WORKPLACE BULLYING INSTITUTE™

2014 WBI U.S. Workplace Bullying Survey

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National Prevalence

27% of Americans have suffered abusive conduct at work; another 21% have witnessed it; 72% are aware that workplace bullying happens

Workplace bullying is repeated mistreatment and a form of "abusive conduct." For the first time, we used the definition of workplace bullying that matches perfectly the definition codified in the Healthy Workplace Bill. Thus, we asked Americans to consider only the most serious forms of bullying. Eye rolling may be part of bullying, but it alone is not sufficient. Nonverbal cues coupled with verbal abuse and the tactics of exclusion are delivered by perpetrators repeatedly in order to intentionally harm targeted individuals. The closest analogy to workplace bullying is domestic violence. Bullying is a non-physical form of workplace violence.

Throughout this report, the exact wording of Survey items begin with *Question:* . The respondents' answer choices are the phrases without italics in all Tables. Subtotals comprised of sets of response categories are *italicized.*

Question: At work, what has been your personal experience with the following types of repeated mistreatment: abusive conduct that is threatening, intimidating, humiliating, work sabotage or verbal abuse?

Table 1

Types of Experiences with Abusive Conduct	Proportion	Percentage
I am experiencing it now or have experienced it in the last year	.0714	7%
I have experienced it before, but not in the last year	.1969	20%
Total with Direct Experience	.2683	27%
I have seen it happen to others	.1071	11%
I know that it has happened to others	.1017	10%
Total of those who Witnessed it	.2088	21%
I've been a perpetrator myself	.0054	.5%
I have not experienced or witnessed it: I do believe it happens in workplaces	.1916	19%
I have not experienced or witnessed it: I believe that non-harmful routine interactions are what others consider "mistreatment"	.0411	4%
Public Awareness of bullying in the workplace	.7150	72%
I have no personal experience of knowledge of, or an opinion about, workplace mistreatment	.2846	28%
Have never been bullied	.5173	52%

Over one-quarter of adult Americans (27%) said they directly experienced abusive conduct at work – currently (7%) or at sometime in their work life but not in the last year (20%).

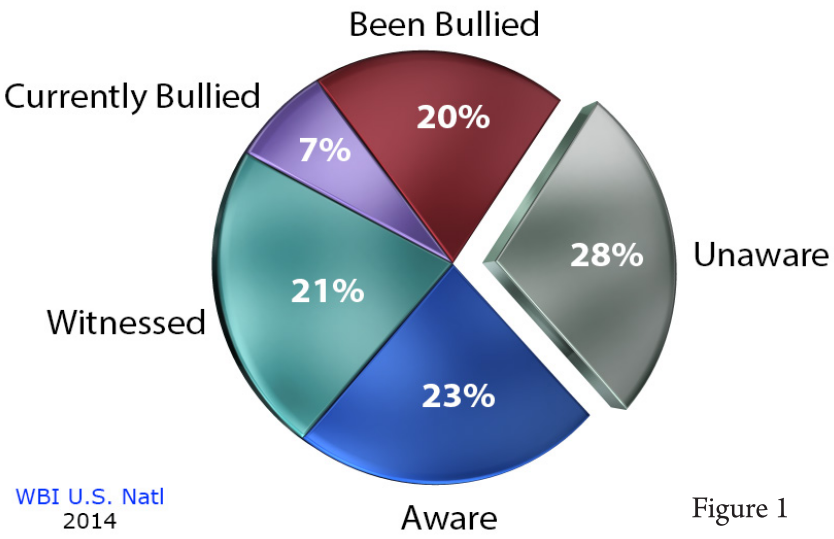


Figure 1

In our 2014 Survey, we split the "witnessed" category into those who had seen the bullying of others and those who knew that others were bullied. Both groups would have experienced the bullying vicariously. Recent research of those who vicariously experienced bullying found that the severity of emotional injuries were similar in severity to injuries suffered by bullied individuals.

The most important change in response options in 2014 was to split the formerly single "I have not experienced or witnessed it" answer into three alternatives. Respondents were asked to declare if they were aware that bullying happens despite not having personal experiences with it. This subgroup (19%) we call the "Aware & Believers." They are not in denial. The "Aware & Disbelievers" subgroup (4%) would be those in denial. The third subgroup is comprised of individuals who know nothing, see nothing and are completely unaware of misconduct occurring in their workplace, approximately 28% of all Americans.

The partitioning of the "I have not experienced or witnessed it" group also allows us to refute the axiom that one must have first-hand knowledge of bullying to recognize its existence. In fact, the 52% of the adult American population that claims to have no experience is split into those who are aware (23%) and those who profess to know nothing (28%).

The percentage of adult Americans aware that abusive conduct/workplace bullying happens at work is the sum of those with direct and vicarious experience plus those with no experience but who believe it happens and those who choose to rationalize abusive conduct as "routine."

The sum of the "aware" groups is 72%. That means 72% of the adult American public is familiar with workplace bullying -- ranging from a painfully intimate immersion to a superficial recognition of the term without knowing many details.

At the Workplace Bullying Institute, we take some credit for this new high level of public awareness. Our work began in 1997 with the steadfast commitment to raising public awareness and the myriad of activities and programs developed since has expanded to drive that awareness.

