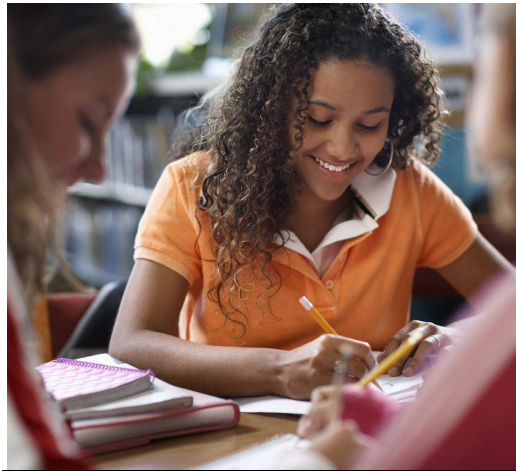


The potential for unfair treatment of these child workers is far too high. Many adults have difficulty standing up for their rights in the workplace. It is much more difficult for kids. They may be unaware of their rights to restrictions on hours of work, breaks, overtime pay, vacation pay and other basic workplace rights. It could be next to impossible for them to stand up to an employer who wants to treat them unfairly.

The government has not put the resources into inspecting every workplace where a 12 year old might be working. Albertans have no way of knowing which restaurants are properly filing the forms. If the government can't find them, it can't protect them!

Twelve- to 14-year-old kids are simply too young to be working in a mainstream workplace. The AFL's position is that the legislative provisions allowing the employment of children under 15 in restaurants, offices and retail stores should be repealed.

**With the exception of paper routes and babysitting, children under the age of 15 years old should not be permitted to work in Alberta.**



*"Allowing 12 year olds to work in restaurants is not in the child's interest, it is not in the customers' interest, and it is not in society's interest. Kids that young should be doing two things - going to school and playing."*

*AFL President Gil McGowan*

**Call your MLA to tell them that this legislation hurts kids!**

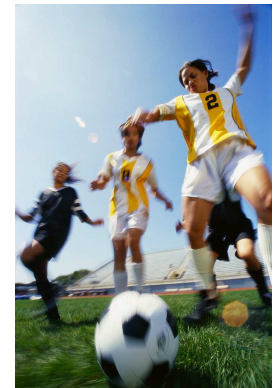
***For more information:***

**Alberta Federation of Labour  
Women's Committee**  
10654 – 101 Street  
Edmonton, Alberta T5H 2S1  
Phone: (780) 483-3021  
Toll free: 1-800-661-3995  
Fax: (780) 484-5928  
Email: [afl@afl.org](mailto:afl@afl.org)  
On the web: [www.afl.org](http://www.afl.org)

## The Alberta Federation of Labour



**Kids  
Should Be  
Kids**



**Did You Know ...**

In Alberta, children as young as 12 years old can work in the restaurant and food service industry, retail, convenience and grocery stores and certain delivery positions as late as 9 o'clock at night? They are also permitted by Alberta's Employment Standards legislation to do an early shift before school.

## Homework? Whatever! McDonald's NEEDS Workers!



Everyone knows that Alberta's service sector is complaining about having a hard time finding and keeping workers in the current tight labour market. Our government's solution? To expand the pool of people willing to work for low wages – by including our kids!

In June of 2005, without public debate, our provincial government quietly relaxed the legislation to allow child employment in restaurants. Prior to this date, a person had to be 15 years old to work in a restaurant unless the employer applied for a permit from the Director of Employment Standards.

While our current legislation still prohibits children from operating

*Max Pasley Enterprises is one of Alberta's 50 largest companies, employing over 3,000 workers. It is McDonald's largest franchise operator in the province. It is also a large donor to the Alberta Progressive Conservative Party.*

*Between 2001 and 2004, the company donated a total of \$15,000 to the party. It donated \$5,000 in each of 2001 and 2004, and \$2,500 in 2002 and again in 2003.*

*Gavin Stafford, a senior marketing executive with McDonald's is quoted as saying that Max Pasley Enterprises and the parent company asked for the relaxation of the rules for child employment in restaurants in 2005:*

*"I understood that there were people from McDonald's HR department and from Pasley Enterprises that met with, if not the minister, with somebody in the department."*

*(Edmonton Journal, June 8, 2006, B5)*

potentially dangerous equipment (like deep fryers), employers in food services, retail or offices do not need to apply for a permit before employing a child. They simply need to fill out a safety checklist and a hazard assessment and keep it on file along with the written consent of a parent or guardian. Theoretically they are supposed to fax the forms to the government but no one is checking to see that they do.

Now, instead of doing homework or playing outside, a child as young as 12 could be handing you that burger at one of Alberta's numerous fast food chains.

*"Restaurant employers are having a hard time finding adults willing to work for the low wages and lousy conditions they offer, and rather than raise their wages, they get the government to create a whole new pool of vulnerable workers."*

*AFL President Gil McGowan*

### The Rights of the Child

The AFL believes that a 12 year old is too young to work in a restaurant or a retail store. An evening shift at a 7-Eleven store is not the same thing as a paper route. We believe the system as it stands places young Albertans in vulnerable and potentially dangerous situations. We believe the existing checks are inadequate to ensure that these children are not being exploited.

