

Fact sheet

The business case for bullying prevention

Bullying is common

Bullying is a serious issue for New Zealand workplaces – one in five employees report they experience bullying each year. Bullying affects individuals and the productivity of organisations.

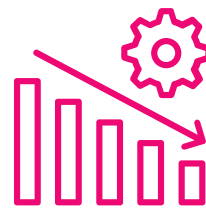
Employees who have experienced bullying report:



Higher levels of psychological strain



Lower wellbeing¹



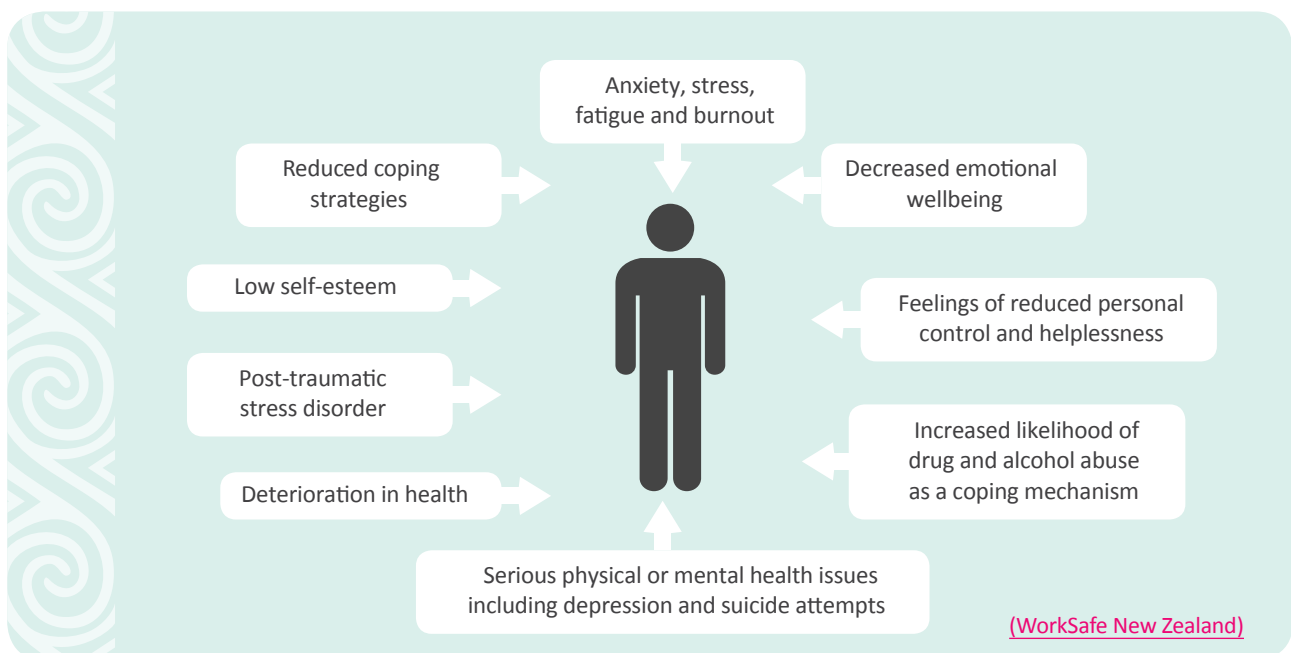
Lower commitment to their organisation



Lower job performance

Bullying harms workers

Lower levels of wellbeing and higher levels of psychological strain affect individual workers in many ways. They can have an ongoing impact on the whole organisation.



1 O'Driscoll, M. P., Cooper-Thomas, H. D., Bentley, T., Catley, B. E., Gardner, D. H., & Trenberth, L. (2011). Workplace bullying in New Zealand: A survey of employee perceptions and attitudes. *Asia Pacific Journal of Human Resources*, 49(4), 390-408.

People who observe bullying or are bystanders to bullying can be impacted and this can contribute to a hostile work environment. This means the impact of bullying is wider than just those who are targeted². It's important for organisations to ensure they create working environments that are psychologically safe and supportive for all staff.

The Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 (HSWA)

Bullying is a risk to the mental wellbeing of all workers. Organisations have a legal responsibility under HSWA to manage risks to mental health and wellbeing as they would with any other health and safety risk ([Wellplace.nz](https://www.wellplace.nz/)).

Managing bullying as a workplace risk should be a standard part of every organisation's approach to effective management of health and safety ([WorkSafe New Zealand](https://www.worksafe.govt.nz/)).

Workplaces that prioritise mental health have better engagement, reduced absenteeism and higher productivity, while people have improved wellbeing, greater morale and higher job satisfaction ([Five Ways to Wellbeing at Work Toolkit](#)).

