



Chartered
Institute of
Environmental
Health



Policy briefing note – child employment

Children are particularly vulnerable in the workplace and the complexity of existing UK law may leave large numbers of child workers exposed to unnecessary risk.

The regulation of child employment is rooted in many sets of Acts and regulations, estimated to be over 200. This may lead to large numbers of children working in potentially hazardous situations, which are largely unknown to the relevant regulatory authorities.

The Children's Legal Centre produces a useful **factsheet**.

The CIEH believes that the regulation of child employment, including the health and safety and child protection aspects should be made clearer for all: children and their parents, employers, education workers and other professionals.

Child employment in moderation is a valuable introduction to the world of work and the understanding of risk and responsibility.

There is some research into the extent of under-16 employment but there is little evidence about the risks or extent of actual injuries or ill health.

More research needs to be carried out in this area.

The area of work has attracted much attention from the NSPCC and The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA).

The CIEH aims to support the work of these organisations and the valuable work they are doing. The CIEH would welcome, and is willing to support, further research projects being conducted.

Producing guidance on the risks, and control of them, and encouraging regulators to direct their attention to this area is also another way the CIEH plays an active role.