

Children's Services

These are the most common injuries and hazards for people working in children's services, as shown by injury claims.

Psychological System

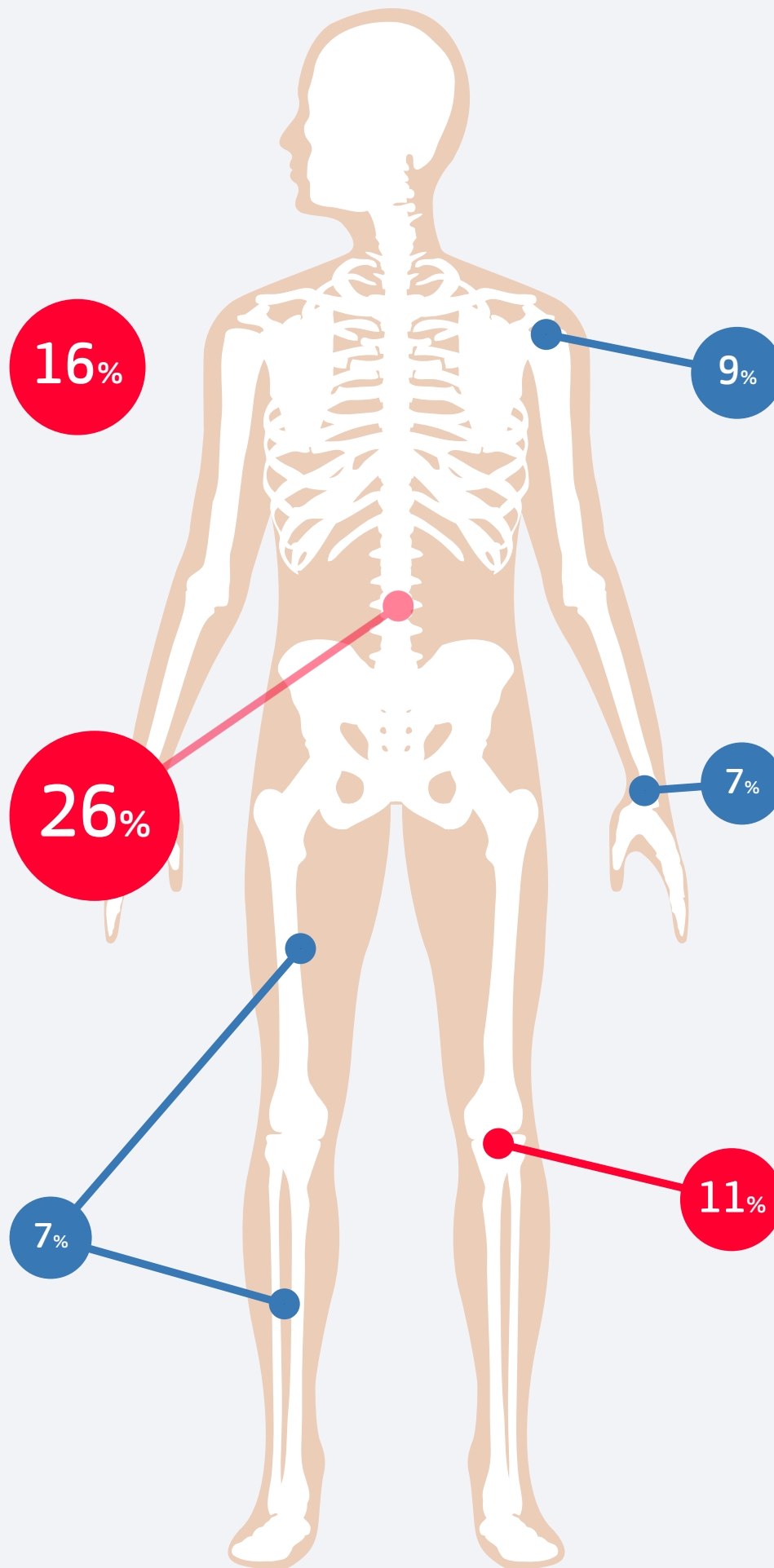
Work-related stress from harassment, bullying, and work pressures.