U.S. Workforce Affected

37 million US workers report being subjected to "abusive conduct"
65.6 million are affected (those abused + those who witness it)

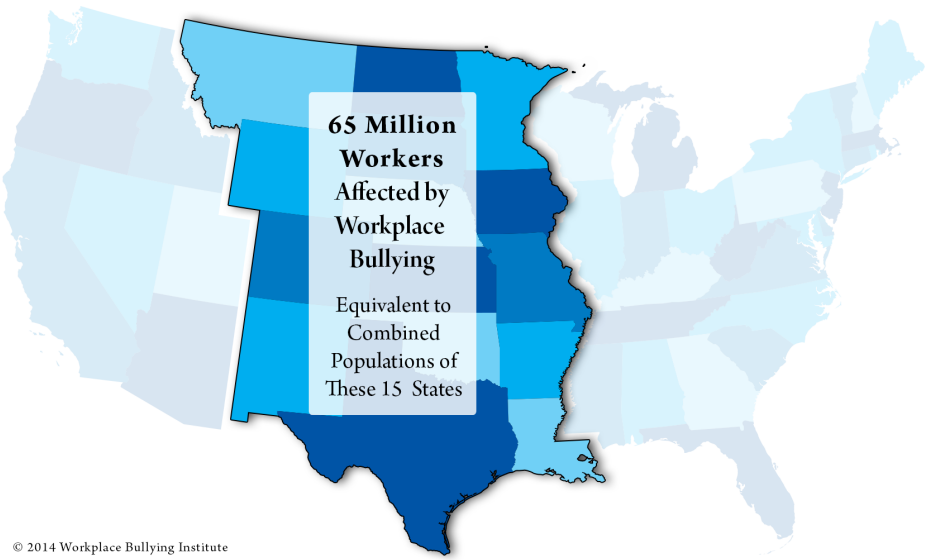
The survey was conducted at a time when the U.S. non-farm laborforce was approximately 137,499,000. By applying the prevalence proportions (Table 1), we are able to estimate the equivalent number of working Americans that correspond to each bullying experience category.

Table 2

Experiences	Labor Force Equivalent
I am experiencing it now or have experienced it in the last year	9,817,429
I have experienced it before, but not in the last year	27,073,553
Total with Direct Experience	36,890,982
I have seen it happen to others	15,038,462
I know that it has happened to others	13,671,329
Total of those who Witnessed it	28,709,791
Total of Workers AFFECTED (Direct + Witnessed) by Bullying	65.6 million
I've been a perpetrator myself	74,249
I have not experienced or witnessed it: I do believe it happens in workplaces	26,344,808
I have not experienced or witnessed it: I believe that non-harmful routine interactions are what others consider "mistreatment"	5,651,209
Public Awareness of bullying in the workplace	98,339,284
I have no personal experience of knowledge of, or an opinion about, workplace mistreatment	39,132,215
Have Never Been Bullied	71,128,232

The number of U.S. workers who are affected by bullying – summing over those with direct bullying and witnessing experiences – is 65.6 million, the combined population of 15 states from the central northern tier to the Gulf of Mexico.

Figure 2



Gender and the Bullying Experience

69% of bullies are men; 60% of bullied targets are women;
women bullies choose women targets 68% of the time

Question: Think of the perpetrator and target of repeated abusive mistreatment at work. What as the gender of each?

Table 3

Gender	Proportion	Percentage
Male perpetrators	.6851	69%
Male perpetrator: Female target	.5672	57%
Male perpetrator: Male target	.4328	43%
Female perpetrators	.3149	31%
Female perpetrator: Female target	.6753	68%
Female perpetrator: Male target	.3247	32%
Female Targets	.6012	60%
Male Targets	.3988	40%

