



Safe Environments
Healthy Workers

STOPPING STIGMA – 6 TIPS FOR CREATING AN OPEN AND SUPPORTIVE WORKPLACE CULTURE



HERE ARE SIX TIPS FOR CREATING AN OPEN AND SUPPORTIVE WORKPLACE CULTURE

1. EDUCATE AND INFORM

Provide educational sessions and information aimed at raising awareness about mental health. Ensure that everyone knows what programs are offered through your organization. Educational materials should include the importance of taking care of your own mental health as well as being supportive of co-workers, family and friends.

2. CREATE AN ENVIRONMENT WHERE EVERYONE CAN DISCUSS MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Make mental health and wellness part of ongoing communications. Provide supervisors with tools and training on how to have conversations with staff and coworkers. Encourage people to share their experiences.

3. TALK ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH USING RESPECTFUL LANGUAGE AND POSITIVE SELF TALK

Respectful language avoids personal characteristics, unless it is relevant and it is inclusive and person-first meaning that it does not include stereotypes or labels (“that is crazy”) and it puts the person ahead of personal characteristics. Self stigma can be a challenge as well, so it is important that our own self talk is positive and supportive.

4. SHOW YOU CARE

Ask co-workers how they are doing and if there is anything that they would like to talk about. If someone does start to share, do not interrupt, listen. Make sure you know what resources are offered through your workplace. If your co-worker asks for help work with them to understand what resources are available through your workplace and outside of the workplace. If appropriate, and your co-worker has stopped sharing, share your own experiences.

5. BE DESCREET. KEEP CONVERSATIONS CONFIDENTIAL

Keep conversations confidential. Remember opening up and talking about mental health may not be easy for everyone. Reassuring your team or co-workers that anything they share is confidential can help build bridges and break down barriers to help seeking.

6. ENCOURAGE HELP SEEKING BEHAVIOURS

Encourage people to seek help if they are experiencing a difficult time, or are feeling anxious, depressed or worried.

WEBSITES OR RESOURCES FOR MENTAL HEALTH INFORMATION

[Canadian Mental Health Association](#)

[Mental Health Commission of Canada](#)

[Centre for Addiction and Mental Health](#)

[ConnexOntario](#)

[Homewood Health](#)

[First Responders First](#)

[Boots on the Ground Peer Support for First Responders](#)

REFERENCES

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