



August 2009

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Online Resources may be found at the bottom of this newsletter.

Workplace Violence and Bullying



Violence in the workplace is a very serious concern to many employers. Keeping a safe and positive environment for employees is extremely important not only for the employees/employer, but also for the customers as well. It is estimated that some 2 million American workers are victims of violence in the workplace.¹ The violence or threat of violence or bullying against workers does not just occur at work. Most businesses recognize that it can occur outside the workplace as well. Workplace violence can range from threats and verbal abuse to physical assaults and homicides.¹

Tips to Help Preventing Workplace Violence² ***Both for the employer and employee***

Establish a Healthy Work Environment

One key element to preventing workplace violence is by having a healthy, open and encouraging workplace. This not only lies on the employers back of helping your employees to feel valued and confident that their opinion is respected, but also on the employees to help keep open and honest communication. Keeping your problems bottled up until you exploded or having a screaming fit about how you feel something is unfair is not going to help create an open and productive workplace. Try approaching your boss or employee in a constructive and professional manner.

Training

Training is a vital part of helping to reduce, and even eliminate violence in the workplace. Both managers and employees should be trained on effective communication skills. Knowing how to deal with workplace violence can be a key part of helping to deescalate situations or even prevent them. Becoming familiar with your employer's policy on workplace violence and prevention is

also very important. Learning and understanding the policies established is a very critical part of your job, not only as an employer but also as an employee.

Protect Yourself

Helping to reduce the odds of workplace violence is essential. Learn how to recognize, avoid or diffuse potentially violent situations. One way to do this is to attend personal safety training programs. Also be sure to alert any concerns you may have to a supervisor. Helping to recognize the early warning signs of a potentially dangerous coworker or employee may help to reduce the risk of an even more violent situation.



Workplace Bullying³

While workplace violence and workplace bullying are not one in the same, they are closely related. Workplace bullying is often an abuse or misuse of power. The unreasonable action of these individuals, or groups, who bullies tries to create feelings of defenselessness in an effort to undermine that individual's rights. While workplace bullying may involve repeated attacks on an individual, workplace aggression typically involves a single act.

There are many different types of workplace bullying but the following are examples that may be considered bullying:

- Exclusion or social isolation
- Being humiliated
- Unwarranted or invalid criticism
- Being treated differently than the rest of your work group

Bullying can have quite devastating effects on individuals including, but not limited to:

- Reduced self-esteem
- Increased depression or self-blame
- Sleep disturbance
- High stress issues

If you are aware of any bullying taking place, report this behavior immediately. Organizations often do not tolerate such behavior and an investigation will most likely occur.

Contact Us

Hours: Monday – Friday,
8:30-5:00pm. Evening hours
are available on a limited
basis.

(540) 989-6605 or 800-699-
9396

Nights and weekends call
RESPOND:

(540) 776-1100 or 800-541-
9992

Advantage EAP does not
necessarily endorse any
products or services mention.

Bullying at school is also another topic that has become an ever increasing issue. If you or someone you love is suffering from school bullying we have two staff members who specialize in this area.

- Dorene Fick, LCSW
 - Jackie Wilkerson, Ph.D., LPC
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These procedures listed may not be specifically how your workplace wants you to handle any workplace violence or bullying, so familiarize yourself with your own employer's policies on these topics. If you feel victimized or are struggling with workplace violence or bullying seeking help is important. As your Advantage Employee Assistant Program, Psychological Health-Roanoke can offer you that help. Advantage EAP is an effective way to help reduce workplace violence or help a person to deal with the effects of workplace bullying. We offer confidential support and counseling services to employees who find themselves in stressful or trying situations.

Please call 540) 989-6605 or 800-699-9396

Nights and weekends call RESPOND:

(540) 776-1100 or 800-541-9992

Or Visit our website at: www.psychhealthroanoke.com

Resources:

- 1) http://www.osha.gov/OshDoc/data_General_Facts/factsheet-workplace-violence.pdf
 - 2) http://www.ehow.com/way_5179391_preventing-workplace-violence-tips.html
 - 3) <http://www.lni.wa.gov/Safety/Research/Files/Bullying.pdf>
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