



Holly Baril:

Whether your teen is flipping burgers, stocking shelves, or starting an internship, workplace safety matters. From understanding rights on the job to spotting hazards before they happen, we're here to guide you through it all. Access to reliable health and safety resources helps students and parents understand workplace risks, follow proper safety procedures, and seek support for mental and emotional wellbeing. By staying informed and proactive, we can all create safer, more productive environments where both learning and work can thrive harmoniously.

Announcer:

It's time for the *IHSA Safety Podcast*.

Holly Baril:

Welcome to Tying It All Together: Health and Safety Resources for Parents and Teens. I'm your host, Holly Baril, and in this episode, we will discuss the health and safety resources available to both young workers and parents and how you can be more involved in your teen's safety at work, what questions to ask, when to be concerned about their safety, and what to do to prevent the unthinkable from happening, because every young worker deserves a workplace that values their wellbeing, and every parent deserves peace of mind. My guest today is Pam Patry, manager for the northern region with WSPS, Workplace Safety and Prevention Services, which is one of the four safe work associations in Ontario.

Now, before we get started, Pam, I just wanted to let you know that I recently recorded a podcast with a couple of young workers and kind of talked about what is some of the safety training that they may have received or did not receive. And then following that, I thought I would do a podcast with the parents just to say, "Hey, did you know that this was happening," and what kind of questions maybe should you have asked, and what kind of questions will you be asking in the future? So with that, I thought we could bring it all together and say, "Hey, WSPS, what resources do you have?" So, again, welcome to our podcast.

Pam Patry:

Thanks, Holly.

Holly Baril:

So can you just explain maybe what sectors of work that your safe work association covers and maybe give some examples?

Pam Patry:

So Workplace Safety and Prevention Services is one of the four health and safety associations that you've talked about. Our main sectors that we work with include agriculture, manufacturing, and the service sectors. And as you can imagine, we actually support 174,000 firms across Ontario, so a really significant number of staff, workers, and businesses in Ontario fall into those sectors. So approximately 4.2 million people in the province of Ontario fall into our sectors, and we think that it's really important that we're able to have these conversations about young workers because they're the ones that we're seeing are getting injured in the workplace.

Holly Baril:

Right. So based on the areas that you covered, then I would probably say that WSPS most likely employs the highest number of young workers in the province. Is that correct in saying that?

Pam Patry:

I think that that would be pretty accurate, Holly. If we think that most young workers probably start in a fast food or a convenience store, those sorts of places are places that really employ young workers to start with. As well as in agriculture, when you think about the young workers who are working on their own family farms, young workers have a significant risk level in those environments as well.

Holly Baril:

Oh, I didn't think about the family farms, actually. Yes. I keep thinking grocery stores and McDonald's and the mall and the theatre. Those are all your sectors.

Pam Patry:

Absolutely.

Holly Baril:

So what are some of the trends that maybe you've seen over the number of years you've been working with WSPS?

Pam Patry:

We always use the phrase, "Young workers don't know what they don't know," and so if a young worker starts in the workplace and their training is very generic or they don't receive any, how are they supposed to know any differently? So that's the first place that we spend a lot of time, and I would bet that some of those young people that you spoke to and those parents are having those same conversations. How do we know what we're supposed to receive for training, and how do we know what is going to keep us safe? Whether it's hazards that are being controlled, how do we know how to do that? And so those are some of the key trends that we see with young workers is just really trying to educate them right from day one when they start that job.

Holly Baril:

Yeah, I think a lot of kids, when you ask them, "What kind of training did you get?" "WHMIS," that's the first thing that comes out of their mouth, like that's the only thing they've received. And when I'm doing presentations to young workers at high schools and I ask them, "So what are some of the hazards that you have in your workplace," and a lot of them... I don't think there's any. And then I list 10.

Pam Patry:

100 per cent.

Holly Baril:

Right? And they go, "Oh, I never thought of that." Exactly.

Pam Patry:

And too, Holly, like you said, they say WHMIS, and that follow-up question is, "Well, what chemicals are in your workplace?" WHMIS just isn't about taking that one-hour online WHMIS certificate and saying, "Yeah, I'm good to go." WHMIS is so much more than that. It's about the chemicals in your workplace that you work with, and that's what makes us competent in that hazard is taking it to that next step. And I think that that's one piece that gets missed a lot by employers is that site-specific, that workplace-specific training is really, really critical.

