

Workplace Violence (Part 2)

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by Tammy Miser

Erin Elizabeth Sperrey

Erin had a big heart and simple aspirations she volunteered at a preschool, wanted to marry, have children and return to college. Sunday Erin went to work at the coffee shop as usual probably thinking the same things all of us do who work on weekends "Another day, another dollar".

Sometime during Erin's normal work routine a co-worker, Christopher Shumway, had a heated argument with her. Christopher pushed Erin down and took her car keys. Erin tried simply walking away but Christopher proceeded with his brutal attack, his attempt at strangling Erin failed so he began viciously kicking her head, chest and mouth. Hearing customers Christopher left the restroom to serve them. Erin endured her last moments alone on a cold floor probably wondering why no one was coming to her aid and praying the pain would go away. When Christopher returned Erin was no longer breathing, he dragged her lifeless body to the car and placed her in the back seat. After returning to the coffee shop for the cash box Christopher sped off for his escape. During Christopher's getaway he ran off the road where a family picked him up and dropped him off at a Motel 6. Erin's body was found hours later in her car.

Work Safe Work Smart

200, 000 children under the age of 18 are injured and 70 die every year in unsafe working conditions. Most of our youth are hard pressed to find any employment apart from high-risk jobs. Factor in these young adults are unaware of their rights and have not been trained in workplace safety the possibility for injury and/or death are greatly increased.

The ideal way to get the word out is for schools to train our future laborers and management as to what are morally acceptable safe practices. There is a great program for young adults called "Work Safe Work Smart". Work Safe work Smart is available because of the grants provided by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) and the research and development of the Minnesota Department of Health. The curriculum been used since 2000 and a downloadable at WSWS <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/hpcd/cdee/occhealth/wsws.html> or you may request a CD or Printed curriculum at workerhealth@health.state.mn.us.

We have put a flyer with this article information and the Work Safe Work Smart curriculum information for easy presentation. Erin's Story/ Work Safe Work Smart Flyer <http://www.usmwforg1/my%20documents%20and%20webs/New%20my%20doc%20and%20web/My%20Webs/myweb/useful/work%20safe%20work%20smart.doc> . Read through the Work Safe Work Smart the introduction and the curriculum and you will be prepared to answer any questions they may have.

Stories like Erin's are horrific no matter what age but with young person's demise we lose a lifetime of achievements. The obligation of presenting schools with the knowledge is up to concerned adults. You have the opportunity to educate students with the help of Work Safe Work Smart and your schools. Give our young adults a chance, an education that will last a throughout their life.

*Erin's Fund & Tribute

<http://www.erinsfund.org/index2.html>

*If your school is using the WSWS curriculum please contact us and let us know we would love to hear from you and present you with a certificate from USMWF!