

Omar, 16, never made it home from his job

What can you do to make sure this doesn't happen in your community?

Teen Fatality Response Kit for Teachers: A Call to Action for Teens and Employers

In 2021, a young man lost his life on the job while changing the oil for a car in a small tire shop in a small town in California. Small employers, in particular, really need to know how they can prevent this kind of tragic event from happening. Employers are hiring more young people than ever. Young people can have a powerful voice in the community, helping to protect and educate their peers AND employers. This is an important time to get the word out!

Teachers, please share the two info sheets in this packet with your students and with local employers to help keep this from ever happening again—in any kind of workplace.

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STEP 1: Make copies of the **Employer and Young Worker INFO SHEETS** to give to your students and discuss Omar's story with them. Go over the information in the info sheets with them. Additional resources are listed at the end of these instructions.

STEP 2: Make a plan with your students for getting the word out to employers, teens or both. Encourage them to choose something they think they can do, maybe by pairing up or going in a small group. Schedule a time for them to report back to the class. Here are a few ideas:

Getting the word out to small employers

- **Present to an employer group.**
 - Adults listen when young people present information and demands.
 - Find employer groups in your community. Identify and contact the Chamber of Commerce, including ethnic chambers (Asian, Black or Hispanic Chambers of Commerce) or Business Improvement Districts for specific business areas or neighborhoods (for example Main Street, Downtown, Fruitvale, North Beach)
- **Find out who employs youth in your community.**
 - Work with your school's work permit issuers to get a list of employers who hire teens. Visit these employers and share the information with them.
- **Who do you know? Share the info one-on-one.**
 - Talk with friends and family members who either are small employers or who know small employers in your community. How can you reach out to small family-run businesses, where things may happen on an informal basis?
- **Organize a canvassing day with a student organization in your school.**
 - Go out in pairs to businesses to share the information with local employers.

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Getting the word out to other youth

- **Work with student organizations in your school or community.**
 - What organizations do you or your friends belong to? What organizations do students participate in?
 - Make a school presentation; share the information through the group's social media platforms or listservs; write an article for the school newspaper or bulletin board; contact local radio stations for a spot on a youth friendly broadcast.
 - What are your ideas?
- **Work with the adults at your school.**
 - Ask to make a presentation in key classes, such as career technical education (CTE) classes, work experience classes or social studies classes that reach all students.
 - Meet with school administration. Plan for a short presentation at an assembly, or through school announcement systems. Have work permit issuers provide the information to employers and young workers.

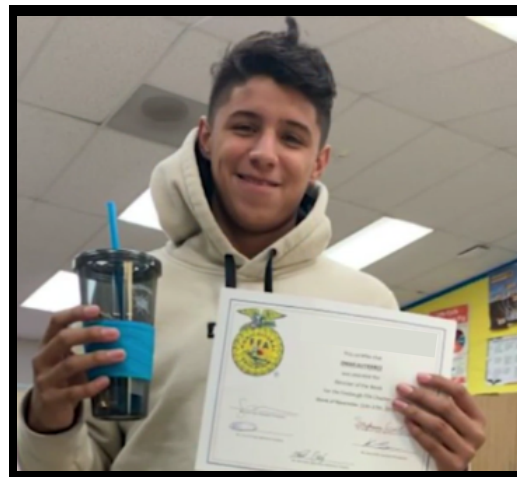
STEP 3: Let the California Partnership for Young Worker Health and Safety know what you've been able to do! Ask your students to fill out this short [google form](#) by May 31. Participants will be eligible for a \$50 Target gift card drawing. You can also contact the Partnership by emailing Rosa Martinez at rmm@berkeley.edu.

Other Resources:

- [A 16-year-old tire repair assistant died when a vehicle slipped off a hydraulic jack and fell on him while he was changing the oil](#) – CA Dept of Public Health fatality investigation report
- [Are You a Working Teen? \(Spanish\)](#)
- [Facts for Employers–Safer Jobs for Teens \(Spanish\)](#)
- [Tips for Parents of Working Teens \(Spanish\)](#)
- Five Steps for Staying Safe on the Job
 - [Auto Repair](#)
 - [Construction](#)
 - [Restaurants](#)
 - [Retail](#)
 - [Hotel Cleaning](#)
 - [Field Work](#)
- For links to all resources visit:
 - youngworkers.org/safe-jobs-month/resource-kit/

Teen Fatality Response Kit: For Employers

On May 12, 2021, Omar went to his afterschool job at a small tire shop where he'd been working part time since the previous summer. He worked there with another friend of his from high school—both were juniors. The shop only had 5 employees including the two students. Omar had a lot going for himself: he was a member of Future Farmers of America (FFA), was on the school's varsity soccer team, and had taken several automotive classes at school. He was a role model for his three young brothers and seemed to always have a smile for everyone.