Holly Baril:

Now, I wonder in saying that, do you think there's a lack of education with the employers? Because maybe the employer says, "Oh, everybody comes in. We're going to sit in front of a computer. You're going to do WHMIS, and yay for me, and then we're good." Or do you think they're just taking the easy way out?

Pam Patry:

I don't think anyone really wants to take the easy way out. I don't think that they're trying purposefully to take that route. But I do think that even at that employer level, small businesses don't know what they don't know. And so if they don't know what is required or how to implement the legislation... So I think that that's sort of key is, yes, they know that the laws exist, but if you don't know how to read legislation, well, what does it mean, and what am I supposed to do with that in my business? And so all of the health and safety associations really work hard to try and educate the employers who then can keep those workers safe. That ultimately is the job of the employer is to keep all workers safe.

Holly Baril:

But you're right. Isn't it funny? Because even myself when I'm teaching and you're trying to explain to someone legislation or their responsibilities as a supervisor, and it's like, "Well, I didn't know that. How

am I supposed to know that?" And it's like, "I know. That's the biggest struggle is you don't know, the workers don't know, nobody knows." So it's breaking that barrier.

Pam Patry:

Think about those young workers who then become supervisors. They've worked there for six months, and now it's their job to train other young workers. And sort of that cycle or that circle continues of, "We don't know, and how do we then make sure that the next person is educated and working safely?"

Holly Baril:

Yeah, exactly. So what have you seen in the workplace when it does come to teens and safety training? So tell me, what do you see that gets done, besides WHMIS, and what do you see that's maybe not getting done?

Pam Patry:

Yeah. So I really always want to remind people that there is that four-step awareness training program that every worker in Ontario is required to do. So four-step awareness, it looks at things like how to become involved, what are your three rights in health and safety, so the right to know, the right to know those hazards, the right to participate in safety, and the right to refuse unsafe work. So that's one thing, that we are seeing greater uptake maybe I'll say in making sure that workers have that program, but I think that the next step is what do you do with it? So, again, I may have learned it, but now what do I do? So WSPS is doing lots of, just like IHSA in high school presentations, trying to get that education out in as many different ways as possible.

I think that businesses who see themselves with high-risk are better at controlling those hazards. So they see themselves that they have high risks, they've identified them, and they train their workers in them. It's the businesses who maybe don't see themselves as that high-risk employer and they don't think about things like violence and harassment or slips, trips, and falls, or ladder safety, right? Everyone knows how to climb a ladder. What do you mean I have to train a young worker on how to use a ladder safely? Those are the things that I think are maybe missing in the workplace.

Holly Baril:

Or the kid pumping the gas. What could happen to him or her?

Pam Patry:

Absolutely.

Holly Baril:

Well, here, let me name you a few things. Have you ever had to intervene in a dangerous situation?

Pam Patry:

Well, actually I'll tell you, I'm also a parent of a young worker, and on a personal level, I had to make a step to say, "Actually, I don't think that you can work there anymore," because it just wasn't safe, in my opinion, for my child. And it can be really hard for a parent to have that conversation because we encouraged them to go get a job. We wanted them to show independence. They went out, they got a job, they're so happy to be making money, and now we're saying, "Whoa, I don't think that you should work there anymore." And so that can be a really hard conversation. But whether it's as a safety professional, as a business, or as a parent, we have to watch for those dangerous situations because even though we think that we're sending our young worker off to be safe in a workplace, we still need to make sure that we're taking a critical view of that workplace and making sure that our own worker is safe there.

Holly Baril:

Yeah, for sure. They're students, right? And they don't understand the hazards that exist or could potentially exist. And so-

Pam Patry:

They just want to do a good job.

Holly Baril:

Yeah, and make some money.

Pam Patry:

Yeah.

Holly Baril:

They're wondering, "Well, why are you stopping me?" "Well, all of these things can happen." "Yeah, but they probably won't." "I know, but that's not the point, really."

Pam Patry:

Yeah. Exactly.