Figure 3

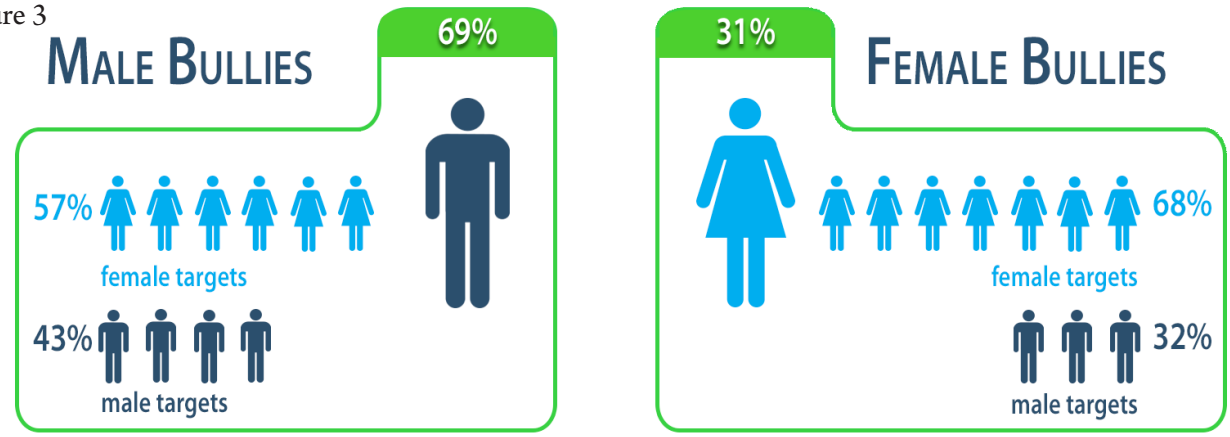
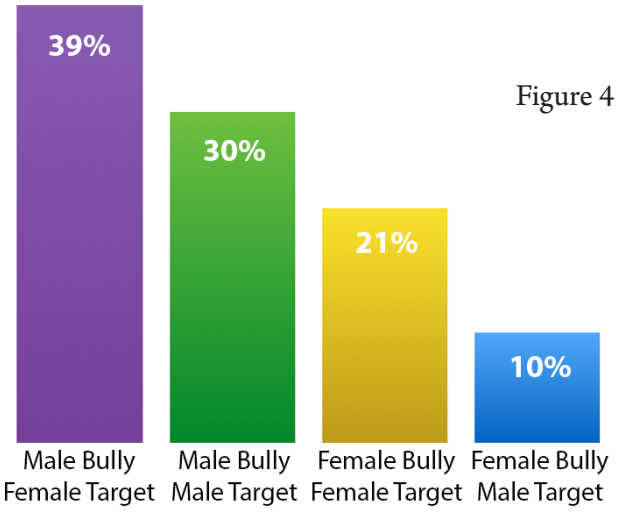


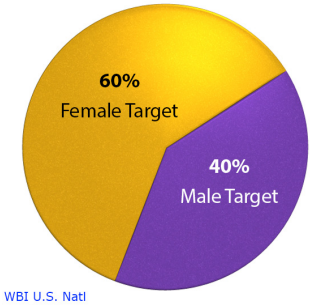
Figure 4



The vast majority of bullies are men (69%, See Figure 3). Male perpetrators seem to prefer targeting women (57%) more than other men (43%). Women bullies were less "equitable" when choosing their targets for bullying. Women bullied women in 68% of cases. [In past WBI national Surveys, the woman-on-woman bullying percentages were similarly disproportionately high.]

When considering all four combinations of gender pairs, the two most frequent were both when the perpetrator was male (See Figure 4). Female targets bullied by men comprised the largest group (39%), followed by men bullied by men (30%), women bullied by women (21%), and the rarest of all, men bullied by women (10%).

Figure 5



Women were targets in 60% of cases (See Figure 5).

An alternative analysis is to cross the *respondents' gender* with the experiences of being bullied and witnessing it. The result then showed that 51% of the men Survey respondents were either directly bullied or witnessed it, a higher rate than was true for women Survey respondents.

Table 4

Respondent Gender	Direct	Witnessed	Affected
Male	25.2%	25.8%	51.0%
Female	28.5%	16.1%	44.6%

We investigated the interaction between gender pairs and the direct experience categories of currently bullied and having been bullied. A difference emerges between situations based on perpetrator gender(See Table 5). Only when the bully is male, do male targets report over three times the rate of being currently bullied relative to female targets (51% vs. 15%). Male targets are only half as likely to report having been bullied in the past as currently bullied (27% vs 51%). Female targets bullied by men are nearly three times as likely (39%) to have been bullied than to report being currently bullied.

Table 5

Gender Pairs	Currently Bullied	Been Bullied
Male Perpetrator: Male Target	51%	27%
Male Perpetrator: Female Target	15%	39%
Female Perpetrator: Male Target	10%	10%
Female Perpetrator: Female Target	27%	25%
Overall Male Targets	16%	27%
Overall Female Targets	11%	47%

The explanation might be twofold. First the fact than men report a higher current rate of bullying may be due to a willingness to "tough it out" and stay in abusive situations not wanting to allow the male bully to "win." Perhaps this poses a challenge to American men's "rugged individualism." If stubbornness is not an explanation, than the pattern might be understood by saying that women targets are quicker to leave, or be forced out of, bullying situations when the bully is male. In those cross-gender pairings, women may have a legitimate sexual harassment complaint.

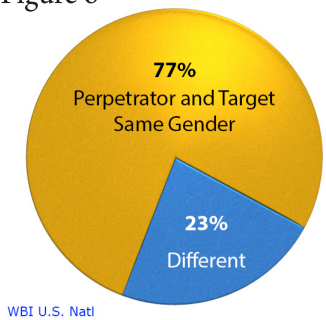
Regardless of the explanation it seems women report more historical bullying by men than men. Their memories may be more resistant to extinction.

The pattern does not occur when the perpetrator is female. However, when we sum over perpetrator gender, female targets still report a higher historical rate of bullying than their male counterparts. The higher frequency for historical bullying emerged for both men and women targets.

The Challenge of Same-Gender Bullying

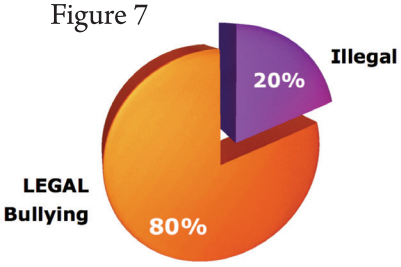
The final analysis of gender tells us that 77% of *currently bullied* targets are bullied by perpetrators of the same gender, *ie.*, man-on-man and woman-on-woman (See Figure 6).

