sure injuries don't happen in the first place. Knowledge, vigilance and continuous improvement are crucial to their overall success and to the health and safety of their employees.

Our challenge together is to help move the rest of the country to this same standard; to imagine and create a world in which our children come home safe and healthy at the end of each day.

Paul Kells
Executive Director
Passport to Safety