

A Message from your EAP



## STOP WORKPLACE BULLYING

In the last couple of years much attention has been brought to the plight of the children and teens who suffer through the torment that is bullying. With this need in mind Family Service is sponsoring a Bully Conference in this month of May in order to bring more attention to the issue and find more ways to address bullying in our schools.

However, bullying is not just a problem for children in our schools but can also extend into adulthood and in the workplace. In fact, studies have shown that 35% of the US workforce reports being bullied at work. What are the signs of bullying and what can you do about it?

**According to the American Psychological Association (APA)** “Bullying is a form of aggressive behavior in which someone intentionally and repeatedly causes another person injury or discomfort. Bullying can take the form of physical contact, words or more subtle actions. The bullied individual typically has trouble defending him or herself and does nothing to ‘cause’ the bullying.”

### **What can be done about workplace bullying?**

On an individual level it can be hard to deal with bullying because it usually stems from the workplace environment itself. But some steps can be taken. Once again the APA gives some suggestions that apply both to employees and their employers.

**Foster improved communication skills-** Sometimes bullying comes from not communicating well about a problem that needs to be fixed. Learning how to express yourself clearly and calmly can go a long way to clearing up misunderstandings.

**Teach employees to understand each other-** Learn how to see things from another person’s point of view. Doing this helps the person doing the bullying to understand the damage they may be doing.

**Identify root causes** – There are almost always underlying causes that lead to bullying and workplace aggression. Sometimes it can be perceived/actual favoritism or the feeling that management isn’t listening. Exposing the source of the problem is a great step towards eliminating bullying.

**Establish a policy of respect-** A policy and culture of respect is the key to eliminating workplace aggression.

Are you being bullied at work and need some more advice on how to deal with it? Call your EAP provider Family Service of the Chautauqua Region toll-free at **1-888-358-3899** and we will point you in the right direction.