

Working **Y**outh

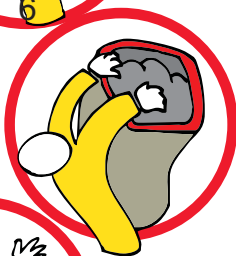
age 14 - 18

Millions of young people like you begin their work life as domestic helpers. As a housekeeper, you may be cleaning, taking care of young children or pets or elderly members of the household, cooking and washing up, going to the market, and running errands. This can be good and decent work, but there are always things that can hurt you or make you sick. Your employer is responsible for providing a safe workplace, but it is wise for you to know the dangers and what to do about them.

The top 4 dangers for youth



- Working long hours; insufficient outside contact



- Lifting things which are too heavy for you



- Disrespectful, improper, or abusive comments or actions from employer family



- Using harsh cleaning agents without knowing the safety measures

HOUSEKEEPER

What YOU should do to stay safe on the job

Know the law

The rule is: No one under 18 should do hazardous work!
(Insert country name) has a law to protect young workers.
The law says:

(insert key points from the law that address: age, hours, tasks that are off limits)

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Get trained

Your boss is responsible for seeing that you are properly trained to do every task that's part of your job and for showing you hazards to watch out for. You should be trained to handle cleaning products safely, on proper lifting methods, the right way to use and store equipment, and what to do if there is an emergency such as a fire, robbery, or abuse. Do not be shy if you are not sure how to do something—ask!

Be careful; be proud

You have a job. You are helping your family. You deserve respect from the people you work for. If something seems unsafe, ask about it. If someone bothers or threatens you, ask for help. Keep your eyes open for dangers.

Remember, it is your employer's responsibility to make sure you are safe and to provide a good working environment. It is your responsibility to follow instructions and safety rules carefully.

What YOUR EMPLOYER should do so you are safe

- Have the vacuum cleaner, iron, and other materials in good repair
- Give you any rubber gloves, hot pads, and any other protective gear you need
- Allow you time off during the day to go to school or training, to socialize, and to relax
- Provide cleaning products that do not hurt your skin or cause headaches
- Provide a comfortable place to rest and adequate, nourishing food

TRUE STORIES

“Even though I am so young, my back hurts every night when I go home. I have to move the furniture when I clean, and the children want to be carried all the time.”

“My employer yells at me all the time, and even has hit me a few times. I don’t think I can ever do the work fast enough or well enough to make her happy – but I don’t know what other work I can do.”

“In the house where I work, everything must be very clean, so the cleaning chemicals I use are very strong. They make my hands cracked and dry, but no one has given me any gloves to wear. The chemicals also make me cough when I use them.”

Some other dangers and what to do about them

STRAIN

- Get help from another person when lifting heavy items or use a cart.
- remember "SLIM" (Safe Lifting Methods)

Squat to pick up the object and lift using your leg muscles not your back

Lean close, keeping the heavy item against your body

Move your feet to turn, do not twist your body

- Use a cloth shawl or other carrier to carry babies for long periods, not just your arms.
- Take regular rest breaks, even just short breaks to stretch your body. Take turns with other workers to do different types of tasks.
- When you work on your knees (cleaning the floor) pad your knees with a mat or towel and change your position often.

FALLS

- Clean up spills immediately
- Pick up items off the floor so that you do not trip over them
- Never run or move too fast
- Do not carry items too tall for you to see over
- Use a ladder or footstool to reach objects stored up high. Never stand on a box or a chair with wheels, or climb the shelves
- Do not stand on the top three steps of a ladder

CHEMICALS

- Ask for information about any strong cleaning products you are asked to use
- Read the labels before using and follow instructions. If you do not understand the label, write down the name and ask someone (a nurse, community worker, or educated adult) to explain what it is, what the dangers are, and precautions to take
- Wear gloves when needed. Your employer should provide these.
- Do not mix chemicals together.

STRESS

- If you are being yelled at or harassed by anyone in the household, talk to a co-worker or someone outside
- If anyone in the household is making sexual advances, get help immediately. If you feel comfortable with your employer, speak to her, otherwise to a community worker

DISEASE

- Wash hands with soap often, especially after changing diapers or working with someone who is sick and always before you eat
- Do not share drinking cups or other things you use to eat with

ELECTRIC SHOCK

- Do not touch or plug in electrical equipment when your hands are wet
- Let someone know if any of the equipment has a frayed cord or is broken. Do not use it until it is fixed.

If you need help or more information, contact:

... insert name and contact information for partner agency...