

# Parent Prevention Initiatives:

*Keeping young workers safe –it's up to all of us.*

*Views from BC Confederation of Parent Advisory  
Council Representatives*

Final Report



May 2004

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

As one component of its ongoing efforts to develop resource materials for parents regarding young worker safety, the WCB-BC sponsored a discussion workshop among representatives of the BC Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils (BCCPAC). The session took place during the BCCPAC Conference in Burnaby, BC on May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2004. The purpose of this workshop was to collect opinions and ideas on current and required young worker resource materials aimed at parents. This executive summary represents the most salient findings gleaned from feedback provided by 15 volunteer BCCPAC participants.

**Elevate the significance of young worker safety before expecting volunteers to enlist to fight for the cause.**

Parents first need to understand and take ownership of young worker safety issues before they will offer to help promote prevention initiatives. Workplace safety is still perceived as the employer's responsibility. Few parents proactively discuss workplace health and safety with their children because they have not yet embraced the significance of this issue. Using current tools such as the Lost Youth video and parent resource kit, PAC representatives will soon begin to internalize the importance of addressing young worker safety.

**Emphasize the message, “Keeping young workers safe – it’s up to all of us.”**

Once truly adopting the phrase, “Keeping young workers safe – it’s up to all of us,” PAC representatives are willing to promote awareness and prevention strategies related to young worker safety. This phrase is one that illuminates the need to encourage community responsibility. As a slogan, this statement epitomizes the key message required to motivate entire communities to become actively involved in the issue.

**Leverage emotional human-interest stories to compel parents to take ownership and fight for these issues.**

Emotional human interest stories need to be shared to effectively make parents understand the significance of their involvement in young worker prevention initiatives. Positively, the “reality” approach is one that the WCB-BC has already adopted, and this approach is dually effective among youth.

**Fully assume the role of the WCB enabler in creating a ‘neighbourhood watch’ for young worker safety.**

The WCB is an enabler at the core of additional prevention initiatives in waiting. Much like a war general issuing artillery and strategies to its soldiers, the WCB can forge strategic alliances and arm stakeholders with resources so they, in turn, may lead their communities to address young worker safety.

Possible enabling strategies include mobilizing:

- DPAC and PAC representatives to take leadership roles in creating and sponsoring educational workshops and/or community dialogues focused on young worker health and safety;
- Employers to communicate directly with parents of young workers, and conversely, parents to reach out to their child's employer;
- Educators to communicate directly with parents about young worker safety; and
- Communities to access WCB- recruited spokespersons who have experienced a workplace accident or injury.

**Continue to aggressively transmit information to PAC representatives.**

The WCB-BC has proactively disseminated resource materials to PAC representatives in recent years. However, awareness of the extent and nature of tools and materials available through the WCB is not yet widespread. Continued aggressive communication efforts to these important PAC partners are merited. The WCB should also consider alternative information dissemination strategies to reinforce and expand current communications.

**Build on existing resources to enable others to advocate young worker safety.**

The WCB's arsenal of information for parents regarding young worker safety is already extensive. Fine-tuning certain tools and materials can yield even stronger victories in the fight to protect young workers. The parent brochure will be a widely used resource in the WCB's enabling strategies. As well, the parent presentation will serve to elevate the significance of young worker safety. Specific tweaks to these resources will improve the effectiveness of the WCB's enabling strategies.

**Don't be afraid to ask for help.**

BCCPAC representatives volunteered to help promote young worker safety messages at the conclusion of the workshop. As long as DPAC and PAC representatives are made aware of the gravity of this issue, the WCB-BC will have a willing network of volunteers to carry messages to their respective communities.

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Please refer to the [attached report](#) for more detailed information.