Just before closing, someone came in with a flat tire. The teens agreed to change the flat tire and jacked up the car on one side with a hydraulic jack. The owner of the car also asked for an oil change, which this small business didn't typically offer. The teens knew how to do an oil change, so Omar jacked up the other side of the car to change the oil. When he was under the car, it shifted and fell off one of the jacks and crushed him. His friend had to get him out from under the vehicle. Omar died shortly after. Only one adult was at the shop, and wasn't where they were working.

The community was devastated—Omar's family, friends, and his employer and workmates.

There are many safeguards that should have protected Omar but didn't:

1. Omar should have had a work permit but didn't. Did he or his employer know that was required? The permit would have stated Omar couldn't work with hydraulic lifts.
2. California's child labor law prohibits workers under 18 from doing work that involves hydraulic jacks. Did Omar or his employer know this?
3. Safety training in automotive classes and at work should cover safe use of jacks and blocking or cribbing, as well as what laws protect teens in the workplace. Did Omar and his co-worker's training cover this? If it did, what conditions led the teens to ignore this training, or forget its importance?

Teen Fatality Response Kit: For Employers

If you are an employer:

- **Get** work permits for any workers under age 18. Workers under 18 must request a work permit application at their school or school district office before beginning a new job. This permit will clearly state what kind of work is prohibited for teen workers.
 - **Know** and follow the law.
 - California's child labor laws ensure that teens are protected from doing the most hazardous job tasks or working with certain equipment.
 - California's health and safety laws require every workplace to have an Injury and Illness Prevention Program (IIPP) that includes identifying and addressing hazards, training employees about hazards, and involving employees in the program.
 - **Ensure** that minors only use equipment that is permitted under child labor laws; [clearly label equipment](#) that young workers are *not* allowed to use.
 - **Train** ALL of your employees to work safely.
 - **Provide** extra supervision and mentoring to young workers. Provide clear instructions, including what job tasks young workers should or should not do.
 - **Encourage** young workers to ask questions and report any safety and health concerns.
 - **Share** this information about what employers and teens should know with your family and friends—young people, parents, teachers and other employers.
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Resources:

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Teen Fatality Response Kit: For Youth

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Teen Fatality Response Kit: For Youth

If you are a young worker:

- **Get a work permit.** If you are under 18, you must get a work permit application from your school or school district office (unless you have graduated.) This permit will clearly state what kind of work is prohibited for teen workers.
- **Know your rights.** U.S. and state laws protect workers on the job. There are also special laws that protect workers under 18. These laws say:
 - Employers must provide a safe workplace.
 - Workers under 18 may not do certain dangerous tasks, and may not work too long, too late or too early. Make sure you know what you can and can't do under the law.
- **Get safety training.** Under the law, your employer must train you to do every task that's part of your job, like how to lift safely, how to use tools safely, or how to deal with difficult customers safely.
- **Follow safety rules.** Use your training to protect yourself and other workers. Do every task the way you have been trained. Ask questions if the rules don't make sense to you.
- **Look for hazards in your workplace.** Your employer must provide a safe workplace, but you should also look out for anything that you think might hurt you or make you sick. You can spot these hazards and tell your supervisor about them before they cause a problem.
- **Ask questions and get help.** Pay attention. If something seems unsafe, ask about it. If you don't know how to do a task you are given, ask a co-worker or your supervisor for help. If that does not work, get help from someone else, such as a safety or union representative, teachers, or parent. For more information, contact:
 - www.youngworkers.org, Search for the "[Are you a working teen?](#)" Factsheet
 - Cal/OSHA, www.dir.ca.gov/DOSH
 - CA Labor Commissioner's Office, www.dir.ca.gov/DLSE
 - CA Fair Employment and Housing, www.dfeh.ca.gov
- **Think for yourself.** How does time pressure affect your ability to make a decision? Why might it be hard to say no?
- **Share this information** about what employers and teens should know with your family and friends—young people, parents, teachers and employers.