

Media Release

The Hon Jill Hennessy MP
Attorney-General
Minister for Workplace Safety



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NEW CAMPAIGN TO IMPROVE SAFETY OF YOUNG WORKERS

The Andrews Labor Government is warning employers to protect young workers and making sure young Victorians are aware of their rights through a powerful new campaign launched today.

Minister for Workplace Safety Jill Hennessy and WorkSafe Chief Executive Colin Radford today launched the new campaign, at Melbourne's KereKere Green Cafe.

The campaign is part of a social experiment which saw young workers aged 18-25 asked to participate in a mock job information session for a research company.

Participants were asked a series of questions about the risks they were willing to take to secure employment – revealing young workers lacked the confidence to question unsafe working conditions.

Twenty-one of the 23 participants said they would accept that their employer had no responsibility for their health and safety, that they would work without first being trained, accept bullying and harassment in the workplace, and accept unsafe work conditions to secure and maintain employment.

Almost all of the participants displayed vulnerability in speaking up when they were uncomfortable about having their health and safety compromised.

The interviews will feature in the campaign through a series of online and print advertisements, which discuss the unique pressures young workers face.

Young workers can be reluctant to question their employers about hazards in the workplace and often have a poor understanding of their health and safety rights.

The campaign will also be supported with education for employers and young workers to increase awareness of their rights and responsibilities.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Workplace Safety Jill Hennessy

"This campaign reveals how our young Victorians are vulnerable to injuries in the workplace and reminds us of the importance of making sure they know they have the right to come home safe from work at the end of each day."

"Everyone has a part to play to make sure young workers are given the training and supervision they need to feel safe and be safe at work."

"Young Victorians should be safe at work and it is unacceptable for employers to pressure inexperienced workers into situations that put their physical or mental health at risk."

Quotes attributable to WorkSafe Chief Executive Colin Radford

"Employers have no excuse for abusing their power and endangering the health and well-being of young workers."

"With more inspectors completing more inspections than ever before, WorkSafe will not hesitate to take enforcement action where it finds employers failing to meet their health and safety obligations."

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