Figure 6



Same gender bullying presents a challenge for targets who would like to file a claim of discrimination. With few exceptions (cases of explicit sexual coercion), sexual harassment requires that the perpetrator be a member of the opposite sex. In same sex cases the human resources department and most employment lawyers will describe the difficulty that same-gender harassment presents. Our 2014 findings (See Figure 4) show that in 30% of cases the bully was male and the target was female. A simplistic interpretation suggests that the target could claim sexual harassment. However, discrimination law requires that the target demonstrate that gender was the *basis* of the animus that the perpetrator held against the target.

Figure 7



Bullying is cruelty and much more frequently "status-blind." In the 2007 WBI U.S. Workplace Bullying Survey, we asked a question about bullied targets' membership in protected groups. That is, were targets protected by gender, race, age, disability, religion, or another class. The same was asked about perpetrators. In only 1 of 5 cases was the target the only one who enjoyed protected status (See Figure 7). The remaining 80% of situations did not lend themselves to a simple violation of state or federal anti-discrimination laws.

The narrowly worded 2014 question that listed gender pairs did not address the fuller discriminatory nature of illegal harassment contained in the 2007 question. But, the 30% man-on-woman category closely approximated the 20% result in the 2007 survey. In conclusion, same gender pairings render complaints of illegality nearly impossible.

Gender and Job Loss

For each of the gender pairs we calculated the rates of job loss for both targets and perpetrators. Job loss percentages were derived from responses to a separate question (See "What Stopped the Bullying") for which we summed quitting, termination, and constructive discharge as reasons for a loss.

The first observation is that targets lose their jobs at a much higher rate than perpetrators (82% vs. 18%). When bullies are men regardless of the targets gender the loss rate is equally high. However, when bullies are women, women targets lose their jobs 89% of the time. Notably women bullies, as perpetrators, suffer the highest job loss rate (30%) of any gender pairing.

Table 6

Gender Pairs	Target Loses Job	Perpetrator Loses Job
Male Perpetrator: Male Target	80%	20%
Male Perpetrator: Female Target	83%	17%
Female Perpetrator: Male Target	70%	30%
Female Perpetrator: Female Target	89%	11%
Overall	82%	18%

Race and the bullying Experience

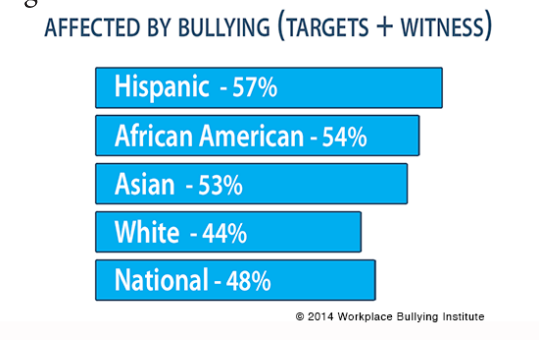
Below are the percentages within each ethnic group that had been bullied, witnessed it and the combined percentage to represent those "affected" by bullying.

Table 7

Race	Direct	Witness	Affected
Hispanic	32.5%	24.4%	56.9%
African American	33.0%	21.1%	54.1%
Asian	33.3%	19.4%	52.8%
White	24.1%	20.2%	44.3%

The overall percentage of those affected was 47.7%. All three non-White groups had much higher rates than the U.S. percentage. Hispanics were the highest; African-Americans were second. Non-White respondents are considered to be members of legally protected status groups. Employers have to comply with state and federal anti-discrimination laws. That is, when they endure harassment, they would be eligible to demand protection from their employers in most situations.

Figure 8



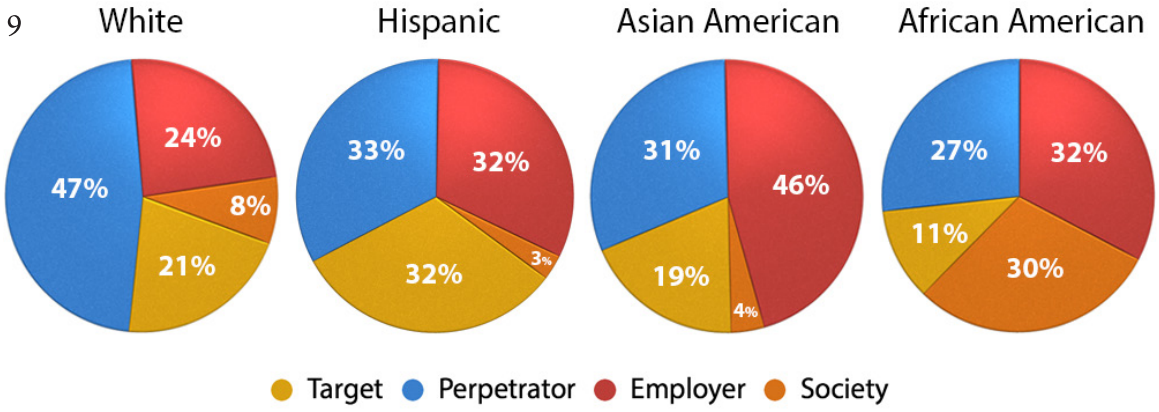
Bullying, defined in this Survey, as abusive conduct, compounds discriminatory misconduct. In other words, bullying supplements, exacerbates, the mistreatment that may or may not have its basis in race of the bullied target. Bullying is cruelty that transcends racial boundaries.

