

## ► WHY ARE YOUNG WORKERS AT HIGHER RISK OF INJURY?

### **The adolescent brain is different to the adult brain**

Areas of the brain responsible for decision making, handling emotions and understanding hazards are all still developing in young workers.

Go to ***Brain Development and Young Worker Safety*** for more information.

### **Young people have limited experience with workplace hazards**

Young workers may not be able to predict the outcome of their actions because they haven't experienced the task/situation before. Without experience it can be hard for a young person to form judgements which an adult may consider to be common sense.

### **Their bodies are often still growing**

Most young workers won't have reached full physical maturity. Their growing bodies mean they may not have the same physical strength or coordination as other workers.

### **Young people have hectic lives**

Combining school, socialising, study, sport and hobbies with casual or part time work can cause young workers to become over-tired and distracted, placing them at greater risk of injury.

### **Young people often aren't sure about appropriate workplace behaviours**

Being new to working, young people often don't know what to do when faced with a workplace hazard. Young workers may not know:

- How to identify workplace hazards or assess the harm they could cause.
- Who to speak to about safety issues and when they should do so.
- The important reasons for adhering to safety rules.
- How to report that they feel in danger, that they don't know what to do or how to do it safely.
- That reporting an OHS hazard is an employee responsibility.
- How to handle stressful situations, such as bullying or harassment.

Go to ***Training and Supervising Young Workers*** for more information on how to manage young workers' safety.