

## **Press Release**

### **IACP Urge People to Seek Help for Workplace Bullying - October is Bullying Awareness Month -**

**Wednesday, 24<sup>th</sup> October 2012:** The Irish Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (IACP) is urging people suffering from bullying in the workplace to seek help as International Bullying Awareness Month is marked around the world, running from 1<sup>st</sup> - 31<sup>st</sup> October. The IACP join a number of internationally recognised organisations who are supporting Bullying Awareness Month.

#### **Shane Kelly, Professional Services Manager for the IACP, said:**

“According to the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS), bullying is usually seen as acts or verbal comments that could mentally hurt or isolate a person in the workplace. It can involve inappropriate physical contact as well. Bullying usually involves repeated incidents or a pattern of behaviour that is intended to intimidate, offend, degrade or humiliate a particular person or group of people. It has also been described as the assertion of power through aggression.”

“Bullying is usually considered to be a pattern of behaviour where one or more incidents in this pattern will help show that bullying is taking place,” Mr Kelly continued. “If you’re experiencing bullying in the workplace, talk to someone, whether it’s a friend, GP or counsellor. You don’t have to go through it alone.”

#### **Examples of workplace bullying include:**

- Excluding or isolating someone socially
- Undermining or deliberately impeding a person's work
- Removing areas of responsibilities without cause
- Constantly changing work guidelines
- Establishing impossible deadlines that will set up the individual to fail
- Withholding necessary information or purposefully giving the wrong information
- Making jokes that are 'obviously offensive' by spoken word or e-mail
- Intruding on a person's privacy by pestering, spying or stalking

The IACP recently released results of a survey which highlights Irish people’s attitudes to mental health. Some of the key findings include:

- One in four (25%) Irish people have attended counselling or psychotherapy;
- 7 out of 10 (70%) people said they would discuss problems with a friend or family member;
- One on four Irish people (23%) would be embarrassed if people knew they were attending a counsellor or psychotherapist.

The full report about Irish people and their attitudes to counselling and psychotherapy can be found at <http://www.irish-counselling.ie/images/IACP%20Behaviour%20%20Attitudes%20Research.pdf>

### **The CCOHS offers the following tips to people experiencing bullying in the workplace:**

#### **Do**

- Tell the person that his or her behaviour is not acceptable and ask them to stop.
- Keep a factual journal or diary of daily events. Record:
  - The date, time and what happened in as much detail as possible
  - The names of witnesses.
  - The outcome of the event.
- Remember, it is not just the character of the incidents, but the number, frequency, and especially the pattern that can reveal the bullying or harassment.
- Keep copies of any letters, memos, e-mails, faxes, etc., received from the person.
- Report the harassment to the person identified in your workplace policy, your supervisor, or a delegated manager.
- (If your concerns are minimised, proceed to the next level of management).
- Seek help from a friend, GP or counsellor.

#### **Do Not**

- Do not retaliate.
- You may end up looking like the perpetrator and will most certainly cause confusion for those responsible for evaluating and responding to the situation.

### **ENDS**

#### **About IACP:**

Established in 1981, the IACP identifies, develops and maintains professional standards of excellence in counselling and psychotherapy through education, training and accreditation. In promoting best practice and the professional development of its members, IACP holds at its core the protection of the public. Representing both the interests of clients and practitioners (over 3,500 nationwide), IACP provides a telephone referral helpline, an information service; and an online counsellor / psychotherapist / supervisor directory. IACP is a registered Charity (CHY 6615).

More information is available from the IACP's website [www.iacp.ie](http://www.iacp.ie).

#### **References:**

The IACP research survey was carried out by Behaviour and Attitudes Marketing Research Ltd.