Back

Strain from lifting, carrying and moving children, toys, and furniture and equipment.

Leg

Muscle strain, traumatic joint/ligament injuries, and fractures from slipping and falling over toys and equipment from uneven ground, or from playing with children on their level.



Shoulder

Muscle strain from lifting, carrying and moving children, toys, furniture and equipment, and from repetitive kitchen duties.

Forearm/Wrist

Muscle strain from repetitive movements, especially lifting children. Fractures from tripping over toys and equipment, or falling from chairs/ladders.

Knee

Traumatic joint/ligament injury and muscle strain from repetitive bending, kneeling and squatting, and tripping on uneven ground or objects (e.g. toys).

Safety solutions

WorkSafe expects employers to have safety solutions in place to protect workers from injury and illness. Below are some common solutions known to reduce the risk of injury. Employers should work together with their employees to determine the most effective solutions for their workplace.

Hotspots

Solution

Bending, kneeling and squatting

- Knee
- Forearm/Wrist
- Leg

- Provide height-adjustable change tables with steps for children able to walk up stairs.
- In the absence of change table, provide a padded surface for employees to kneel on.
- Provide appropriate furniture for adults (e.g. a height-adjustable office chair that can be lowered to engage with children).

Disease

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- Develop and implement appropriate policies and procedures to ensure good hygiene (e.g. hand-washing).
- Seek medical advice in vaccinations if applicable.

Lifting and moving children and equipment

- Back
- Shoulder
- Forearm/Wrist

- Provide appropriate aids and equipment (e.g. height-adjustable change tables, cots with a higher working base, height-adjustable highchairs with removable trays, height-adjustable trolleys for shifting goods in and out of vehicles, wheeled trolleys or frames for laundry bags) and ensure they are used properly and maintained in accordance with manufacturer specifications.
- Ensure large, bulky or awkward objects can be easily moved (e.g. fit sandpit covers and playground equipment with large castors or wheels, use wheeled trolleys or frames for laundry bags, and height-adjustable trolleys for shifting goods in and out of vehicles).
- Provide appropriate steps that are scaled appropriately for children and designed to Australian Standards (e.g. steps feature hand-holds, runners, rollers and stops, and have fall protection for the child).
- Develop and implement appropriate policies and procedures for lifting and moving children and equipment (e.g. only non-walking children should be lifted).
- Train employees in the selection and use of any aids and equipment and safe handling methods (e.g. hold child's hand when ascending steps).

Storing equipment, materials and toys

- Back
- Shoulder
- Forearm/Wrist

- Position storage/shelves between shoulder and knee height or provide step stools or ladders, preferably with hand-rails, to access stored objects without over-reaching.
- Position dryers and washing machines so they can be loaded between shoulder and mid-thigh height.

Work-related stress, bullying, and harassment

● Psychological System

- Develop and implement appropriate policies and procedures for workplace bullying and harassment.
- Encourage a positive workplace culture, including reporting of bullying and harassment.
- Ensure all employees understand what bullying and harassment is, and the procedures for reporting incidents (e.g. policies and procedures should be promoted during employee induction and workplace bullying prevention or training).
- Provide access and encourage employees to use employee counselling/support services, where possible.
- Encourage employees to report any workplace stress factors (e.g. work demand, low control, poor support, lack of role clarity, organisational culture) and control appropriately.

Working in the kitchen

● Back ● Knee ● Shoulder ● Forearm/Wrist

- Provide appropriate mechanical aids (e.g. food processors and electric can openers) and ensure they are used properly and maintained in accordance with manufacturer specifications.
- Consider purchasing prepared food (e.g. sliced cheese and diced meat).
- Ensure employees are not exposed to repetitive work for long periods (e.g. by using job rotation, work variation) or work that requires a significant amount of high force.

Visit www.injuryhotspots.com.au
WorkSafe Advisory Service Toll-free 1800 136 089

Your health and safety contact is:

You must consult with the people who will be affected by changes before any changes affecting their occupational safety or health are put in place. If someone is injured at work, their employer must ensure they receive proper care and support their safe return to work. WorkSafe Victoria is a trading name of the Victorian WorkCover Authority.