



A 2007 WBI-Zogby survey reports that almost half of adult workers in the U.S. say either they have been bullied or have witnessed bullying in the workplace.

What is workplace bullying?

Workplace bullying involves repeated attacks against the target. It is not the same as aggression, which usually involves a single act. It's also important not to confuse tough or demanding bosses – those who hold people accountable – as bullies; setting high expectations to receive the best possible performance is not bullying.

The workplace bully is usually less-skilled than other workers around him/her; the bully usually victimizes the best and brightest of their co-workers due to a perceived threat.

Be aware that bullying is different than harassment. Harassment is a type of illegal discrimination defined as offensive and unwelcome conduct, serious enough to affect the terms and conditions of a person's employment, and occurs because of a person's protected class, such as race, religion, sex, disability etc. Bullying is not illegal in the United States, unless it involves harassment, as based on the legal definition.

Some examples of bullying include:

- Unwarranted or invalid criticism
- Blame without the facts
- Being treated differently than the rest of your work group
- Being sworn at
- Exclusion or social isolation
- Being shouted at or being humiliated
- Being the target of practical jokes
- Excessive monitoring

How does bullying impact the workplace?

While not illegal, bullying drags down company morale, causes higher turnover, lowers productivity, costs more in sick days and in worker's compensation claims. Bullying creates feelings of defenselessness in the target.

The target may experience physical and mental health problems such as:

- High stress
- Financial problems due to absence from work
- Reduced self-esteem

- Musculoskeletal problems
- Phobias
- Sleep disturbances
- Increased depression, self-blame
- Digestive problems

If you are being bullied, or are aware that a co-worker is being bullied, you need to make someone in human resources or your company's leadership team aware of the problem. Bullying, if left alone, will negatively impact the well-being of the workplace and can affect anyone exposed to the situation, not just the target.

Your employee assistance program, *Ease@Work*, can also help with co-worker issues. If you're not getting along with a co-worker, or need advice about how to better manage a work situation, **call us for assistance at 216.241.3273 or 800.521.3273.**

Addressing workplace bullying

REGAIN CONTROL BY:

- Recognizing that you are being bullied
- Realizing you are not the source of the problem
- Recognizing that bullying is about control and has nothing to do with your performance

TAKE ACTION BY:

- Keeping a diary detailing the nature of the bullying; include dates, times, places, what was said/done and who was present
- Hold on to any copies of documents that contradict the bully's accusations against you
- Report the behavior to an appropriate person (manager, human resources etc.)

Expect the bully to deny your accusations. Have someone else with you during any meetings with the bully. Remember, most bullies won't act up in front of their superiors.

Recognizing bullying



“No student should be afraid to go to school because of bullying, and no parent should be worried that their child may be bullied.” That’s a goal worth repeating. It’s also the mantra of Dan Olweus, creator of perhaps the most well-known and respected bullying prevention program.

Yet, as parents and caregivers, we do worry. . . and sometimes our child may be afraid to go to school. We all know the reality is bullying still does occur in the school environment and bullying has moved into cyber-space as well.

When is it more than kids being kids?

Olweus says, “A person is bullied when he or she is exposed repeatedly and over time to negative actions on the part of one or more other persons, and he or she has difficulty defending himself or herself.”

Bullying can take on many forms, including:

- Verbal – derogatory comments and bad names.
- Physical – hitting, kicking, shoving, spitting.
- Bullying through social exclusion or isolation.
- Bullying through lies and false rumors.
- Having money or other things taken or damaged by students who bully.
- Being threatened or forced to do things by students who bully.
- Racial bullying.
- Sexual bullying.
- Cyber-bullying (via cell phone or internet).

Bullying impacts not only the direct target, but it also negatively impacts those who observe the bullying taking place, the overall climate of the school

and community. Higher incidents of violence have been indicated among adults who were bullied as youngsters. Additionally, students who are bullied may suffer effects that last long into their future:

- Depression
- Low self-esteem
- Health problems
- Poor grades/work achievement
- Suicidal thoughts

Those who observe the bullying behavior may feel they are in an unsafe environment. Observers, although not directly involved, may feel fearful, powerless to act, guilty for not acting or even tempted to participate.

Keep your eyes and ears open

Be aware of signs of bullying – if clothes, books, your child look dirty or damaged; doesn’t talk about or bring friends home; seems reluctant to go to school – makes up excuses not to go; loses interest in school – begins getting poorer grades; seems unhappy, downhearted or has mood swings with sudden outbursts of anger; has frequent headaches, stomach aches; sleeps restlessly with nightmares; steals or asks for extra money, which is then used to soften up the bullies.