Holly Baril:

So thinking about the parents and yourself, like you said, and myself at the time when my kids were working as students as well, what do you find is the gap between the parents and their child's safety at work?

Pam Patry:

I think that parents don't always ask the great questions. We send them to work, we send them to school, we send them out, and we say, "Hey, how was your day? What did you do today," and the answers are, "It was good. Nothing. Everything's good." We need to ask more probing questions to try and understand what they learned, or what did they do at work. What are some of the tasks that you're doing, and how have you been trained? So I think that one of the things that parents need to take a larger role in is that conversation when they come home at the end of the day. "You started a new job. What kind of things are you doing in that new job? Can you give me an example? How are you trained to keep yourself safe in that example?"

Holly Baril:

Yeah. So then that kind of just brings me to wondering, what should parents know about the different types of tasks that their child may be asked to do or something that's inappropriate to do?

Pam Patry:

Yeah. And I think that parents, for the most part, again, they're not neglectfully not asking the right questions, but they don't know what to ask. We need to take that stop and say, "When I worked in a grocery store," or "When I worked in a pharmacy," or "When I worked at the mall, what were some of the hazards that I experienced," or maybe, "What are some of the shortcuts that I took?" So I can think back to one of my very first jobs and seeing a coworker stand on a roly chair because she didn't want to go get a stepladder to grab a book off of a shelf on a bookshelf. And it was okay, but we know that that's not okay. It's not safe to stand on a roly chair just to grab a book because it's the quicker way to do it.

Holly Baril:

Yeah. Complacency.

Pam Patry:

Right. And so continuing to have those conversations, but then we also need to model the same behaviors at home. So if you have a teen who's working in landscaping, well, if they're at home cutting the grass, do you have them wear steel-toed boots then or eye protection or hearing protection? Because if they need to wear it at work, they should be wearing it at home and vice-versa. And if we're suggesting and teaching them that they need that personal protective equipment, or that PPE, for the work that they do at home, then hopefully they will be empowered at the workplace to ask those same questions.

Holly Baril:

Yeah, and they might feel, "Oh, where's my gloves? I should be wearing gloves because I wear them at home. Can I get a set of gloves," or something.

Pam Patry:

Exactly.

Holly Baril:

Yeah, for sure. Parents, we just need to be more involved. We can't just assume that, "Okay, my child works at the grocery store and they're at the cash. They'll be fine." Well, they may be, and yeah, but there are hazards lurking out there.

Pam Patry:

Right. So simple hazards, standing at the cash, standing on your feet all day long, moving the groceries from one spot to the next and that repetitive motion, violence and harassment, all of those things are the quick ones that right now are on the top of my head. There's so many more.

Holly Baril:

Yeah. Exactly. The quick ones that you and I can think of because we do this for a living, and that's where parents don't think of it necessarily because, again, they're not thinking that there's a hazard or a danger of their child at the cash or... I mean, to me, the meat slicer and the grease...

Pam Patry:

Absolutely. Ask that question of, "What kind of training did you have on the meat slicer?" We need to ask those questions. "Oh, you cut bread. What do you use to cut the bread? How were you trained? What do you do when the bread gets stuck?" Those are things that might happen in a large manufacturing firm that... Workers are taught about lockout/tagout and about how to shut the equipment down, but are teens being taught the same thing in what might be considered a controlled workplace for a young worker?

Holly Baril:

Yeah, I think you said it earlier that some workplaces realize that they conduct high-risk activity, so they put those controls in place, and I just think sometimes some of these service jobs, maybe the employer feels, "Well, there's really nothing that can kill the workers here." But again, there's that potential that it could happen. So they don't view it as high-risk, so therefore they're not really worried about the controls until something happens.

Pam Patry:

And you may have heard me say it a few times, violence and harassment right now is huge in every single workplace. And so if you are listening to this podcast and you own your own business, what are you doing to control violence and harassment? Have you done a risk assessment for violence in your

workplace? It's the law. You have to do it. And it's one of the big things that we're seeing as a trend in workplaces.

Holly Baril:

And again, just going back to this sector, you have people coming through your front doors that you don't know. And they may be a first-time visitor, they may be there every other day as a client. So you're just opening that door, like you said, to the violence and harassment of all kinds of different characters and personalities and moods. How can we control that?

