Workplace Violence Training

EASTERN
WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

start something big

2012
OVERVIEW

- Mindset of Awareness
  - Workplace Violence
  - Definition
  - Myths
  - Facts
  - Behaviors of Concern

- Commitment to Action
  - Action Point
  - Common Inhibitors to Reporting
  - Available Reporting Options
  - EWU Policy – Violence, Prevention, Control, and Response
What is Violence in the Workplace?

*Violence in the Workplace* can be defined as interpersonal behaviors that are threatening, abusive, violent, or potentially lethal in nature and can occur by and between supervisors, employees, faculty, staff, students and non-employees entering the University.
Workplace Violence

EWU Policy 603-02: Health and Safety – Public Safety
Violence, Prevention, Control and Response

Policy 1-2

For the purposes of this policy, violent behavior includes any criminal behavior, either direct or indirect, that:

• Threatens or causes bodily harm.
• Harasses or intimidates others.
• Interferes with an individual’s legal rights of movement or expression.
• Disrupts the workplace, the academic environment or the University’s ability to provide service to the public.
Workplace Violence

- Includes:
  - Threats
  - Assault
  - Harassment
  - Stalking
  - Intimidation
  - Domestic Violence/Intimate Partner Violence
  - Bullying
  - Workplace Homicides
Myths

- “Out of the blue…”
- “Just snapped…”
- “If left alone, events will resolve themselves…”
- “Employees can’t do anything to stop it…”
- “It couldn’t happen here…”
Workplace Violence Facts

- Violence in the workplace is a serious safety and health issue. In its most extreme form, homicide.
- Homicide is the third leading cause of fatal occupational injuries in the United States.
- In 2010, there were 4,547 workplace deaths.
  - Of the 4,547 workplace deaths, 506 were homicides.
  - Homicides are down by 6.64% from 2009 to 2010, overall workplace deaths are down 0.088%.
College & University Shootings

- San Diego State University – August 15, 1996 – 3 killed
- Pennsylvania State – September 17, 1996 – 1 killed, 4 wounded
- University of Washington Medical Center – June 28, 2000 – 1 killed, shooter also killed
- University of Arkansas – August 28, 2000 – 1 killed, shooter also killed
- Virginia’s Appalachian School of Law – January 16, 2002 – 3 killed, 3 wounded
- University of Arizona Nursing College – October 28, 2002 – 3 killed, shooter also killed
- Case Western Reserve University – May 9, 2003 – 1 killed, 2 wounded
- Shepherd University – September 2, 2006 – 2 killed, shooter also killed
- Dawson College, Montreal – September 13, 2006 – 1 killed, 19 wounded, shooter also killed
- University of Washington – April 2, 2007 – 1 killed, shooter also killed
- Virginia Tech – April 16, 2007 – 32 killed, 12+ wounded, shooter also killed
- Louisiana Tech – February 8, 2008 – 2 killed, shooter also killed
- Northern Illinois University – February 14, 2008 – 5 killed, 18 wounded, shooter also killed
- University of Central Arkansas – October 27, 2008 – 2 killed, 1 wounded
- Savannah State University – November 21, 2008 – 1 wounded
- Henry Ford Community College – April 10, 2009 – 1 killed, shooter also killed
- Hampton University – April 26, 2009 – 3 wounded
- University of Alabama, Huntsville – February 13, 2010 – 3 killed, 3 wounded
- Ohio State University – March 9, 2010 – 1 killed, 2 wounded, shooter also killed
- University of Texas, Austin – September 28, 2010 – shooter killed
- Middle Tennessee State University – February 14, 2011 – 1 wounded
- Southern Union State Community College – April 6, 2011 – 1 killed, 3 wounded
Workplace Violence

- Very few organizations will ever experience disturbed employees engaging in shooting sprees that wound and/or kill multiple victims.

- A far greater number will face other forms of workplace violence:
  - Threatening behavior and violent events that are less spectacular and less deadly.
  - Nonetheless, significantly damage the well-being of an organization and place employees in harm’s way.
Behaviors of Concern
- Communication & Understanding -

- There are behaviors that suggest the potential for future violence.
  - If there is a behavior that makes you uncomfortable, it is best to listen to what may be an intuitive warning.
    - If you see something or sense something, say something.
    - May be an innocent explanation for behavior.
    - If left unaddressed, could escalate and contribute to a toxic work environment.
Behaviors of Concern
- Potential Problems -

- The following may alert supervisors to potential problems.
  - Threats, frequent aggressive outbursts, or excessive displays of temper.
  - History of threats/violent acts.
  - Ominous fascination with weapons and/or references to weapons, violent media content, or violent events.
Behaviors of Concern

- Sadness -

- Some Behaviors of Concern, such as sadness, might not look like they could lead to a breaking point.
- What begins as sadness may evolve into a serious depression and the potential for suicide.
  - Suicide is aggression turned inward; wherein homicide is aggression turned outward.
Behaviors of Concern

- Signals -

- Do not focus on “snapshots”.
  - No one behavior suggests a greater level of threat; significant changes in patterns of behavior are far more telling.