A second way in which non-white respondents differed from the white majority of respondents is in the preference for assigning responsibility for abusive conduct. In a separate question in the Survey (See Causal Factors) respondents chose from the following options: target attributes, perpetrator attributes, employer factors and societal factors.

White respondents rank order of causal factors: perpetrator (47%), employer (24%), target (21%), and society (8%).
Hispanics: perpetrator (33%), target (32%), employer (32%), society (3%).
Asian Americans: employer (46%), perpetrator (31%), target (19%), and society (4%).
African Americans: employer (32%), society (30%), perpetrator (27%), and target (11%).

There were differences across the racial groups in which factors best explained the bullying. African Americans were the only group to assign a high percentage to society. Of all the racial groups Hispanics blamed targets the most. Perpetrators were blamed most by whites. Employers were blamed the most by Asian Americans and African Americans. The two groups with the highest "external" explanatory factor percentages were African Americans (62%) and Asian Americans

Figure 9



Ideology and the bullying Experience

The respondents' self-identification of a held political ideology provided the lens through which they viewed the prevalence of bullying. Conservatives reported experiencing the least amount of bullying, direct and vicarious.

Table 8

	Direct	Witness	Affected
Moderate	29.7%	25.4%	55.1%
Liberal	32.6%	15.8%	48.4%
Conservative	23.4%	20.0%	43.4%

Perpetrator Rank & Number

56% of bullies are bosses

Mobbing was the term adopted by Heinz Leymann to describe health-harming abusive conduct at work. Mobbing implies multiple perpetrators. Mobbing preceded the term workplace bullying. However, WBI has consistently defined bullying as committed by one or more persons. Bullying nearly always escalates to more than one person joining the main instigator to torment the target.

Question: Who was (were) the principal perpetrator(s)?

Table 9

Responses	Percentage
Single higher rank individual, a boss	40.1%
Single same rank individual, a peer	19.0%
Single lower rank individual, a subordinate	7.1%
Multiple higher rank individuals, bosses	8.1%
Multiple peers	9.0%
Multiple subordinates	2.7%
A combination of bosses & peers	7.3%
A combination of bosses, peers & subordinates	6.7%

From Table 9, respondents said the following:

- 77% of cases involved single perpetrators
- 23% of cases involved multiple perpetrators

In 14% of cases, the bullying was generated by a combination of perpetrators operating at different levels of the organization – bosses, peers, and subordinates.

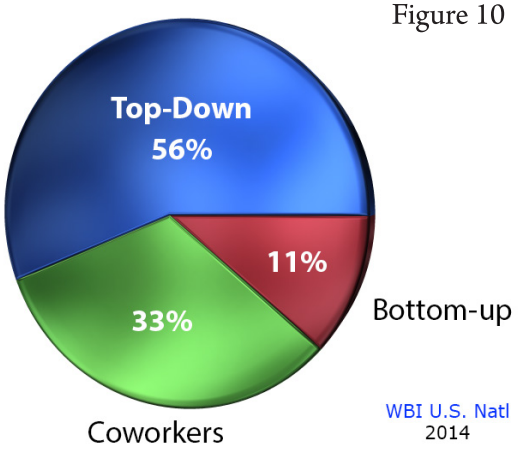
With respect to perpetrator's rank, not counting the combined sources cases:

- 56% held a higher rank, was a boss, top-down
- 33% abuse came from peers, lateral or horizontal, same level
- 11% bullying from subordinates, bottom-up

This pattern is consistent with previous WBI national Surveys.

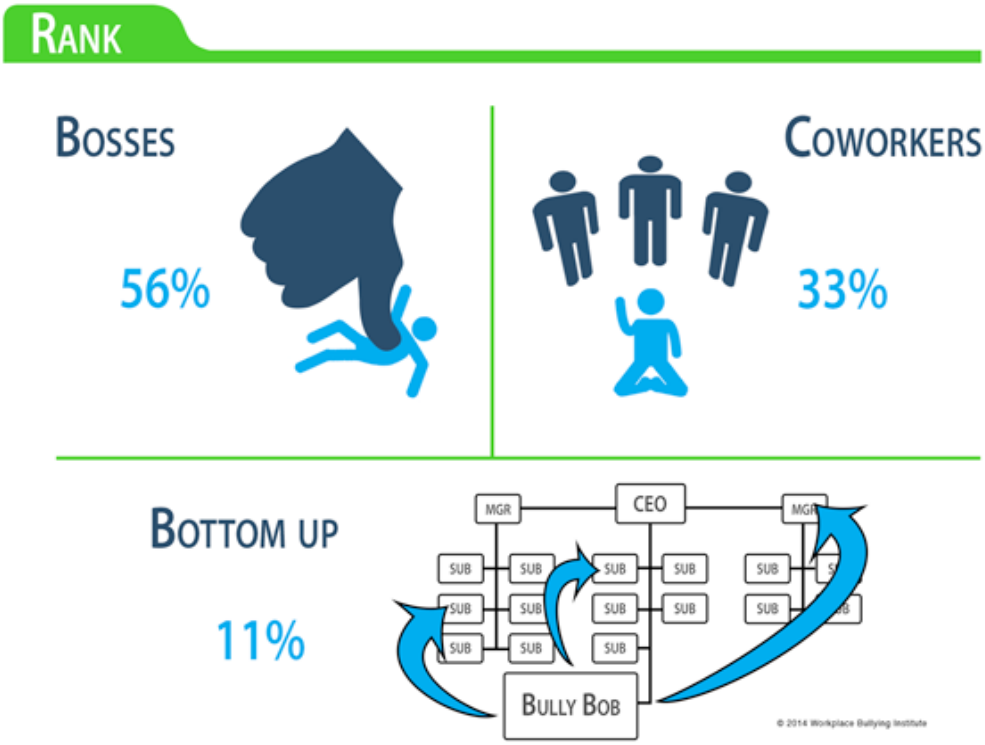
No interactions between rank and race or rank and gender were found.