Pam Patry:

Do you remember the days when we used to say the customer's always right? Just do everything to make them happy? That day has changed, and every worker needs to know that they have the right to be treated fairly, safely, nicely in a workplace, whether it's from your employer, from your co-workers, or from your customers. And I think that that sort of shift has started. And I do think that our young workers expect it, but they don't always know how to address it. So one of the first things that a business can do is do a violence risk assessment, make sure that you have procedures in place for violence and harassment, but then also don't be afraid to implement them. So whether it's asking a customer to leave, or even having different types of barriers as controls, having a staff area versus a customer area can allow that de-escalation of the environment.

I would also say businesses need to learn what's out there. There's courses out there with all of the health and safety associations from how to address mental health in your workplace of your workers, which is related to harassment, or de-escalation. How can your workers de-escalate that situation that could become violent?

Holly Baril:

Yeah, that's important. Because if it's there and you're just feeding into it, forget it. Like you said, there's got to be a way... But there's also got to be a way for someone else, a supervisor or an adult, to be able to recognize that there's something going on on the left here and I better step in.

Pam Patry:

Absolutely.

Holly Baril:

And that actually brings me to a quick question as well is some of these employers will make 17, 18-year-olds supervisors, and they really have no idea their legal responsibilities according to the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*, and then voila, here we are with a violence and harassment, and this is another child trying to help another child. What do we do?

Pam Patry:

They take this job as a supervisor for 25 cents more an hour, and they're super thrilled about it because they're being recognized for their hard work, but they don't understand their responsibilities. Their job

now as a supervisor is to identify hazards for the other workers and tell them how to control those hazards. Certainly those supervisors, those young worker supervisors need to do the five-step awareness from the Ministry of Labour, so it's for a supervisor, but it's beyond that. How do you make sure now as a 17 or 18-year-old kid who's trying to teach a 15 or 16-year-old kid how to do the job and how do we make sure that they're safe, and what are the other components? As a supervisor, it's not just being the person who might have the key or be the most senior person in the building.

Holly Baril:

Yeah. For sure. So I was going to ask you, what kind of safety training should a teen expect before they start work? Now I know you mentioned four-step and then if they are a supervisor, five step, but again, if we have some teens listening or their parents, do you got a little list or something you can share?

Pam Patry:

Yeah. I think as a parent, one of the things that I would suggest that you do is become a customer of that business if you can. So if they're working in a grocery store or a pharmacy or a store in the mall, be a customer, walk around, know what's going on and sort of what the workers are doing, and that might be a great thing that you as a parent can do when your teen is starting that new job. Take them to the place that they're going to be working and walk around and see what's there and see what hazards you might see. You don't have to be a health and safety professional to be able to look around and say, "Oh, that doesn't look super safe," or, "I wonder how they do that work." Training should be site-specific, so in this business, how do you do it? And everything from the way you move product, the way you lift product, the way you put it on the shelves, those are all things that need to be considered. Whether you're carrying lots of boxes and pushing a trolley, or climbing up a ladder, again, they seem like such simple tasks, but they're things that you might need that training on.

And so I think that some of that training that young workers should expect and parents should expect them to receive as well is identification of the hazards in the workplace and then what you do to make sure that you're safe when doing it. So here's what a hazard could be. When you're doing this job, you're going to do X, Y, and Z, and here's a hazard, and here's how you keep it safe. And I would say businesses need to break it down into those simple terms. It doesn't have to be complicated and it doesn't have to be three days of training, but it needs to be simplified to help the young person understand in that simple fashion that says, "Here's what you're going to do, here's what could happen, and here's how you prevent it. "

Holly Baril:

Exactly. A nice job hazard assessment, lay it out so that everybody understands. Yeah, good idea. And I like the whole visit the business that your child's working at. Yeah, that would be good as well. You get a firsthand idea of what's going on over there and how people are treating the employees as well, right?

Pam Patry:

Yeah.

