



**BC NURSES'
UNION**

Standing up for health care

PINK SHIRT DAY 2024



LIFT EACH OTHER UP AND
PROMOTE RESPECT IN THE
WORKPLACE

www.bcnu.org

#PinkShirtDay #LiftEachOtherUp

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 2024 IS PINK SHIRT DAY

On **February 28**, everyone is encouraged to wear pink to lift each other up, promote respect and show your commitment to end bullying.

Pink Shirt Day is a national event that takes place annually on the last Wednesday of February.

The event arose from a 2007 incident of homophobic bullying at a Nova Scotia high school, and the subsequent display of student solidarity to fight against gender-based discrimination. When a student was bullied for wearing a pink polo shirt to school, David Shepherd and Travis Price decided to take action to fight the injustice. They bought dozens of pink shirts at a thrift store and announced they would be provided to students to wear the next day. Many students took it upon themselves to show up to school in pink rather than wait for one of the shirts.

Since then, **Pink Shirt Day** has been an opportunity to have conversations about bullying

in schools, communities and workplaces.

On February 28, and every day, you have an opportunity to promote respect and advocate for more inclusive workplaces free from gender-based discrimination and discrimination in all its forms.

Share your experiences with co-workers and don't forget to use the **#PinkShirtDay** hashtag in your Facebook and Instagram posts and in your tweets.*

Join the conversation, lift each other up and take a stand against bullying!



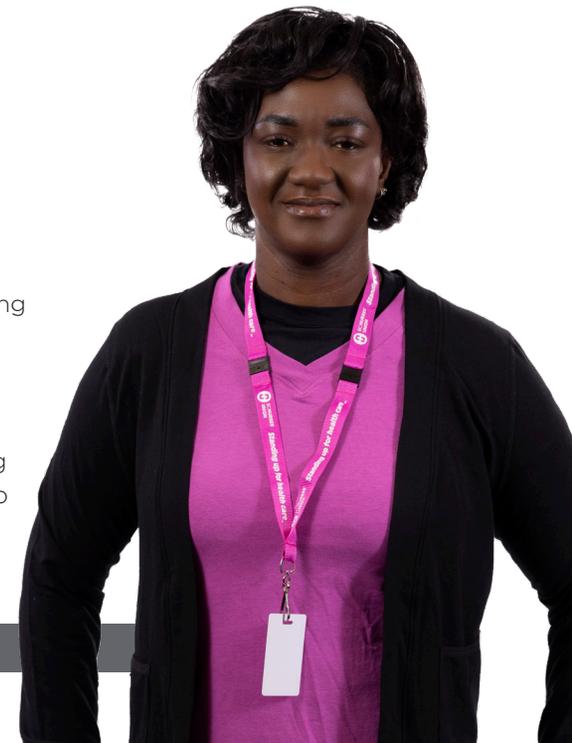
WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying is any inappropriate conduct towards a worker that the person knew or reasonably ought to have known would cause that worker to be intimidated or humiliated.¹

- > Workplace bullying is associated with nurses leaving their job, or the nursing profession.^{4,5}
- > Exposure to workplace bullying can negatively affect the health of individuals, their co-workers, and their family, causing increased stress, anxiety, sleeplessness, fatigue, and depression.⁶
- > Bullying reduces team communication, job satisfaction, motivation, and morale,⁷ and affects patient care.^{8,9}

FACTS ABOUT BULLYING

- > It's estimated that up to 40 percent of Canadians have experienced workplace bullying.²
- > Studies show that 48 percent of nurses have experienced or witnessed bullying.³
- > Your employer is legally required to take all reasonable steps to eliminate bullying and harassment.
- > Discrimination on the basis of Indigeneity, racialization, sex, gender identity/expression, sexual orientation or disability compounds exposure to bullying and harassment.
- > Deadnaming (using former names) misgendering (using incorrect pronouns) or doxxing (sharing photos or medical info to bully people) are prohibited in our provincial contract.



*Note: If you are posting on social media, follow applicable employer policies for confidentiality.

#PinkShirtDay

BULLYING CHECKLIST

COULD IT BE YOU?

Anyone can engage in bullying and anyone can be bullied.

Self-awareness is the key to eliminating bullying and harassment. Review the questions below and note situations that you may have participated in or witnessed.

Have you ever:

- > Assigned a task that's beyond a person's experience, knowing or hoping they will fail?
- > Refused to communicate crucial information or sabotaged work because you didn't want someone to succeed?
- > Targeted someone you don't want to continue on your team?
- > Denied or discounted someone's ideas in meetings or on projects? Played malicious pranks on a co-worker?
- > Noticed how your perception of people who don't share your job title is different than your perception of people who do share it (e.g. RNs' relationship with LPNs, care aides or other staff)? Started or failed to stop destructive gossip about a co-worker?
- > Shouted at, cursed at or threatened a co-worker?
- > Deadnamed, misgendered or doxxed?

- > Denied access to resources such as training or information because you want to see them fail?
- > Treated student nurses with disrespect and exercised condescending behaviors towards them?
- > Stolen someone's ideas and taken credit for them yourself?
- > Started destructive gossip or failed to stop it?
- > Uttered threats or shown physical intimidation such as throwing objects?
- > Publicly discredited someone?
- > Witnessed bullying and not taken action?

Source: Building Dignity, BCNU, 2009



BUILDING A PSYCHOLOGICALLY HEALTHY AND SAFE WORKPLACE

Bullying and harassment may be a symptom of a psychologically unhealthy and unsafe workplace.

