

# Early Intervention



***By early identification of physical signs of discomfort, easy and cost effective measures can be introduced to prevent an injury from occurring.***

Early intervention is about:

- Identifying and responding to early warning signs and reports of accidents or incidents, and
- Providing assistance to employees before they sustain or develop an injury or illness, take extended absences from work or lodge a claim for workers' compensation.

The earlier you notice potential signs of ill health or injury, the sooner you can take steps to help. This will benefit not only the employee but the school community as well.

## Benefits of early intervention

Early intervention offers the following benefits:

- Creates a productive and supportive workplace
- Prevents long term absences from the workplace
- Reduces any adverse effects on school employees
- Less disruption for students and staff due to shorter absences of ill and injured employees
- Increases the probability of a successful return to work.

## Identification

Identifying early warning signs will help schools support employees who may be at risk of injury or illness, and trigger early intervention strategies. In some cases, physical signs may be outwardly visible and easy to identify. Others may be more difficult.

Some less obvious early warning signs include:

- Emotional responses and erratic behaviour
- Disengagement and low morale
- Withdrawn behaviour (reduced participation in work activities)
- Increased unplanned absences
- Increased use of negative language and workplace conflict
- Physical symptoms (tiredness and headaches)
- Difficulty sleeping.



## Strategies

Most of the solutions that can be implemented involve everyday good management and regard for employees. A fundamental component of any early intervention program is timely and reliable accident reporting. If minor injuries, near misses or hazards are reported it provides the school with an opportunity to intervene and prevent a more serious injury in the future.

Information should be provided to all employees about reporting and contact procedures and what assistance is available to them if they are absent from work, or experiencing health problems that prevent them from working at their normal capacity.

Other strategies may include:

- Conducting regular workplace risk assessments
- Developing safe work guidelines for hazardous activities
- Employee assistance programs
- Healthy workplace policies or flexible work arrangements.

## Resources

- Supporting Ill and Injured Workers – Early Intervention (YouTube)

## Further information

### ***Catholic Education Melbourne***

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### ***Catholic Education Office Ballarat***

03 5337 7135

### ***Catholic Education Office Sale***

03 5622 6600

### ***Catholic Education Office Sandhurst***

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