

fack families against corporate killers

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FACK Statement International Workers' Memorial Day 28 April 2019

When someone dies in a work-related incident, it's not something that *happened* to a family. It is something that *continues* to happen. Not just for weeks or months. But for years...decades...maybe even generations.

17 years after the death of their dad, Natalie and Dionne are still pursuing answers and the truth about what happened to him, and the justice that they all so deserve. They themselves were only 18 and 12 when he left for work one fateful morning.

2019 is the TUC's year of the young worker and for far too many FACK families, they live in the knowledge that their young worker will remain **forever** young, lives cut heart-wrenchingly short by workplace failures.

Dates are triggers for grief, for remembering, for considering how much - yet so little - has changed.

Consider 17-year-old apprentice Daniel, who had been working for less than a week, when he was allowed to go up onto the roof of a store without proper supervision, and who died when he fell through a skylight. Only earlier this month his mum Anthea wrote:

"16 years today...Dan lost his life and we too lost a huge chunk of ours. Our job. Our future. Whilst Roy Clark did a few months [for manslaughter] and returned running his company with no penalties. Ironically, we've passed him this morning on our way to get flowers for Dan. He was driving, whilst using his phone...nothing changes."

Michael Adamson should have turned 40 last month. He died at the age of 26. A note left at his graveside from Bianca, Ross, Cai and Cammy said: "Today we should be celebrating, getting pissed on Southern Comfort and singing Happy Birthday. But, today I am here at your grave. Today I leave flowers as some kind of symbol of my love and to show how much we miss you. Today I cry instead of celebrate. You are missed every day and we mourn for the amazing future you had ahead of you!"

And just what did lie ahead for these amazing young people, denied their futures, denied their own families, denied the opportunity to shape future generations? We will most often never know. Or else will be kicked in the gut more than 7 years on from your son's death, when you have summoned the courage needed to change his bedroom which has remained untouched since his death, only to find a note he'd written under his bed, stating which motorbike he'd intended buying with his hard-earned cash. Can you even begin to imagine how 19-year-old Jason Burden's mam and dad felt on discovering that note, just a fortnight ago?

Don't begin to imagine. Because it's just too painful.

As is knowing that 16-year-old Callum Hughes mum feels like his birthday is a "silent killer", annually tearing another piece of her heart out.

Or reading 20-year-old Andrew Hutin's mum write more than a decade after his death that "whoever said it gets easier has never been through what we are going through."

Or to see 16-year old Cameron Minshull's mum post a meme that reads "When the links of life are broken and a child has to part, there is nothing that will ever heal a parent's broken heart".

We implore you to remember all of our dead. And to continue to fight like hell for the living!

The theme for this year's International Workers' Memorial Day is "Dangerous Substances; Get them out of the workplace!" And others will speak eloquently about that.

So our plea is that what we also need to get out of the workplace are dangerous, *substandard* management, *substandard* supervision, *substandard* risk assessments and method statements, *substandard* equipment, *substandard* inspections.

Let's send our sons and daughters, our little sisters and brothers, out to work of a morning knowing that it will be another stride along the road to them fulfilling their hopes and dreams, rather than fearing it will be a fatal step on the path to an early grave.

Let's know that in future families can gather in celebration rather than mourning.

That flowers can be for Mothers' Days and mums' birthdays, rather than for sons' or daughter's graves.

For 23-year-old Steven Allen's mum Judith, some comfort can be taken from knowing that the loss of his life led to the giving of life to others in the form of organ donation.

But it doesn't bring him back.

Nothing is ever going to bring any of our loved ones back.

And so legacies must be built. By us. For them.

Speak our loved ones' names.

Tell their stories.

Ensure the lessons to be learned from their deaths are taught over and over so that the greatest legacy of all can be built for this and future generations, a world of work that is safer and healthier: life-giving, not life-ending.

FACK was established in July 2006, by and for families of people killed by the gross negligence of business employers, see www.fack.org.uk.

Founder Members of FACK:

Dawn and Paul Adams – son Samuel Adams aged 6 killed at Trafford Centre, 10th October 1998

Linzi Herbertson -husband Andrew Herbertson 29, killed at work in January 1998

Mike and Lynne Hutin – son Andrew Hutin 20, killed at work on 8th Nov 2001

Mick & Bet Murphy – son Lewis Murphy 18, killed at work on 21st February 2004

Louise Taggart – brother Michael Adamson 26, killed at work on 4th August 2005

Linda Whelan – son Craig Whelan 23, (and **Paul Wakefield**) killed at work on 23rd May 2004

Dorothy & Douglas Wright – son Mark Wright 37, killed at work on 13th April 2005

For more information and to support FACK, contact Hilda Palmer, Facilitator for FACK: Tel 0161 636 7557