

Building a respectful workplace

How I Can Make A Difference

- Challenge co-workers who make sexist, racist or homophobic remarks or jokes that are in any way derogatory about women, people of colour, aboriginal peoples or lesbians and gay men.
- Support anyone who is a target of harassment.
- Work honestly with any sexist, racist or homophobic feelings or beliefs that you may have. Try to challenge your assumptions by finding out more about the root causes of discrimination and by asking yourself how you would feel if you were isolated in the workplace and made to feel unwelcome.
- Actively support workplace efforts to end discrimination and harassment.
- If you work with people who speak callously to one another, resolve to be the one to break the pattern.
- Demonstrate positive behaviours in the workplace, like recognizing those who do a good job, and saying a simple "Thank You! "
- Be informed. Read the Collective Agreement, in particular the Article or Letter of Understanding on Harassment in the Workplace.
- Actions speak louder than words. Do what you know is right.
- Don't let apathy be your legacy. Everyone has something to give, offer or suggest.
- Be a good listener.
- Don't take sides when it does not involve or affect you.
- Be a team player.
- Allow for imperfection. We all learn from mistakes.

Think About It!

- We never know all the circumstances of other people's lives. If we paused to consider how much pain others might be in, we would never speak meanly to anyone.
- We all want others to give us the benefit of the doubt, but we often find it difficult to do so for them.
- Remember playing telephone? One person would start off, and by the end of the chain, the message would be completely different. How can we believe gossip knowing how distorted a rumour gets as it goes along the chain?
It they don't have an audience, gossipers can't gossip.
- Co-workers often side with victims of harassment in 1 on 1 conversation. However, in public, co-workers often side with the harasser or they remain quiet.
- The victim of harassment is often a well liked co-worker, is dedicated to their work and suffer quietly and alone.
- Typically, victims endure bullying for almost 2 years before they file a complaint. Imagine!
- Victims have a 70% chance of losing their jobs.
- Only 13% of harassers are ever punished.
- Even when bullying is witnessed, co-workers usually side with the bully.
- You never really know your co-workers. Just because the co-worker does not say anything about a particular stereotypical negative remark or joke, it does not mean it has not negatively affected them, a friend or a member of their family.
- We teach our children understanding, acceptance and respect. Will our children recognize this teaching in our workplaces?

For more information...

Cate Moss, Human Rights Coordinator
Contact email: cate@caw2002tca.ca