Holly Baril:

So when it comes to safety training for our young workers, again, when I did the podcast with the young workers, a couple of the comments was, "Oh, yeah, we sat in front of a computer. There was five students. And we were told, 'Just watch that. If you have any questions, let us know.'" She says, "Well, I'm not going to ask questions, first of all. I mean, I didn't really learn much. But who am I going to ask questions to?" They don't want to ask. They're intimidated, right? It's their first job. So how often should their training be updated? And then second part of that question is, and I understand why people do computer-based training, but let's be realistic, tell me how effective do you think that is, and what should they do instead?

Pam Patry:

Yeah. So I think that what you're starting to talk about, Holly, is culture. Who does a young person talk to, and are they going to do it? And how do we change that culture of safety in a workplace? In my example, when I was young and that girl climbed on a roly chair, it was okay to do that. Nobody said anything. And so that culture of safety was really, really low. But when you have that culture of safety where we have higher expectations, then it's going to push our employers to work into a safer environment and keep our workers safer through hazard identification and training and controls.

So part of that culture comes right back to being at home. So we talked about your kids cutting the grass. Let's make sure they have the PPE at home that you would expect them to have in the workplace, because why could they do it at home and not at work? So let's start that conversation early. Things that we think that, "Well, anybody can do that," like using a knife to do something in the kitchen at home, let's make sure they know how to do it and let's make sure they have the right tools to do it and we're not using a super sharp knife right on the countertop. Mom might kill you for one reason, but also the safety of doing it is the other reason. So really as parents, starting that culture conversation at home for safety and then encouraging our kids to speak up.

And I think that as... My example of become a customer inside the store might make you feel comfortable, especially kids can start working at 14. How comfortable are they going to be able to say, "Can you train me on this," or, "I don't know how to do that." That's right. So being in the workplace, maybe you can advocate for them as well, give them the words to make them feel comfortable.

WSPS has a part of our website called First Job, Safe Job, so really similar to this conversation that we're having right now. And in one of the pieces, we actually talk about safety conversations in the car. Kids don't want to have the conversation with mom about some of those tough things, whether it is what's happening in their lives or what's happening with them at work. They don't want to sit at the dinner table and stare you in the eye and have this really hard conversation, but doing it in the car is a much more comfortable spot. You have a clear end of the conversation. Nobody's looking at each other, and here we go, we're going to do it. And that was the approach that I took with my kids is, "All right, we're all in these four doors. Let's do it. We're going to have the conversation." So take that time, create that conversation, unplug the headphones for a little bit of your car ride and have that-

Holly Baril:

Put the phone down.

Pam Patry:

Put the phone down and have that conversation about the culture of the workplace and how safe do they feel and really take that step as a parent or a loved one or the neighbor down the street to say, "How is your employer keeping you safe?"

Holly Baril:

So great. That's awesome. Now, how can an employer create that positive safety culture? What can they do that stands them out from the others?

Pam Patry:

Yeah. It's long-term. You can't do safety overnight. You also can't do culture overnight. The employer has to be committed to making that culture shift by them pointing out hazards in their workplace, by them calling out that maybe we didn't know, but we've learned, and now we're going to take a critical look at this, that it's not about performance or it's not about getting in trouble, that as the employer starts to call it out, even on themselves, that that's going to start to shift the culture. The employer needs to follow the same rules. If the rule is you have to wear non-slip shoes in the kitchen, well, the employer needs to wear non-slip shoes in the kitchen. If the requirement is to wear safety eyewear when you enter the shop floor, then everybody should be wearing safety eyewear when they enter the shop floor, regardless of their position. And so all of those little pieces and time is going to lead us to a culture where everybody feels that safety isn't just a priority, but it's actually our culture. It's actually what we do. It's what we care about.

Holly Baril:

We care. Yeah. So I have to laugh because... And I tell this story all the time. My poor kids, just like you, Pam, right? Because of our job. So my son, years ago, of course, because now he's in the military, so this is when he was a teenager, he's working at the grocery store, right? Grocery store examples. And he's on a night shift there, stocking shelves. That's his job. Okay. So I already know what hazards I'm worried about.

