



Burnie Advocate
Thursday 9/09/2010
Page: 7
Section: General News
Region: Burnie TAS, AU
Circulation: 23545
Type: Regional
Size: 183.07 sq.cms.



press clip

Workplace bullying a 'psychological hazard'

WORKPLACE bullying costs Australia about \$36 billion every year, according to a recent assessment.

This week Tasmanian Skills Institute people problem facilitator Caroline Dean ran training sessions with the Central Coast Council on workplace bullying.

Bullying includes —

- withholding information;
- gossip;
- persistent criticism;
- shouting and offensive language; and
- being ostracised and isolated.

Ms Dean said bullying was costly to both organisations and individuals.

For businesses she said bullying often meant lower productivity, higher absenteeism, more stress leave and low morale.

For individuals bullying could mean increased tiredness, fear of going to work, and post traumatic stress disorder symptoms, such as anxiety.

"Statistics say that one in four (people) have witnessed or ex-

WAYS TO DEAL WITH THE PROBLEM



Ms Dean

TASMANIAN Skills Institute people problem facilitator Caroline Dean says there's a number of things to do if you are experiencing workplace bullying —

- Keep an evidence log of incidents, with names, dates and what the impact of the bullying was.
- Speak to a counsellor, or some workplaces may have a contact officer to talk to about concerns.
- Find someone that you trust in the workplace and tell them what is going on.
- She said that it was a myth that not doing anything about bullying made it go away, and the opposite was often true.

perienced bullying."

Ms Dean said in some occupations bullying was more prevalent, such as the trades.

"There is a correlation between particular management styles and bullying.

"A management style that is directive and authoritative can create a culture that promotes bullying."

Ms Dean said organisations

needed to be proactive when it came to bullying, and to ensure there was a respectful workplace culture.

Ms Dean said bullying should be treated like any other occupational health and safety issue.

"We need to deal with it as we would with any other hazard, like power cords on the floor, this is a psychological hazard."