

# Bullying and Horizontal Violence

## How to Recognize It

## How to Handle It

### EXAMPLES OF BULLYING BEHAVIORS

- Being accused of errors made by someone else
- Nonverbal intimidation, including being stared at or glared at
- Being belittled
- Having thoughts or feelings ignored
- Being excluded from activities or conversations
- Being gossiped about or being the topic of rumors
- Being yelled at or screamed at in front of others
- Being humiliated in front of others
- Being assigned undesirable work
- Being sabotaged
- Having resources or information withheld, thereby impeding job performance
- Being physically threatened

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### POSSIBLE RESPONSES WHEN YOU EXPERIENCE BULLYING

- Verbal abuse (yelling in front of others)  
"I do not appreciate being yelled at in front of others. It sets a bad example for the staff and does not leave a good impression on the patients and family members. If there is something that you need to discuss with me, we can do it in a more private place."
- Nonverbal abuse (eye-rolling, making faces)  
"I sense that there is something that you want to say to me. Do you wish to discuss it?"
- Overhearing someone talking about you  
"If there is an issue that we need to talk about, please come to me directly so we can discuss it."

### SAMPLE OF RESPONSES WHEN YOU WITNESS THE BULLYING

- Backstabbing (complaining about a person to someone other than the person)  
"I do not know the facts of the situation and do not feel comfortable discussing it."
- Lack of Respect  
"I do not like to talk about others without their permission."

(Adopted from M. Griffin, 2004)

It is the position of the Center for American Nurses that there is no place in a professional practice environment for lateral violence and bullying among nurses or between healthcare professionals. All healthcare organizations should implement a zero tolerance policy related to disruptive behavior, including a professional code of conduct and educational and behavioral interventions to assist nurses in addressing disruptive behavior.

Center for American Nurses Position Statement, February, 2008

