



HEU speaks out against bullying on Pink Shirt Day – February 26

The Hospital Employees' Union encourages members throughout the province to join in solidarity with other labour and community partners to protest against harassment and bullying on the 7th Annual Pink Shirt Anti-bullying Day – Wednesday, February 26.

Organized by the Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater Vancouver, British Columbians are asked to show their support by wearing a pink item of clothing to demonstrate their opposition to bullying in all its forms, including cyberbullying.

“While it’s the employer’s responsibility to provide a safe work environment that’s free of bullying and harassment, we also have an opportunity to do our part to prevent workplaces from becoming toxic,” says HEU secretary-business manager Bonnie Pearson.

That’s why HEU successfully lobbied with other unions to have workplace bullying and harassment included as a compensable mental health claim through WorkSafeBC.

The result was the passage of *Bill 14* on May 31, 2012 changing the *Workers Compensation Act* to include: “a significant work-related stressor, including bullying or harassment, or a cumulative series of significant work-related stressors, arising out of and in the course of the worker’s employment.”

Then, last November, after province-wide consultation with unions and employers, WorkSafeBC introduced amendments to sections 115, 116 and 117 of the *Workers Compensation Act* – to clearly outline the responsibilities of employers, supervisors and workers to create respectful workplaces.

In Canada, pink became a national symbol of anti-bullying after two Nova Scotia teenagers stood up for a classmate who was bullied at school for wearing a pink shirt. The high school students – David Shepherd and Travis Price – took up the cause, recruited their classmates, and organized a pink protest.

They bought and distributed 50 pink tank tops to male students, and they all wore them in a day of solidarity against bullying.

Be sure to send photos to heu@heu.org of your Pink Shirt Day activities and download our poster from the HEU website.

For more information on Pink Shirt Day, visit <http://www.pinkshirtday.ca/>.

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