

CREATING ENVIRONMENTS THAT DON'T ALLOW BULLYING TO FLOURISH



Workplaces that prevent bullying have:



Strong and well-communicated policies and processes regarding bullying



Leadership commitment to preventing bullying and intervening when it occurs



Positive communication



Practices that affirm diversity

The key is to create good policies and processes around bullying

Policies should include but not be limited to:

- A definition of bullying
- Clearly explained organisational commitments to bullying prevention
- Clear expectations around communication and role clarity
- Clear processes for reporting and managing complaints
- Clear communication and direction around available support

Once a policy is put in place, it's important to walk the talk. From a Māori perspective, for example, tikanga/custom cannot be applied unless underlying values genuinely inform those actions.

If your organisation doesn't have a current policy, WorkSafe NZ has an example template [here](#).



Further ways to reduce the risk of bullying

1. **Positive, mana-enhancing communication reduces the risk of bullying.** [Working Well – Positive Communication at Work](#) is a resource designed to build a culture of positive communication together, based on having clear intentions, asking more – telling less, valuing relationships and making it safe to speak up.
2. **Discuss what bullying is and expected behaviours with teams on a regular basis.** Sometimes people will have a feeling something's not quite right but might dismiss it or not feel confident enough to ask for support. Talking about expected behaviours and identifying bullying will help people be more aware of any unacceptable behaviours.
3. **Have a range of ways people can speak up.** It's important people feel safe to raise issues and have more than one person they know they can talk with. These could include a health and safety representative, another manager, a close colleague or even an external EAP counsellor.

Affirming diversity

Studies suggest people who bully are more likely to choose targets who are of a different ethnicity, religion, gender identity or sexual orientation, or those who have a disability.⁸

Here are some useful resources to help you develop policies and procedures that work toward a more diverse and inclusive workplace:

- [Rainbow Rights](#)
- [Inclusive Education \(policies, systems and procedures – for schools but relevant for workplaces\)](#)
- [Diversity Works NZ](#)
- [Inclusive Education \(safe, inclusive environments – for schools but relevant for workplaces\)](#)
- [Treaty workshops and other resources](#)
- [Te Reo resources for the workplace](#)
- [Māori employee experiences in the workplace](#)
- [Sign up for a Māori word of the day or week](#)
- [Open Minds' guide for managers](#)

You can also get in touch with [RainbowYOUTH](#) or [InsideOUT](#) for more guidance.

8 Gardner, D., Bentley, T. A., Catley, B. E., Cooper-Thomas, H., O'Driscoll, M. P., & Trenberth, L. (2013). Ethnicity, workplace bullying, social support and psychological strain in Aotearoa/New Zealand. *New Zealand Journal of Psychology*, 42 (2), 84 - 91.
<https://mro.massey.ac.nz/handle/10179/9483>