Figure 10



The WBI Infographic portrayal of rank and bullying.

Figure 11



When perpetrators enjoy a higher organizational rank than targets, opportunities to abuse authority present themselves. Further, the likelihood of targets being able to confront the boss about her or his unacceptable conduct approaches zero, given the difficulty of crossing the "power gradient." Coworker, peer-to-peer, bullying may not involve power differences, but the health harm caused by social exclusion/ostracism that peers employ poses an equal, if not greater, threat to the target's safety.

Employers' Reactions to Bullying

72% of American employer reactions either condone or explicitly sustain bullying; less than 20% take actions to stop it

In 2014 at the time of the Survey, there was no state or federal law yet enacted to compel American employers to address abusive conduct that occurred outside the limited definitions of illegal discriminatory actions. The absence of a law means that employers may tolerate misconduct without legal risk. Of course, repeated abusive conduct, as defined in the prevalence question, does prove costly for employers who choose to ignore it. Tangible costs include unwanted turnover of key skilled personnel, absenteeism, higher insurance costs (health and employment practices liability), and litigation expenses. Intangible costs include: damage to institutional reputation and an impaired ability to recruit and retain the best talent.

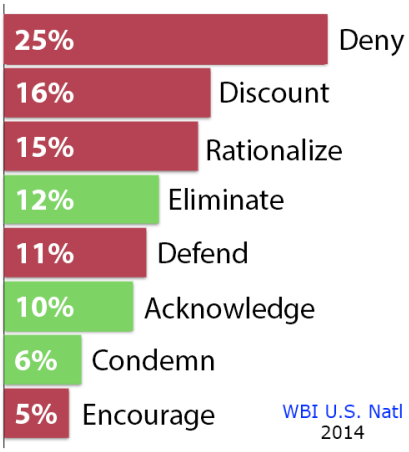
A rational employer would seek to minimize preventable costs and strive to eliminate demonstrable abusive conduct. A 2013 WBI poll conducted by Zogby of Business Leaders, CXO-level corporate leaders, showed that 68% of executives considered "workplace bullying a serious problem." And according to this current 2014 Survey, 48% of Americans are affected by bullying. Given the confluence of this awareness, we asked the public how employers were voluntarily dealing with bullying without needing to comply with laws.

Question: What do you know to be the most common American employer reaction to complaints of abusive conduct (when it is not illegal discrimination)?

Table 10

Employer Reactions	Proportion	Percentage
Encourage it; Necessary for a competitive organization	.0483	5%
Defend it; When offenders are executives and managers	.1115	11%
Rationalize it; It's an innocent, routine way of doing business	.1543	15%
Deny it; It doesn't happen here, fail to investigate complaints	.2491	25%
Discount it; Describe impact as not serious	.1599	16%
Negative Reactions	.7230	72%
Acknowledge it; Show concern for affected workers	.0985	10%
Eliminate it; Create and enforce policies and procedures	.1208	12%
Condemn it; Exercise zero-tolerance	.0576	6%
Positive Reactions	.2770	28%

Figure 12



Respondents were clear that employers fail to appropriately react to abusive conduct much more frequently than they take positive steps ameliorate bullying. Denial and discounting were the most common reactions by employers.

The 6% condemnation rate in this Survey matches the rate in a separate WBI study (WBI 2012 IP-B) given by targets to describe how many good employers had created effective anti-bullying policies and who had faithfully enforced them (5.5%).

Coworkers' Reactions to Bullying

Results from several WBI online surveys of bullied targets reliably show that coworkers rarely help their bullied colleagues. Several social psychological processes operate in the group setting to explain the failure to act prosocially.

The perspective of the general public captured in this national Survey describes circumstances somewhat more positively than surveys of bullied targets. We believe the reference to "most of the witnesses" led to these inexplicable results. The flaw is in the design of the question.

Doing nothing was the most cited tactic. Of course, doing nothing to help colleagues when they are distressed is not a neutral act. It is negative. However, it is not the same as betraying the target by siding with the perpetrator(s). Negative actions were taken in 49% of cases.