If your child is doing the bullying, it’s important to break this pattern – not only for the sake of the victim, but also for your own child’s well-being. Talk with others who observe your child’s actions when you’re not around. Observe if your child is aggressive, nasty, spiteful and in general opposition; has a need to dominate or manipulate others; or likes to push around, insult or tease other children.

Take bullying seriously. Talk with your children regularly about what happens at school and while they’re on-line. Establishing a relationship such as this keeps the lines of communication open.

If you suspect bullying, it is important that you contact the school and have the issue investigated. If bullying is confirmed, a detailed plan should be drawn up of how you and the school can put an end to the situation.

For more information, a comprehensive guide *Bullying is Not a Fact of Life* can be obtained by going to www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov and searching the topic “bullying” or publication number CMHS-SVP-0052.

Why do kids bully? Are there warning signs my child could be a bully?

Through his work, Olweus has discovered that there are three interrelated reasons why students bully.

1. Students who bully have strong needs for power and (negative) dominance.
2. Students who bully find satisfaction in causing injury and suffering others.
3. Students who bully are often rewarded in some way for their behavior with material or psychological rewards.

Those who bully are also more likely to:

- Get into frequent fights
- Steal and vandalize property

- Drink alcohol and smoke
- Report poor grades
- Perceive a negative climate at school
- Carry a weapon

However, not all students who bully will display the above behaviors. Some bullies are highly skilled socially and good at ingratiating themselves with their teachers and other adults. While this is true of some boys who bully, this behavior is more typical of girls who bully. For this reason, it is often difficult for adults to discover or even imagine these students engage in bullying behavior.

Do you have some back-to-school questions?

Want to know how to have a good parent-teacher conference? Do you have concerns about a special needs child's education? Or, maybe you are still looking for after-school care? Ease@Work's Class Act Program can help with school-age issues, while our childcare program can address other non-school related concerns.

Call us at 216-241-3273 or 800-521-3273.

Respectful behavior for kids of all ages

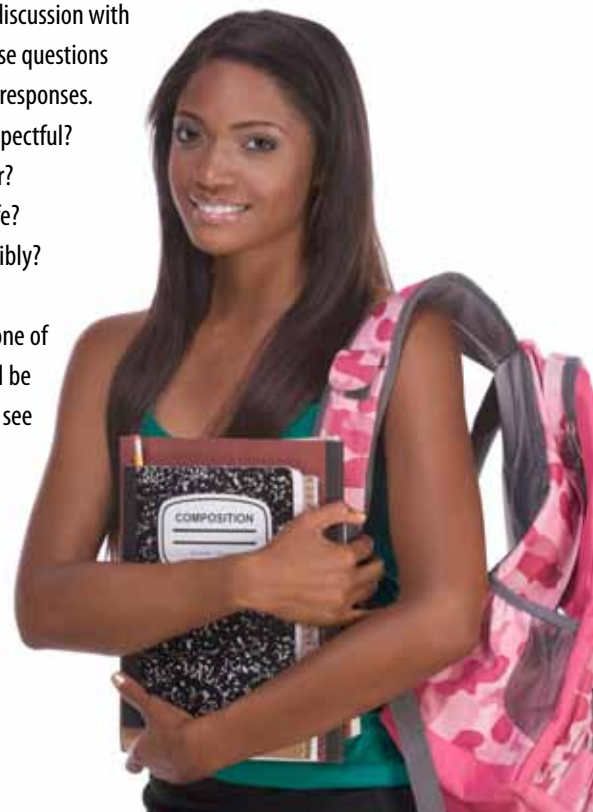
When children are taught behaviors that are acceptable and respectful at an early age, chances are they will model those desired qualities into high school and their adult lives. Respect and "citizenship" are not only important during the school years, but remain essential to knowing how to work with others once they enter the work force. Disrespectful behavior in school can get them a detention or suspended; the same behaviors at work can get them fired.

Here are some conversation generating, thought-provoking check points to get your child or young adult thinking about their behaviors.

Parents can initiate a discussion with children by asking these questions and talking about the responses.

- Was my behavior respectful?
- Was my behavior fair?
- Was my behavior safe?
- Was I acting responsibly?

A "no" answer to any one of these questions would be a reason to pause and see what could have been done differently.



