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2 June 2021

HIA Launches New Young Worker Safety Campaign Platform

HIA is excited to announce the launch of its new digital campaign for site safety awareness, which is aimed at reducing the rates of injury among young workers and apprentices who work on construction sites in NSW.

The construction industry has significantly higher physical injury rates when compared to other industry sectors, and this is particularly true for young workers and apprentices who are more likely to be injured.

“We need to talk to this demographic in a way that entertains and engages with them so that the important task of raising safety awareness on sites can be carried out effectively” stated HIA Executive Director, David Bare.

HIA’s new campaign platform uses Instagram to deliver targeted safety videos and messages to young workers, led by ‘The Common Sensei’. The Common Sensei is the embodiment of an apprentice’s common sense on the worksite, and appears whenever danger is near.

A number of ‘memory’ trigger mechanisms are built into the videos to aid safety recall when the apprentice is onsite working. The campaign will see new Common Sensei wisdoms continually fed into social feeds to build consciousness of young tradies and apprentices.

“This idea taps into the insight that apprentices are in the development phase of applying their situational awareness and experience on site, commonly referred to by their employers as ‘common sense’” commented HIA Marketing Communication Manager, Ryan May.

“There are of course, many factors that go into making a worksite safe, including robust safety systems, but at its core, site safety starts with thinking for yourself and speaking up if something doesn’t feel right” added Mr Bare.

Project Background

In June 2020, HIA partnered with the iCare Foundation on a worksite safety initiative targeting this issue as part of the Injury Prevention In Construction investment.

The project has undertaken widespread research and development with young workers in the Australian construction industry and aims to connect with them to raise awareness, and empower changed behaviour regarding worksite safety.

The creative direction is built on the idea that ‘Common sense’ is a skill that all must learn in order to become ‘master of a trade’. As the apprentices themselves told us about safety - ‘a lot comes down to common sense’.

The initiative is underpinned by a proven methodology developed by key collaborators on the project, The Shannon Company; a specialist behaviour change communications organisation with a 30 year

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track record of encouraging individuals, families and communities to change their behaviour 'willingly and for good'.

Further helping to deliver the project are experienced evaluators, Human Capital Alliance, management and research consultancy firm.

The long-term objective of the project is to effect behavioural change on residential building sites throughout NSW and to reduce all levels of workplace accident and injury over time.

“We always aim to do our utmost to create a bright and sustainable future for the industry’s next generation, and we believe that starts with talking about safety” concluded Mr Bare.

How to get involved

- Spread the word to young workers and apprentices in construction
- Follow the common sensei on Instagram [@commonsensei_au](#)
- Visit commonsensei.com.au

More information

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