

International Hazard Datasheet on Occupation

Teacher, Elementary

What is a Hazard Datasheet on Occupation?

This datasheet is one of the international Datasheets on Occupations. It is intended for those professionally concerned with health and safety at work: occupational physicians and nurses, safety engineers, hygienists, education and information specialists, inspectors, employers' representatives, workers' representatives, safety officers and other competent persons.

This datasheet lists, in a standard format, different hazards to which Elementary Education Teacher may be exposed in the course of their normal work. This datasheet is a source of information rather than advice. With the knowledge of what causes injuries and diseases, is easier to design and implement suitable measures towards prevention.






Who is an elementary education teacher?

A specialist in the theory and practice of education at the primary level, which includes building a foundation for literacy, science, mathematics, and comprehension to prepare students for future schooling.

What is dangerous about this job?

- Slips, trips and falls due to wet floors, uneven surfaces and cords
- Indoor air pollution exposure, including dust, due to poorly maintained schools
- Fatigue and lower back pain due to long periods of walking and/or standing
- Office ergonomic disorders due to poorly designed work stations
- Workplace violence from students, students' family members, community members and school intruders

Hazards related to this job

Accident Hazards 	Slips, trips and falls due to wet floors, uneven surfaces and cords	1 2
	Cuts, lacerations and punctures from classroom activities and handling paper	3
	Potential for car accident due to field trips or teachers who commute between schools	4
	Electrical shock from faulty or improperly grounded equipment	5 6
	Injuries to feet and toes from falling heavy objects	2
Physical Hazards 	Inadequate heating or cooling, extreme temperature exposures, humidity	2 7
	Life safety hazards due to improperly maintained life safety systems	8
Chemical Hazards 	Irritation of the eyes, nose, and throat due to exposure to cleaning solvents, including dry erase cleaners	9
	Exposure to chipping lead paint and asbestos in older school buildings	9
	Eye and respiratory irritation due to painting of rooms and tarring of roofs	9
	Indoor air pollution exposure, including dust, due to poorly maintained schools	7
Biological Hazards 	Hazard of contracting a communicable disease from students such as chickenpox and influenza	10
	Infections due to exposure to blood and body fluids possibly leading to blood-borne disease	10
Ergonomic, Psychosocial and Organizational Factors 	Fatigue and lower back pain due to long periods of walking and/or standing	11
	Stress, fatigue, and tension due to the special nature of working with children and their families	13
	Office ergonomic disorders due to poorly designed work stations	11 12
	Voice disorders due to continuous talking and voice overuse	11
	Workplace violence from students, students' family members, community members, and school intruders	13 14
	Sprains and strains from rearranging classroom furniture	15

Preventive measures

1	Wear proper footwear with non-slip soles
2	Keep all passages clearly visible and uncluttered
3	Purchase safety scissors for student use and keep paper products organized
4	Comply with all driver safety regulations and utilize seatbelts whenever possible
5	Install ground fault circuit interrupters, call qualified electricians to test and repair faulty or suspect equipment
6	Comply with safety instruction on the installation and periodic inspection of equipment
7	Install a heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) system with air cleansing including dust filtration capabilities as well as facilities for total ventilation
8	Conduct with all life safety regulations and provide a mechanism for reporting deficiencies along with a follow up action
9	Conduct building maintenance tasks such as painting, renovations, and repairs outside of school hours to reduce exposure
10	Get needed vaccinations; routinely use proper protection such as gloves; practice good hand washing techniques
11	Plan activities throughout the day so that similar tasks are broken up to relieve musculoskeletal stressors
12	Provide ergonomic consultations and training materials on how to set up workstation properly
13	Counseling services should be available to teachers
14	Provide appropriate emergency response plans and guidelines
15	Work in pairs and ensure furniture is maintained for easy movement

Specialized Information

Synonyms

Primary school teacher, educator, tutor, instructor, preceptor, governess

Definitions and/or description

Teaches various subjects such as reading, language arts, social studies and science, develops lesson plans to create learning experiences, establishes and maintains standards of student behavior, communicates with students family members through conferences, keeps appropriate records on student evaluations, identify student needs on an individual level, participates in administrative meetings, supervises students outside of the classroom activities, administers standardized tests, participates in professional development courses

Related and specific occupations

School administrators such as principals, vice principals, school counselors; special education teacher; secondary education teacher; professors and teachers in specialties such as art, physical education, wood-work and home economics

Tasks

Typing; mousing; keying; writing; drawing; grading; sitting; standing; planning; walking; talking; counseling; training; instructing; presenting; listening; recordkeeping; copying; crouching; kneeling

Primary equipment used

Computer, projector, dry erase board, dry erase marker, clock, chalkboard, chalk, markers, stapler, pencils, pens

Workplaces where the occupation is common

Teachers are primarily found in public or private schools before, during and after school during the term and lesson planning may occur at home. Some off-site trips may be occur throughout the school year, the majority of teachers have summer vacation off

References

- International Labor Organization, Encyclopedia of Occupational Health & Safety, 2011, Elementary and Secondary Schools, on the Internet at <http://www.ilo.org/oshenc/part-xvii/education-and-training-services/item/702-elementary-and-secondary-schools> (visited November 19, 2013).
- Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2012-13 Edition, Kindergarten and Elementary School Teachers, on the Internet at <http://www.bls.gov/ooh/education-training-and-library/kindergarten-and-elementary-school-teachers.htm> (visited November 19, 2013).
- Villanueva, Reyas A. (2011) Voice disorders in Metropolitan Area of San Juan, Puerto Rico: profiles of occupational groups, J Voice, 25(1):83-7, on the Internet at <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/19883991> (visited November 19, 2013).
- Austin Peace Academy, Elementary School Teacher Job Description, on the Internet at <http://www.apacademy.org/downloads/JD.pdf> (visited November 19, 2013).
- E.M., Fifth Grade Teacher, November 25, 2013. Chicago International Charter School Bucktown.