

DVD Training Material

- Ch 1 – Early Intervention



Overview

Early intervention is about identifying and responding to early warning signs and reports of accidents or incidents by providing help to employees before they develop an injury or illness, take extended absence from work or lodge a claim for workers' compensation.

This scenario demonstrates that by identifying physical signs of discomfort, easy and cost effective measures can be introduced to prevent an injury from occurring.

Early Intervention

Why is early intervention so important?

Early intervention offers the following benefits:

- Creates a productive and supportive workplace
- Prevents long term absence from the workplace
- Reduces any adverse effects on co-workers
- Students have less disruption due to shorter staff absences
- Increases the probability of return to work.

The earlier you notice potential signs of ill health or injury, the sooner you can take steps to help. That benefits not only the individual but the team as well.

Identification

What are the early warning signs?

Identifying early warning signs will help schools support those employees who may be at risk of injury or illness at work, 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
- Withdrawal behaviour such as reduced participation in work activities
- Increased unplanned absence
- Increase in use of negative language and workplace conflict



- Physical symptoms including tiredness and headaches
- Difficulty sleeping.

Strategies

What solutions can we implement at our school?

Most of the 'things to do' boil down to ordinary good management and regard for people.

A fundamental component of any early intervention program is good, reliable accident reporting. If minor injuries, near misses or hazards are reported it gives the school an opportunity to intervene and prevent a more serious injury. Your minor trip may be the next person's twisted ankle or worse.

Information should be provided to all staff about reporting and contact procedures and what help is available to them if they are off 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, flexible work arrangements.

Where to get more information

- Catholic Education Melbourne – (03) 9267 0431
- Catholic Education Office Ballarat – (03) 5337 7135
- Catholic Education Office Sale – (03) 5622 6600
- Catholic Education Sandhurst – (03) 5443 2377
- WorkSafe Advisory Service – Tel (03) 9641 1444 or Freecall 1800 136 086 or
- Email info@worksafe.vic.gov.au