Respondents from the national sample believe that approximately one-quarter of coworkers (29%) take public positive steps to help their bullied friends. This is more benevolent than targets credit coworkers to be. And the public estimate that only 7% of coworkers ostracize (socially exclude, "ice out," and isolate) their peers seems unrealistically low.

Question: How did most of the witnesses react to the ongoing mistreatment of the targeted person?

Table 11

Responses	Proportion	Percentage
Did nothing	.3835	38%
Privately aided the target/victim	.2229	22%
Publicly helped the target/victim: corroboration, reported incidents	.1305	13%
Attempted to intervene or resolve: talked to perpetrator and/or management	.1566	16%
Isolated/ostracized the target/victim from the group	.0703	7%
Sided with the perpetrator: ended relationships with the target/victim	.0361	4%

We examined the differences in the perceptions of bullied targets and witnesses with respect to the rates of three negative coworker behaviors: doing nothing, ostracism, and siding with the bully. Though targets believed 41% of coworkers did nothing to help, witnesses confessed to a relatively high rate of doing nothing themselves in 30% of cases.

Both ostracism and betrayal seemed to be taboo according to both targets and witnesses. The rates varied between 3% and 9%. The low rates probably reflect a social desirability bias.

What Stopped the Bullying

61% of bullied targets lose their job with their employer; 74% lose their particular job

Question: What stopped the abusive mistreatment?

Table 12

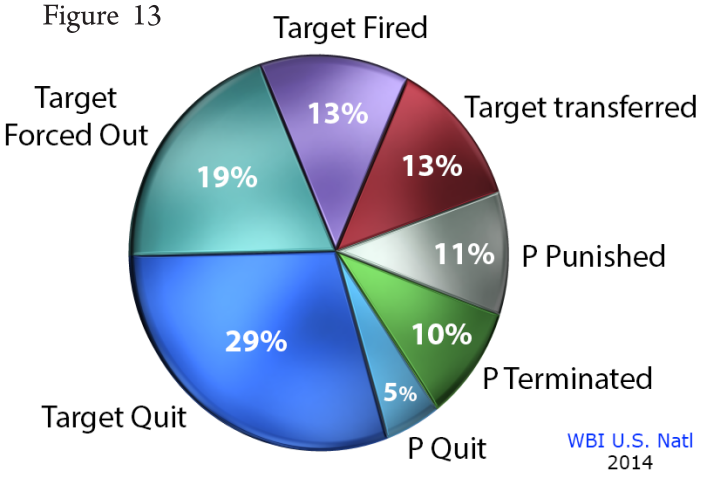
Response Options	Proportion	Percentage
Target voluntarily left the job to escape more mistreatment	.2872	29%
Target forced to quit when work conditions were deliberately made worse	.1923	19%
Employer terminated the target	.1282	13%
Target lost job	.6077	61%
Target transferred to a different job or location with same employer	.1333	13%
Perpetrator was punished & kept job	.1077	11%
Perpetrator was terminated	.0974	10%
Perpetrator voluntarily quit	.0564	5%
Perpetrator lost job	.1538	15%

This Survey question provided the response option: "It has not stopped" that was chosen by 18% of respondents. The percentages in Table 12 are based on a new sample that excluded the 18%. The options were chosen only by those for whom the personal bullying had stopped or the witnessed bullying had stopped.

The sad reality is that even the general public seems to know that it is the target, the victim of the abuse, who is asked to make additional sacrifices to stop the bullying. In 61% of cases, bullying stops only when the target loses her or his job. Remember that individuals do not invite this severe misery into their work lives. Therefore, once a person is targeted for bullying – a choice made by the perpetrator(s) – that person has a 6 out of 10 chance of losing her or his livelihood.

Furthermore, the target is driven to quit. Voluntary quitting is usually based on escalating health problems that families and physicians recognize, then encourage the target to leave the job. But 40% of quitting is based on decisions made after work conditions become untenable, so cruel as to drive a rational person to escape. Constructive discharge is the goal for many perpetrators. Terminations of the skilled and threatening-to-bullies targets are typically based on fabricated lies. Several WBI surveys of bullied targets substantiate this claim.

Figure 13



Accepting a transfer to retain a job, to bullied targets, is often a source of perceived injustice. Their reasoning is "I did nothing to deserve the abuse, why should I be the one to leave the job I love and am best qualified to perform." To many, transfers are punitive. On the other hand, it prevents economic devastation and might provide a degree of psychological safety.

When we consider only job loss and not transfers or punishment with job retention, targets lose their jobs at a much higher rate than perpetrators (82% vs. 18%). When bullies are men regardless of the targets gender the loss rate is equally high (See Table 6, page 8). However, when bullies are women, women targets lose their jobs 89% of the time. Notably women bullies, as perpetrators, suffer the highest job loss rate (30%) of any gender pairing.

Though the ratio of negative consequences for targets relative to perpetrators is 4:1, we interpret the rising percentage of negative outcomes for bullies over the years to indicate progress in public (and employer) awareness of bullying. Slowly, bullying is gaining a negative connotation. Perpetrators are starting to be stigmatized. Of course, given the paucity of employer reactions, there is still much progress to be made.

