

Psychosocial Hazards

The CSA Standard for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace defines psychosocial hazards as “elements of the work environment, management practices, or organizational practices that pose a risk to mental health and well-being.” If psychosocial hazards at work are not recognized or identified, they could potentially create an unsafe work environment, for everyone.

There are resources available such as online training, seminars, the CSA Standard, Etc. that when implemented can help bring awareness to yourself and others. An organization's ability to integrate psychosocial hazard prevention into its occupational health and safety program will help workers understand their roles and responsibilities when it comes to psychosocial hazard awareness.

Why it is Important?

Workers who feel they have a good support network have greater job attachment, commitment, and overall job satisfaction. Organizations will benefit from developing programs and training to support workers who may be experiencing psychosocial trauma. Benefits can include; lower turnover rates, boosted worker morale, less attendance issues, worker efficiency, and greater success amongst leadership teams.

Things to Look For...

We need to remember that every worksite is different and there is no single way how to identify the risks but there are a few things to look for:

- Someone being bullied or harassed by their peers
- Too much work and not enough time
- Workers feeling unsupported by supervision or management
- Workers being asked to do certain tasks that may be dangerous to their safety
- Threats of physical violence
- Witnessing a traumatic event
- Unfulfilling work/ no development opportunity

No two workers are the same, and each individual may respond to certain risks differently. Identification of these risks are key to solving the issues.

The regular routines of morning coffee and conversation in the lunchroom or trailer could be the first steps to becoming aware that something may be “off”. You may begin to notice things like:

- Poor work attendance
- Withdrawal behaviours
- Conflicts with others
- Overreaction to certain situations
- Headaches
- Burnout
- Anxiety
- There is more careless or reckless behavior
- Change in eating habits
- Signs of substance abuse

What Do I Do When I Recognize the Signs?

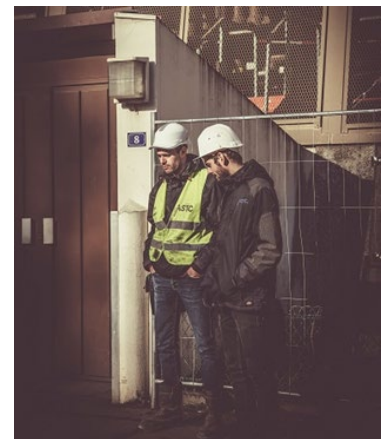
Speak out – The best thing to do is to not stay quiet. A simple conversation with someone could be all it takes to assist them to get the help they need. Using active listening, you may be able to give someone a chance to talk about it. If you feel you can't speak to them directly, speak to a supervisor or a manager.

What Do I Do if I am Experiencing these Symptoms?

Sometimes it may be difficult to open up to someone at work due to feelings of insecurity or embarrassment. If you are comfortable If you feel as though you need help or are just looking to talk to someone without judgement, text WELLNESS to 741741 anytime. Someone will provide you with assistance and help you get the services you need.

Sources:

- https://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/psychosocial/mentalhealth_risk.html
- <https://mentalhealthcommission.ca/national-standard/>



Tool Box Talk

When accidents and incidents happen on the jobsite, we are always quick to point the finger at lack of training, not following practices or procedures, or even improper supervision. The idea that the hazards and dangers associated with the job were not properly communicated to all of the workers is often missed.

Tool Box Talks can go by many names, and although formats may vary, these meetings all serve one purpose: to inform employees and contract workers. Tool Box Talks are short, informal, meetings between management and the workers on a jobsite. The goal of these meetings is to reinforce current safe job procedures, inform workers of new and/or relevant procedures, review recent safety violations/incidents, and ensure workers are up-to-date on the information required to complete their work safely.

Always use a Tool Box Talk form to record the meeting topic, date, who was in attendance, and any follow-up actions to be taken. Not only do these forms help with consistency of record keeping, but they also ensure that nothing is missed. At the end of the meeting have management sign off on the form.

One of the most important aspects of a Tool Box Talk is giving workers an opportunity to voice their concerns and ask questions. All employees have a right to participate in health and safety as it relates to their work and it is the supervisor or manager's responsibility to create an environment for them to do so. Once the meeting is over, and the form is filled out, it should be filed with other documented Tool Box Talks.

Remember that Tool Box Talks are short and informal, they are not meant to be intimidating. Use the opportunity to have fun and stay on top of what is necessary to keep safety culture a strong part of the business.

For a full listing of Tool Box Talk topics, visit: www.scsaonline.ca/resources/tool-box-talks

For a copy of the Tool Box Talk form, visit: www.scsaonline.ca/pdf/Tool_Box_Meeting.pdf

About the Saskatchewan Construction Safety Association

The Saskatchewan Construction Safety Association (SCSA) is an industry-funded, membership-based, nonprofit organization that provides cost-effective, accessible safety training and advice to employers and employees in the construction industry throughout the province to reduce the human and financial losses associated with injuries. Registered March 20, 1995, the SCSA is, and has been since inception, committed to injury prevention. Serving almost 10,000 member companies with business offices in both Regina and Saskatoon, the major business units of the association are Advisory Services, Business Development, Corporate Services, Program Services and Training. The mission of the SCSA is constructing safety leadership in Saskatchewan and the vision is to create the safest construction environment in Canada.