Elderly susceptible to bullying, too

So, you've done your research, made visits, and finally located a long-term care facility that you feel comfortable entrusting with the care of your loved one. You breathe a sigh of relief... but in reality your job doesn't end there. You will still need to be an advocate for your elder, monitoring their care and comfort while in the facility's care.

Unfortunately, elderly individuals make very easy targets for bullying due to their general fragility and the fact that they are less likely to fight back against their attackers. Bullying of elderly is most often perpetrated by those who care for them - aides, nurses, doctors and even their own family members. Most of the time we label this as "abuse."

Aged loved ones may not see or hear as well as they once did. And, while they may question what is occurring to them, they may not be able to verbalize their abuse or neglect to others. They are also less able to stand up for themselves against bullying. Clearly, caregivers need to stay involved in their loved one's care, even if the daily responsibilities belong to an outside party. Be sure to visit as often as reasonably possible and vary your schedule to include non-routine visits - for example, if you always visit on the weekend, make a visit during the middle of the week; or, if you always visit in the evening after work, make a surprise visit in the morning on your way to work.

If your elder is still able to communicate, your job is a little easier. Talk about family and friends and what's going on outside the care facility, but also talk about your loved one's interests and activities at the residence. Notice if there are any changes in their social routines or if they seem to be hesitant to talk about a particular issue. Pay attention to their body language.

For care of a loved one who is non-communicative, you'll have to be more of an investigator. Be attentive to your elder's care and inspect their physical condition and surroundings. Watch for marks on their body, ask for an explanation from their care staff and keep track of occurrences; if an injury is extreme, or something doesn't feel right about an explanation, trust your intuition and follow through with formal reporting as appropriate.

Also, be attuned to neglect. Some examples: If your loved one is heavily soiled every time you visit and their skin is irritated from urine and feces, they may not be receiving appropriate hygiene care. Or, if your loved one needs assistance eating and you notice that they have lost weight, make a visit during mealtimes to see if someone is helping your loved one, or if the tray is just left in their room.

Remember, there certainly are excellent assisted living and long-term care facilities with highly qualified and compassionate employees. When you find a facility that meets your criteria, routinely monitor the situation and make sure the standards you expected are being met.

Abuse can take many forms.

Listed below are the most common types of elder abuse:

- Physical abuse
- Verbal abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect or abandonment
- Financial exploitation
- Healthcare fraud
- Healthcare cruelty



Need help finding the right care for your elderly loved one? Ease@Work has Eldercare specialists who can help. Make Ease@Work your partner in eldercare by calling 216.241.3273 or 800.521.3273, or go to www.easeatwork.com/ **EASEy** with your organization's user name and password.

What are the symptoms of CO poisoning?

- Flu-like symptoms
- Nausea
- Fatigue
- Headaches
- Dizziness
- Confusion
- Difficulty breathing
- Skin may become pink or red

Looking for CO Risks in Your Home

- No draft in chimney
- Excessive rusting on flue pipes
- Moisture collecting on windows and walls of furnace rooms
- Streaks of carbon around the service door of gas-burning appliances
- Fallen soot from the fireplace
- Small amounts of water leaking from the base of the chimney, vent of flue pipe.
- Damaged or discolored bricks at the chimney top
- Other than blue flames in fuel-burning appliances

Car exhaust is another source of CO. Do not run your car in a closed space. Make sure garage doors entering the home from an attached garage seal completely to block accidental exposure.

“Use it up, wear it out,
make it do, or do without.”

— Depression-era slogan

The typical polo shirt travels 14,000 miles before it gets to a store in your neighborhood. That same shirt requires 33 kilowatt hours of electricity, emits 27 pounds of carbon and produces its weight in waste. Think before you buy. Look for a “Made in the U.S.A.” label. Mend your clothes instead of throwing them out, or pass them on either by donating or reselling them. Want some new clothing items? Shop resale stores - you'll save money, the environment, and be in style!



Source: Living Green – the feel good, not guilty, calendar

Beware of carbon monoxide: a silent killer

With fall upon us, soon it will be time to flip the switch from “air-conditioning” to “heat.” And with that switch, incidents of accidental carbon monoxide poisoning go up, with over 500 deaths each year in the U.S.

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a colorless, odorless gas. Most victims of CO poisoning die in their sleep. CO kills by reducing the levels of oxygen in the blood, resulting in cardiac trauma, brain death, coma and death.

Most everyone has a potential CO threat in their home. Any fuel-burning appliance puts you and your family at risk – a gas furnace, oven, range top, water heater, portable heater and fireplaces. But you can protect yourself with a CO detector.

