

MORE MUST BE DONE TO PROTECT YOUNG PEOPLE STARTING WORK

Submitted by: Chelgate

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30 August 2006: NATIONAL WISE UP 2 WORK DAY

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1,500 are badly injured and five killed every year through poor training and induction when starting work

Today (August 30) is National Wiseup2work Day and the call from the TUC and the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health (<http://www.iosh.co.uk>) (IOSH) is that far more needs to be done to protect our young people when they are starting work, apprenticeships or work experience.

The aim of National Wiseup2work Day is to highlight the huge number of deaths and injuries caused to young people when they start work due to inadequate training or poor induction. In the UK, an average of five people under the age of 19 die and 1,500 are badly injured at work every year.

Neil Budworth, president of IOSH (<http://www.iosh.co.uk>), said: "Taking the first steps in their careers is an exciting and challenging time for our young people, but many have no experience of work or the hazards that lurk in the workplace. This naivety can result in accidents, injuries, and even death.

"The Wiseup2work campaign aims to make young people aware of the risks they face when starting work, and to get the Government, business leaders, teachers and youth workers to make young people's safety a priority."

To this end, IOSH has produced a six-point plan to be circulated at the forthcoming party conferences, and within Government. A first copy was handed to Brendan Barber, general secretary of the TUC, today at the Central London YMCA, photographed with five young people, the number killed last year. He said: "Young workers are not killed and injured at work because they goof around. All too often employers are failing to realise that young workers, who could even be in their first jobs, have not had the experience or training to recognise and manage healthy and safety risks at work (<http://www.iosh.co.uk>)."

Wiseup2work is a major initiative by IOSH, sponsored by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) and supported by the National Youth Agency and the British Chambers of Commerce.

Mark Haysom, chief executive of the Learning and Skills Council said: "Promoting young people's awareness of health and safety (<http://www.iosh.co.uk>) in the workplace is vital, and we are happy to be supporting this innovative resource that will help prepare teenagers for the world of work."

David Frost, director general of the British Chambers of Commerce said: "Britain's education system is failing young people, producing workers that do not have the necessary skills that business needs. We are storing up severe social problems if we fail to address the skills agenda in a meaningful way. Initiatives like Wiseup2work are part of a wider assault on low-skills, which we hope will produce educated, skilled and business-focussed employees in the future."

First Direct bank employs a diverse cross section of people including young people, and on occasion students on work experience. The bank also participates in Take your Sons and Daughters to Work Day every year. Carol Basnett, health and safety advisor said: "Within the office and support service environment which are usually low risk, we identify young people who may be at risk when they first start work. Special considerations are evaluated and we carry out a young persons risk assessment to match the work activity/event, with all new starters receiving safety and fire induction. We also continually monitor accident trends and revise training and induction as necessary."

Further information about the campaign can be found on the website: www.wiseup2work.co.uk.

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Notes to editors:

- Images IOSH president, Neil Budworth, and TUC secretary general, Brendan Barber, are available as JEG email attachments. Please contact the PR team below.
- Wiseup2work is an interactive online resource for teachers, youth workers, supervisors and employers to use to prepare young people for work. www.wiseup2work.co.uk . The resource is supported by the Learning Skills Council, the National Youth Agency and the British Chambers of Commerce.
- IOSH is Europe's leading body for health and safety professionals (<http://www.iosh.co.uk>). We have nearly 30,000 members worldwide, including more than 8,000 Chartered Safety and Health Practitioners. The Institution was founded in 1945 and is an independent, not-for-profit, non-governmental organisation that sets professional standards, supports and develops members and provides authoritative advice and guidance. www.iosh.co.uk

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