The CSA Standard on Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace lists 13 factors that contribute to a safe workplace. Respect is identified as being crucial for eliminating the risk of workplace bullying, harassment, racism and discrimination.

What is a respectful workplace?

- > A workplace where all employees are considerate towards each other, clients and patients. Employees are treated with dignity and respect by the employer, clients and each other.
- > A workplace where esteem, care and consideration for others are the norm.

Why is respect important?

- > Greater job satisfaction
- > Better team work
- > Positive work environment
- > Protection of mental health

What happens when it is missing?

- > Increased turnover
- > Emotional exhaustion
- > Regular conflict
- > Leads to bullying and harassment, which affects not only the target but also the bystanders

How can I promote respect in my workplace and community?

- > Support and be kind to people who experience racism and bullying.
- > Learn more about the histories and experiences of colleagues who have faced oppression on the basis of their identity.
- > Reflect on how our action or inaction may contribute to the oppression of colleagues.
- > Oppose deadnaming, misgendering and doxxing, which are prohibited in our provincial contract.
- > Consider how your personal biases might shape your words and actions.
- > Reflect on how you listen, who you listen to and what you listen for when you hear about bullying or racism.
- > Act with kindness.

Source: www.guardingmindsatwork.ca

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BEHAVIOUR	EFFECTIVE RESPONSE
Nonverbal Innuendo > Raising of eyebrows; making faces	I noticed you had a reaction. Is there something you'd like to talk about?
Verbal Remarks > Snide, rude comments > Lack of openness, abrupt responses > Deadnaming > Using inappropriate pronouns	I need you to be more clear in your directions and feedback. Is there a way we can structure this to be more specific? Our co-worker goes by (this name), not the one you are using. That's not the pronoun our colleague uses. They use (pronoun).
Undermining Activities > Turning away > Being unavailable	I have some questions and would like to understand how this situation may have happened. Would you be willing to help me with this?
Withholding Information	It's my understanding that more information might be available regarding the situation that might affect how I approach it (or learn about it). Can you please tell me more?
Sabotage > Deliberately setting up a negative situation	There is more to this situation than meets the eye. Could you and I meet in private to discuss it?
Infighting > Bickering with peers	Always avoid a contentious discussion in a non-private place. I am noticing tension here, but this is not an appropriate time or place. Let's set up a time to discuss.
Scapegoating > Attributing all that goes wrong to one individual	I don't think that's the right connection.
Backstabbing > Complaining to others about an individual and not speaking directly to that individual	I don't feel right talking about him/her/them/the situation when I wasn't there or don't know the facts. Have you spoken to them?
Failure to Respect Privacy	It bothers me to talk about that without their permission. I only overheard that. It shouldn't be repeated.
Doxxing	It's not appropriate to share this photo/information.
Broken Confidences	Wasn't that said in confidence? That sounds like information that should remain confidential. They asked me to keep that confidential.

Source: Bartholomew, Kathleen, RN, MN. "Ending Nurse-to-Nurse Hostility: Why Nurses Eat Their Young and Each Other" (HCPro, 2006)

ACTIONS TO TAKE IF YOU EXPERIENCE WORKPLACE BULLYING

Documenting bullying and harassment is a crucial first step to resolve the issue. To ensure you can provide appropriate evidence in the event of a formal complaint, document every bullying and harassment incident you experience at work in a notebook or electronically.

- > Record the following information for each incident:
 - > Date and time of interaction
 - > Location of interaction
 - > People involved
 - > Witnesses
 - > Description of interaction
 - > How the interaction made you feel
 - > Other applicable information
- > Report bullying and harassment to your employer.
- > Contact a steward and your workplace JOHS committee representative to inform them.
- > Make a complaint following the employer's respectful workplace policy and/or file a grievance.

For mental health support, call your Employee and Family Assistance Program and access other available resources through your extended health benefit plan.

Raise awareness on social media using the #PinkShirtDay and #LiftEachOtherUp hashtags.

Note: If you are posting on social media, follow applicable employer policies for confidentiality.



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LEARN MORE

References

1. WorkSafeBC – Bullying and Harassment resources – <https://www.worksafebc.com/en/health-safety/hazards-exposures/bullying-harassment/responding-bullying-harassment>
2. CBC News – <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/windsor/40-of-canadians-bullied-at-work-expert-says-1.987450>
3. Havaei F, MacPhee M, Ma, A. “Workplace Violence among British Columbia Nurses Across Different Roles and Contexts” Healthcare, 2020, 8,98.
4. Johnson S, Rea R. “Workplace Bullying: Concerns for Nurse Leaders.” Journal of Nursing Administration. 2009;39(2):84-90
5. Griffen M. Teaching cognitive rehearsal as a shield for lateral violence: an intervention for newly licensed nurses. Journal of Continuing Education in Nursing, 2004;35(6):257-63
6. Bullying in the Workplace Handbook, by the Public Services Health and Safety Association (2019) – <https://www.pshsa.ca/resources/bullying-in-the-workplace>
7. MSNBC Hospital bullies take a toll on patient safety <https://www.nbcnews.com/health/health-news/hospital-bullies-take-toll-patient-safety-f1na1c9461648>
8. US Joint Commission Hospital Accreditation www.jointcommission.org

Additional Resources

Centre for Occupational Health Psychology

<https://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/psychosocial/bullying.html>

Pink Shirt Day – www.pinkshirtday.ca

Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety – www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/psychosocial/bullying.html

Employee and Family Assistance Program

www.efap.ca

Guarding Minds at Work

www.guardingmindsatwork.ca