- Employee is sending out personal “SOS” distress signal.

- Learn to recognize the signals that could point in the direction of violence and then learn to respond to them.
Triggering Event

- A reprimand, termination, or layoff.
- Financial troubles, a separation, a divorce, or a death.
- A loss, whether real or perceived, in someone’s personal or professional life.
- “Injustice Collectors”
  - Will not forget or forgive those wrongs or the people he believes are responsible.
Behaviors or Concern
- Domestic Violence -

- Pattern of behavior in which one intimate partner controls another through the use of:
  - Physical Violence
  - Coercion
  - Intimidation
  - Threats
  - Isolation
  - Emotional, Sexual, or Economical Abuse

- Affects nearly one out of four women in today’s workplace.
United States Facts

- Women account for 85% of victims and men account for 15% of victims in intimate partner violence.
- More than 3 women and 1 man are murdered by their intimate partner everyday.

Washington State Facts

- Between January 1, 1997 and June 30, 2010, there were 325 female victims and 49 male victims killed by their former or current spouse or significant other.

Spokane County Facts

- There were 35 homicides and 12 abusers suicides between 1997 and 2010.
Behaviors of Concern
- Stalking -

- Pattern of harassing behaviors intended to frighten, intimidate, terrorize, or injure another person.
- Primary motives for stalking include power, control, and possession.
- Offenders refuse to accept the end of the former relationship (real or perceived).
- When the victim spurns their unwelcome advances, the stalker often turns to intimidation.

- 503,485 women are stalked by an intimate partner annually in the US.
- 1 in 12 women and 1 in 45 men will be stalked in their lifetime in the US.
Behaviors of Concern
- Domestic Abuse -

- Employees may observe behaviors which might suggest violence at home.
  - Disruptive phone calls and emails at work.
  - Discomfort when communicating with others.
  - Anxiety and lack of concentration on the job.
  - Unexplained bruises or injuries.

- Inappropriate clothing for the time of year.
- Frequent work absences.
- Unplanned use of personal time.
- Disruptive visits to the workplace by a current or former intimate partner.
Many employers, as part of their workplace violence prevention program, have a “No Threats, No Violence” policy. A requirement of that policy is for any employee who obtains an order of protection to report that information to the appropriate individual within the organization so procedures can be instituted to protect the safety of that employee, as well as ensure the safety of other employees in the organization.

Contact Campus Police with Concerns
UW Incident

Rebecca Griego murdered by Jonathan Rowan in April of 2007 at the University of Washington.
Common Inhibitors

- Lack of Awareness
  - Not trained to recognize Behaviors of Concern.

- Psychological Barriers
  - Busybody or Snitch
  - Fear of Retaliation
  - Believe it is someone else’s responsibility.

- If a Flash Point is triggered, it will affect you.
Workplace Violence Formula

**Awareness + Action = Prevention**

- You can do something about many situations.
- Action must be appropriate.
- Without awareness and willingness to act, you truly become vulnerable.
Summary

- Work from a mindset of awareness.
  - Don’t ignore Behaviors of Concern.
    - Will not go away and can escalate.
  - Learn how to recognize and diffuse potentially violent situations.
  - Alert supervisors to concerns.
  - Report all incidents.
EWU Policy 603-02
Violence, Prevention, Control and Response

Policy 1-2
Eastern Washington University will not tolerate violent behavior directed toward any member of the university community or to any person on university property. For the purposes of this policy, violent behavior includes any criminal behavior, either direct or indirect, that:

- Threatens or causes bodily harm.
- Harasses or intimidates others.
- Interferes with an individual’s legal rights of movement or expression.
- Disrupts the workplace, the academic environment or the University’s ability to provide service to the public.

Policy 1-3. Applicability
All faculty, staff, students, vendors, contractors, consultants, and others who do business with the University, whether in a University facility or off-campus location where University business is conducted, are covered by this policy. This policy also applies to other persons not affiliated with the University, such as former employees, former students, and visitors.
Reporting Options

- For lower level behaviors, you might feel comfortable giving the person a chance to talk or vent.
- Report behavior to a person in authority.
Reporting Information

- Supervisor, Human Resources, Police, Employee Assistance Program
- 24/7 Tip Line #509-359-4286
- Emails and Texting
- Police Dispatch 509-535-9233
- Strength in Numbers…Team Up
- CAPS
Helpful Non-Emergency Resources

- EWU Violence Prevention Advocate: #509-359-6429
- YWCA Alternatives to Domestic Violence 24 Hour Crisis Line: #509-326-2255
- SAFeT Sexual Assault 24 Hour Crisis Line: #509-624-7273
- CAPS (referrals to specialized services): #509-359-2366
- Employee Assistance Program: #509-482-3686 or #866-704-6364 (nights and weekends)