All of a sudden the phone rings, it's midnight, and I go, "What's going on?" So I said, "What's happening?" "Well, my partner didn't come in, and the bread guy's here." I said, "Okay." He says, "Well, he has to unload the bread." "Okay." "Well, Mom, my partner usually drives the forklift to unload the bread." And now I'm starting to go, "Okay." And he says, "Yeah, the bread guy is saying, 'Listen, you need to unload this stuff. Just get in the forklift and just unload for me. I got to go,'" and he tells the bread guy, "Yeah, I got to call my mom because I don't think that this is the right thing... I don't think it's safe." So I said, "Well, thank you very much for calling me. You need to call your employer." "Well, geez, I don't know if I should." I said, "He owns the place. He needs to know that this is something that you shouldn't be doing."

Anyway, the story ends up, calls the employer, and the employer thanked him for not doing that task because he hasn't been trained on how to use the forklift. So, again, these kids think they're going to get in trouble for saying no to something that you know deep down in your gut you shouldn't do this, but they're afraid. It's their first job, or they don't want to make anyone mad. So, again, having that support from your parents or a loved one to say, "No, please contact the employers," is important because-

Pam Patry:

What a positive outcome that happened that could have gone so badly that if he said, "Okay, I'll get in. I'll drive the forklift," it could be catastrophic. It could have critical injuries or fatalities. And so we got to go with that gut feeling that says, "No, I don't think I should be doing that. Now what am I going to do about it?"

Holly Baril:

Yeah. Building that confidence in your own child to be able to ask those questions and be able to say, "I'm not comfortable. I don't think I should do this," right?

Pam Patry:

And we have the right to refuse unsafe work. And it's not if I think it's unsafe, it's not if my mom or my best friend thinks it's unsafe, it's if I think it's unsafe, then I need to step up and say, "I think this is unsafe," for whatever reason. And then maybe, "I need more training. Maybe I need more education. Or maybe it's not a job that I should be doing."

Holly Burrill:

Yeah. Yeah. 100 per cent. Now, to lead into that, what should a parent do if their teen is hurt at work or exposed to an unsafe condition?

Pam Patry:

Yeah. I hear about stories where a worker gets hurt. Whether they're young or old, they get hurt at work, and then they're not filing in the correct forms, and then it's not going through WSIB and it's not being looked at. All that does is perpetuate the problem. We think that we're supporting the employer by not getting them in trouble, but it's not really like that, because if you get hurt and you haven't reported it, there's long-term impacts. There could be really long-term impacts. And so it's so important that if you get hurt at work, you know where the forms are to fill out, get your first aid, for sure, from somebody if it's needed, seek medical attention if necessary, and fill out incident reports and identify the hazards. Because today it could be you getting a small injury, and tomorrow it could be your best friend getting critically injured.

And so we really need to identify those unsafe conditions, whether it's through talking to your joint health and safety committee or your health and safety representative or your supervisor and saying, "Hey, look at this wire. It's looking kind of frayed. I'm not sure it looks really safe. The last time I plugged it in, it gave me a little zap-zap." Today it might be just a little zap-zap, but tomorrow it could be a whole lot worse. And so we need to identify those unsafe conditions and understand how the employer wants us to report them and make sure we report them.

And if it is not being fixed, if you as a parent feel as though those concerns are not being addressed, the Ministry of Labor is always there to support on that enforcement side. The health and safety associations are incredibly happy to help as well, but we're not enforcement. We're there to educate. We're there to prevent. We're there to provide training. Sometimes you do have to go that enforcement way and talk to the Ministry of Labour to make sure that that workplace is safe.

Holly Baril:

Yeah. So, again, just making sure that the parents understand, if your child comes home and they cut their finger, that the kid doesn't just say, "Oh, I think they filled out a paper." We don't always want to get involved and be that parent, but we should be saying, "Okay, maybe we should ask what paperwork they filled out. And I'm going to keep an eye on that, because if it does get worse and we have to go seek medical attention, then we need to make sure the right stuff is done." So, again, just educating the parents that don't always take face value what your child says because they don't know either possibly, and who knows what's happening at the workplace when it comes to injuries?

Pam Patry:

Totally. Be that parent. Be that parent who asks questions...

Holly Baril:

Oh, ask questions. Yeah.

Pam Patry:

...Because your child needs to be kept safe. Be that parent.

