Avoid Harmful Horseplay

WHAT'S AT STAKE?

Horseplay is rough play, practical jokes and other physical humor which can endanger workers. Horseplay at work is also linked to bullying behavior. In those cases, jokes are actually harassment targeting new workers or others who, in someone's opinion, do not fit in with the crew.

WHAT'S THE DANGER?

A victim's explosive anger is one danger arising from horseplay. Even if a certain prank doesn't cause physical injury, it could bring dangerous retaliation. Workplace "joking" has resulted in fatally stabbed jokers. And even the most lighthearted horseplay can distract workers for a second and cost someone a serious injury. Every year people are injured during horseplay. "I'm sorry" can't bring back a finger, an eye or a life.

EXAMPLES

Vandalism is closely linked to horseplay as destruction of property for a prank or more malicious reasons. Consider the traffic fatality in which three innocent people were killed when the vehicle in which they were riding smashed into a transport truck. Why? Pranksters had deliberately knocked down a stop sign at a rural intersection. Whoever did that probably thought they were being pretty funny at the time.

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF

Think of victim

Be aware of how practical jokes affect the victim – endangering, frightening and belittling him or her. Treat others how you would like to be treated.

Don't play

If someone plays a practical joke on you or invites you to join in horseplay, tell him it's dangerous and not fitting in the workplace. Remember that any workplace tool can be a lethal weapon if misused, even in fun. Don't engage in this type of activity.

Discourage it

Discourage your fellow workers from "acting up" on the job.

Train early

Help influence and train new and young workers to avoid horseplay and stick to the rules. Warn them that there may be times when the same-old, same-old atmosphere at work seems to call for a little "lightening up," but the cost of following that temptation can quickly become heartbreakingly heavy.

No audience

Ignoring horseplay is sometimes a smart way to discourage it.

Report it

The best way to stop horseplay, however, is to report any worker who refuses to listen to reason about practical jokes and horseplay. It may cost that person a job, but it could save a life.

FINAL WORD

It makes no difference what the motive is for horseplay – boredom, humor or deliberate cruelty. The result is the same: Horseplay hurts.

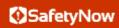
QUIZ

- 1. Some horseplay in workplaces is linked to bullying.
 - o True
 - False
- 2. If a prank doesn't cause physical injury, it's safe to do.
 - o True
 - o False
- 3. Any workplace tool can be a lethal weapon if misused.
 - o True
 - o False
- 4. Ignoring horseplay can be a smart way to discourage it.
 - o True
 - o False
- 5. The best way to stop horseplay is to report it.
 - o True
 - o False

BEFORE THE TALK - TIPS		AFTER THE TALK- CHECKLIST		
1.	Discussions of horseplay can quickly go off track, as talk turns away from the hazards and toward bragging about supposedly humorous exploits. Be prepared to keep this meeting on track.	PROVIDED FOLLOW-UP TO WORKERS THAT DID POORLY ON THE QUIZ NAME:		
2.	There are many reasons for a company to forbid horseplay. Here's one: In a compensation case, an employer was found responsible for injuries an employee received while playing a prank on another worker. The commission hearing the case ruled the horseplay was a risk of employment	DATE: OBSERVED WORKERS TASK(S): DATE:		
3.	because these incidents were a common practice even though management did not approve. There's no doubt horseplay kills. Here's one such fatal incident: A helicopter pilot and passenger were killed in a crash attributed to horseplay.	REFRESHER TRAINING TOPIC(S): DATE:		
	Witnesses reported seeing two helicopters engaged in what appeared to be games or stunts in the air, dodging and weaving within a short distance of each other. When the one helicopter attempted a steep climb, the tail section fell off and the machine crashed into a residential area. 4. Ask your workers to share suggestions about halting horseplay.	OTHER (DESCRIBE): MEETING DATE: LOCATION:		
NOTES				
- - - -				
- - -				
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ANSWERS:

1. True 2. False 3. True 4. True 5. True



ATTENDANCE				
-				
MOTRUCTOR				
INSTRUCTOR:	DATE:			
SAFETY TALK:				