Purchase CO detectors label for residential use and then install and test as directed. Some general guidelines include the following:

- If the unit plugs into the wall, test it monthly; if it is battery-powered or has battery back-up, be sure to change the batteries at least once a year. The fall time change is usually a good reminder date.
- If you have a fuel-burning appliance, have it checked regularly by a service technician; if you have a fireplace, have it inspected before use.
- Install CO detectors outside of rooms your family members sleep in and near fuel-burning appliances.
- Follow all manufacturer instructions for installation and cleaning.

What to do if you have a car accident

Unfortunately, if you're a driver, there's a chance that you will have an accident. Many people are unsure of what to do when they have an accident. Here are some things to keep in mind:

- Stop your car. Do not leave the accident scene.
- Call 911 or other designated emergency number. Get police and/or medical help right away.
- When police arrive:
 - Tell them what occurred
 - Follow police directions
 - Take the officer's name
 - Get a copy of the accident report
- Get the following information from the other driver:
 - Name
 - Address
 - Telephone number
 - Their insurance company information
 - Names and addresses of all passengers
- Get the names, addresses, and phone numbers of witnesses
- Write down the accident facts
- Call your insurance company. There is a time period in which you need to do this, so read your policy.
- Your claims agent, or the other driver's claims agent, will need to see the damage to your car. Do not get it repaired until the agent has seen it.
- You may need to submit several estimates for repair.
- You must cooperate with the insurance company's investigation.
- If your car is a total loss, that means the cost to fix it would be more than the value of the car. In this case, the insurance company would either replace the car with a comparable one, or offer you cash settlement at the market rate for your vehicle.

Finally, be sure to read and understand your car insurance policy. If you're not sure what something means or what is/is not covered, talk to your insurance agent.



get up and go!

for a better for a better heart

Walk {verb.}

Move at a regular pace by lifting and settling down each foot in turn, never having both feet off the ground at once.

Heart disease is the #1 killer in the U.S., but you can do something to protect yourself. Consider the healthy benefits of walking just 30-minutes a day:

- Lowers LDL cholesterol (the “bad” cholesterol)
- Raises HDL cholesterol (the “good” cholesterol)
- Lowers blood pressure
- Reduces risk of, or helps to manage, Type 2 Diabetes
- Helps manage weight
- Improves mood
- Helps keep you strong and fit

Put laughter in your life

Laughter is a very powerful medicine. It can lower stress, dissolve anger and unite people, even in troubled times. Take a look at yourself. Are you “humor-impaired?” Do you walk around frowning or scowling? Do you belittle others?

It’s easy to get caught up in life’s challenges. Stop and remember to put some humor and laughter into your life.

- Remind yourself to have fun.
- Head off stress with humor. See a funny movie.
- Take a laugh break – allow yourself to be silly.
- View would-be disasters through the eyes of your favorite comedian. What would they say?
- Spend time with people who help you see the bright side and make you smile.
- Learn to laugh, even when you think you can’t. Consciously let go of anger, fear, grief and laugh despite it all.

Laughing makes a person feel good and that feeling can stay with us even after the laughter ends. Laughter can help us see that problems are not always earth-shattering. It allows us to look at an issue from a different perspective, makes it seem less serious and helps us to realize opportunities for increased objectivity and insight.

End of summer salad

Summer is wrapping up, but you can hold on to a little bit the season as long as fresh watermelon is available. Be adventurous! Try this unique combination of flavors for an easy to make salad or side dish. You’ll be surprised how the ingredients work well together.

Ingredients

The dressing

Oil
Vinegar
Fresh ginger
1 Orange
Salt

The salad

1 bag of baby spinach
3 cups of watermelon
8 oz Chevre cheese

Directions

1. Make the dressing first. Use a mixture of 3-to-1, oil to vinegar; you’ll need about a half-cup of dressing. You may use your favorite type of vinegar. White wine vinegar works well with this, but other types are fine also. Whisk together. Grate the zest from one orange into the mix. Grate fresh ginger to taste into the dressing. Whisk together and let sit while you make the salad.
2. Make sure the baby spinach is rinsed and patted dry. Put into a large mixing bowl. Seed and cut the watermelon into one-inch cubes. Add that to the spinach. Cut the Chevre (a soft goat cheese) into small pieces and put into your mixing bowl.
3. Toss the salad with the amount of dressing to taste. Add salt if desired. Plate and serve.