Holly Baril:

Pam, we see it. We see the fatalities in the workplace and we see the fatalities of young workers that we know could be prevented, and it's hurtful and it hurts our hearts as trainers that those poor parents have to deal with this and go through this. And here we are, these safe work associations, doing our best to try and capture as many people as we can and get the information out and, "Call us. Call us. What can we do to help?" And unfortunately, there's only so many of us and tons more people working, right? So it's difficult.

Pam Patry:

Yeah. Be that parent and reach out for help and know that the health and safety associations can help. We have youth programs. We have programs for the schools. We have programs to help employers. If you don't know where to start, if you're talking to the employer, if you own a business, you're not alone. We've talked about so many trends and so many things that should be done, but you can't do safety overnight, and it's really hard to do safety alone. So that's why those safe work associations exist.

Holly Baril:

And a lot of our listeners as parents or grandparents or what have you, they work somewhere, possibly. Well, they're covered by a safe work association as well. Do they know that?

Pam Patry:

That's right.

Holly Baril:

So what training have they received as parents? And that was kind of one of the questions I asked the parents during the parent podcast was, "What training did you get?" And it was kind of the same thing, "Well, yeah, some stuff," and again, it all depends on the sector of work, right? Construction, oh, yeah, you're going to get this, that, and the next thing, but another office worker was like, "Oh, you know what? I'm not really sure. I didn't really get much." So as parents listening, you fall potentially under one of the four safe work associations, so inquire about your workplace. Then it gives you that much more information to inquire about your child's workplace as well.

So one last question for you. You kind of mentioned it a little bit. But based on all your years of experience, all the trends you've seen, the trends within the workplaces, the trends within the province of Ontario, all that kind of stuff, can you tell me how can your association help parents, teens, employers?

Pam Patry:

We can only help if they reach out. That's the first thing is we're out there talking to businesses all the time, but the only way we can be at your business or at your teen's business is if you reach out and have those conversations, talk to the employer about the training. And then we're there. We are all across Ontario, like all of the safe work associations. In fact, super exciting, we have staff that are way out in the Kenora—Rainy River district, all the way down through southern Ontario, out to all corners of our province. And so as a business, you shouldn't feel that there's nobody there to help you, because we are. We're there to help you. There are so many free resources and services that we can come onsite, we can do virtually, we can send you samples and support. There's free webinars. There's training. If you're looking for it, we have it. We just have to find you, or you just need to find us.

Holly Baril:

Yeah, so I'm going to make sure that probably all four safe work associations' websites are attached to the podcast, which then the parents can click on, go to the resources, contact whoever you need to contact or download anything that's on there. Your association, just like mine, Pam, everything is Word document. Download it, steal it, yes, please. Use it and get that knowledge you need and ask those right questions.

Pam Patry:

And be that parent. So this podcast is about that wrapping up the three components, the young worker, the parent, and the safe work association. Be that parent and ask those questions. You're not going to write the procedures for the employer, but like you said, Holly, you as a parent work somewhere. You as a neighbor work somewhere, you as a grandparent. Ask the questions, have that conversation, and be that parent. Awesome. Do you have anything else to add, Pam, that you can think of?

Pam Patry:

No. Thanks so much, Holly, for including WSPS in your podcast today. I think this is a conversation we have to keep having. Whether you're standing at the barbecue with your neighbors, or you're out for

the walk with your dog, have the conversations. "What are you doing now? Where are you working? I saw you in this workplace." Start those conversations and don't be shy to have those critical, difficult conversations sometimes to make sure that the young people in your life are safe.

Holly Baril:

Yes. We definitely want to make sure that we don't have to deal with anything... I don't even want to talk about it because it makes me sad, but you know what I'm getting at. So definitely, 100 per cent do not be afraid to ask questions or go to the employer and ask them questions. Either way, get involved a little bit better.

So, Pam, thank you for offering to do this podcast for me so I can wrap it all together and try and give the information to our listeners, parents, teens, employers, whomever may be listening. I really do appreciate it. Thank you very much. Thank you for listening to our podcast. I'm your host, Holly Baril, and be sure to subscribe and like us on your podcast channel and visit us at ihsa.ca for a wealth of health and safety resources and information. And remember, your health, your safety, your future, protect all three.

Announcer:

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