

# How you would ensure that students develop and adopt safe working practices in practical areas of schools?

Work Health and Safety (WHS) is the responsibility of everyone, this includes the students (Wright, R 2015) and is particularly evident in the setting of a Home Economics kitchen. This is why developing safe work practice in students is essential in these practical areas of schools. Safe work practices not only keep myself as a teacher safe but also the students in my care safe and harm free (Marple, P 2015 & Allwright, L 2015)). The impacts of not having a safe work practice developed in students is detrimental to the safety and wellbeing of all, as there could be physical and mental injury as a result of unsafe practices being employed or even bullying and harassment (Wright, R 2015).

For a safe work practice to be developed students need to be involved and want to adapt the practice themselves. This should be completed using a whole school approach and from the very start of the subject (Commonwealth of Australia, DEWR 2006), so it becomes ingrained in the students and staff and is the norm.

**For the purpose of the following, this classroom context has been selected:**

*I will be teaching a Year 8 Food Technologies class, who have minimal experience in cooking and using a kitchen. The class has mixed learning styles with some needing hands on experience to retain information and others needing to see it happen. It is in a co-educational private school, where the maximum class size is 16 students. The class contains a mixture of males and females students, with males being the dominate gender.*

*The school is big on safe work practice and encourages students to be involved in creating a classroom environment that is safe, they encourage in even more so in a Home Economics classroom where hazards and injury will be more prominent.*

### Assessment 1: Essay, Workplace Safety

Damien Walker

Although the chosen classroom context is a Food Technologies class the same procedure should be followed in a Textiles Technologies class to enable students to adopt and develop a safe work practice.

In this environment, I am following the direct instructions of the Management and Control Person Conducting Business or Undertaking (PCBU) (Rowe, S 2015). In this case, the PCBU is the Principal and WHS Representative. I would also need to follow the approach of the other teachers within the faculty (Allwright, L 2015).

For students who have minimal experience in the kitchen, an induction into the schools kitchen is extremely important for teachers to conduct before any type of practical activity occurs, this will avoid unsafe work practice, confusion and or potential accidents occurring (Evans, L 2014). As a teacher, I would include the following in my induction: explanation hygiene procedures, of how to safely operate items of plant (oven, stove, grill, blender and a knife), class expectations and where potential hazards might lie in not only items of plant but around the kitchen.

Students should be encouraged to get involved with Safe Work Practice (Commonwealth of Australia, DEWR 2006). This is can be completed by running a class discussion and getting them to find potential hazards in the kitchen or when using items of plant. I would set students up with a fictional video, where they can find Potential kitchen hazards. This can be seen by two Home Economics teachers in this YouTube clip, *Kitchen Safety at Downer Grove North High School* (Kim, 2011). The use of a video will engage, the students in my chosen context from the beginning and cater for the different learning styles and not just be a discussion but contain a visual element. Potentially you could use a game like Virtual Hotel (SafeworkSA, September 2013), where you can enter the kitchen and identify hazards with plant and the wider kitchen and then answer related questions. This could also be achieved with Appendix 1 (Evans, L 2014). When explaining hazards, it is important I not focus on the negatives or provide students with horror stories (Wright, R 2015), as this could turn them away from the subject

My induction into the kitchen would include also, what Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is required of students. PPE is anything used or worn by a person to minimise a risk to the person's health or safety (Rowe, S 2015). I will make note that it is expected that students wear these during all practical lessons and that no exceptions will be made. PPE to be worn by all need includes enclosed shoes, an apron and having long hair tied back. Other PPE may be employed throughout the class, when undertaking different operations with the kitchen. If students are unwilling to wear PPE or for instance does not have enclosed shoes, I, as the teacher, must not let them participate in the practical, as it may be harmful to them safety and wellbeing (Rowe, S 2015 & Wright, R 2015).

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Students need to be aware of classroom expectations and that unsafe work practice will not be tolerated. I would do this in the form of a contract, where myself and the students together identify what should be expected in terms of behaviour and safe work practice. Appendix 2 shows an example of this, which has been adapted from Evans (L, 2014). The contract is to be signed by not only the student but the parents and myself. Setting clear expectations of work practices and behaviour will avoid confusion and misunderstanding and in the long run create a safe environment for the students under my care and one that is incident and hazard free (Evans, L 2014).

No matter what the school, I as a teacher will always encounter students with behavioural issues and that are unwilling to follow safe work practices. When this occurs the best practice for me to employ will be to remove them from the class and the dangerous situation, until such time they are willing to follow expectation (Allwright, L 2015 & Wright, R 2015). This is where you could remind them of the contract they signed and that they are in violation of it. It is important that when disciplining a child, I not take away from the other students experience and practice showing rational reactions (Allwright, L 2015).

Introduction to Safe Operating Procedures (SOP) should be completed for items of plant (Rowe, S 2015). *I would introduce these gradually as items of plant are being used in class.* This way students are not overloaded with information on the first day. Only demonstrate plant as they are necessary for practical. I will not allow Students to participate in practical activity with being present for a demonstration of items of plant.

As information may not be retained by all my students in the same way, I will need to cater for the various learning styles in my class. A book with stepped out procedures to operate plant will be provided, additionally, visual demonstration and allowing students practice SOP for plant will be employed.

Once students have been inducted or shown how to use each item of plant, I will record that I have completed this. This covers you in the event of injury and in a court of law if injury does occur (Wright, R 2015 & Rowe, S 2015). I will also keep my lesson plan to back this up. A key method to us is to debrief students after activities. I would use this method after students encounter items of plant and look at the potential hazards they have experienced and how they went about minimising injury during their practical.

I will also develop Safe work practices by having my students create posters for the classroom that pertain to certain items of plant and, safety and hygiene procedures. Examples include, hand washing, how to hold a knife and where saucepan handles should be placed. This will help them begin to retain the key points for item of plant

and how to use them safely to avoid injury. This is also playing to the whole school approach and will help other student develop and adopt safe work practice (Commonwealth of Australia, DEWR 2006).

Incorporating safe work practice into theoretical and practical assessment will ensure that students adopt a safe work practice (Evans, L 2014). Once students grasp the concept of safe work practice, in the later years of the subject all you need will be a refresher task and to refresh their knowledge. I would employ assessment by providing student with feedback after each practical and also have student look at their own practice. A feedback proforma would look at what they did well and what needs working on. Appendix 3, shows an example of this proforma. Incorporation of safe work practices and WHS into assessment put students in charge and allows them to be responsible for their own actions and identify hazards and controls for the kitchen and items of plant (ref). In a sense, this creates thinkers and doers rather than doers who just follow directions.

This is again where a whole school approach (Commonwealth of Australia, DEWR 2006) comes into play to ensure upon changing teacher each semester or year, transition is smooth. A teachers program should adhere to the guidelines set by the school, however the delivery method might be slightly different to cater for different learning style classes and student will have.

After employing all the aforementioned strategies, students should be well on their way to adopting a safe work practice and already using it in there practical. Work Health Safety is a continuous job and does not stop just because I as the teacher have taught student safe work practices. I need to vigilant to everything and ensure students are adhere all the time. It is also clear that delivery method will differ class to class but you will provide the same information and be following the schools and faculty's approach to safe work practice.

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