

# Risk Assessment

A risk assessment is an examination of the aspects of a task that may expose workers to an increased risk of injury. The purpose of a risk assessment is to determine whether enough has been done to control the risk or whether further control measures need to be put in place (e.g., first aid and other emergency response measures). In order to initiate a risk assessment, you must first identify what hazards might exist. This poster series focuses on the most frequently encountered hazards in school settings.

The objective in all risk assessments is to establish the degree of risk (high, moderate, or low) to the workers who perform tasks that involve exposure to risk factors. The basic risk assessment approach is to look at the “extent of exposure,” which is generally a combination of magnitude (how much), duration (how long), and frequency (how often, how fast).

For example, you may have identified an awkward stooping posture when a worker performs a task (a hazard that could cause a musculoskeletal injury). During the risk assessment, you may find out that the worker does this task only occasionally or for a very short period of time during the day. There may be exposures to other factors (e.g., high force, repetition) associated with other tasks the worker performs for longer durations. In this example, these other tasks involve a greater amount of risk, requiring control measures and/or procedures plus training.

Risk assessment tools specific to various situations are available from a WorkSafeBC officer or from [WorkSafeBC.com](http://WorkSafeBC.com).



## In the OHS Regulation

Risk assessment information related to

- Musculoskeletal injuries (Sections 4.46–4.53)
- Violence in the workplace (Section 4.28)
- Occupational first aid (Section 3.16)

## Resources

Available from [WorkSafeBC.com/Publications](http://WorkSafeBC.com/Publications)

- *Making it Right* (BK110, panel 20)
- *Working Alone: A Handbook for Small Business* (BK131, p. 8–10)

## Safety is everyone's responsibility!

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