We do not suggest that progress requires demonization of bullies. Rather, employers need to feel ashamed when they condone bullying rather than condemn it. Eradication of bullying, the systemic destructive force within organizations, is the goal, not dealing with the personalities of offenders.

Support for a Law

93% of the American public aware of abusive conduct at work want a law against it

Question: Do you support or oppose enactment of a new law that would protect all workers from repeated abusive mistreatment in addition to protections against illegal discrimination and harassment?

The respondents who answered this question were individuals who were directly bullied, those who had witnessed it, the few who were perpetrators, and those with no personal experience but who believed it happened and those who believed it was exaggerated. Those groups taken together constituted the American public who were "aware" of abusive conduct at work, the 72% (See National Prevalence, page 4).

Figure 14

It is clear that those respondents, the American public aware of abusive conduct, want to see worker protections extended beyond the anti-discrimination statutes – 93% support specific anti-bullying legislation.

Table 13

Response Options	Proportion	Percentage
Strongly support	.6327	63%
Somewhat support	.2953	30%
Somewhat oppose	.0580	6%
Strongly oppose	.0158	1%

Furthermore, 50% of Survey respondents self-defined as Conservatives strongly support the Healthy Workplace Bill. With such little opposition from those expected to oppose the bill, it is a certain conclusion that now is the time for passage of this new law.

Table 14

	Strongly Support	Somewhat Support	Overall Support	Oppose
Liberal	74.3%	22.9%	97.2%	2.8%
Moderate	68.8%	27.6%	96.4%	3.6%
Conservative	49.5%	36.2%	86.2%	13.8%

Thanks to the pollster we had several demographic groups upon which to compare levels of support. Support for a law was uniformly high regardless of group affiliation: 91% of men, 95% of women, 88% of 18 to 29 year olds, 94% of 30 to 49 year olds, 93% of 50 to 64 year olds, 94% of those with no college degree, 92% of college graduates, 93% of whites, 93% of African Americans, 99% of Hispanics, 93% of union workers, 93% of non-union workers, 93% of NASCAR fans, 90% LGBT people, 85% of tea party sympathizers, and 99% of occupy wall street sympathizers.

The phrasing of the prevalence question in this 2014 Survey, "repeated mistreatment: abusive conduct that is threatening, intimidating, humiliating, work sabotage or verbal abuse," is the definition used in the Healthy Workplace Bill (HWB). The HWB is the legislation that has been introduced in 26 states (as of the date of this Survey) but has not yet been enacted into law. The public that is aware of bullying believes it is time.

Causal Factors

41% believe bullying can be blamed on the perpetrator; differences among racial groups emerged

Two questions explored with varying levels of accuracy the public explanation for why bullying happens.

In the better of the two Survey items, we asked respondents to choose one primary factor or reason for the bullying.

Question: Which one factor is most responsible for abusive mistreatment at work?

Table 15

Potential Causes	Proportion	Percentage
Work related skill deficiencies of the target/victim	.0769	7%
Personality flaw of the target/victim	.1264	13%
Something about the target	.2033	20%
Work related skill deficiencies of the perpetrator	.1099	11%
Personality flaw of the perpetrator	.3004	30%
Something about the perpetrator	.4103	41%
Work conditions that encourage abusive conduct	.0824	8%
Perpetrators are not held accountable	.2015	20%
Something about the employer	.2839	28%
Society that supports aggression, abuse and humiliation	.1044	10%

There were four factors from which respondents could choose: two items centered on the target; two items about perpetrator characteristics; two items about the organization; and one item about our pro-aggression society.

Target and perpetrator factors are based on individuals' personalities and skills. A respondent who assigns the majority of responsibility to targets is blaming targets for their fate. Focusing on perpetrators blames bullies. Employer work conditions and the failure to stop bullying, allowing bullying to happen with impunity, hold organizations responsible. Employer responsibility is external to both target and perpetrator. At the broadest level, societal mores surrounding aggression and violence can be credited as the reason so much bullying happens in America.

The primary causal explanation chosen by respondents was the perpetrator (41%), specifically, the bad personality of the bully (30%). Respondents saw the employer with its bullying-prone work environment and failure to hold bullies accountable as the second best explanation (28%).

One-fifth of respondents hold targets responsible for their fate, while half of that number (10%) perceive society is to blame. This Survey question was the respondents' opportunity to blame victims, but only 20% chose to do so. The vast majority believed that factors outside the targets' control were responsible.

There were differences across the racial groups in which factors best explained the bullying (See Race and the Bullying Experience, page 9 for a fuller analysis). African Americans were the only group to assign a high percentage to society. Of all the racial groups Hispanics blamed targets the most. Perpetrators were blamed most by whites. Employers were blamed the most by Asian Americans and African Americans. The two groups with the highest "external" explanatory factor percentages were African Americans (62%) and Asian Americans (50%). Whites and Hispanics preferred "internal" personality factors to explain bullying (68% & 65%, respectively).

In terms of preventing or controlling bullying, the prospects of changing the personality of either the target or bully are dim. Change is more likely when organizational factors are redesigned.

The second Survey question asking respondents to allocate responsibility for bullying was less clearly written and focused than the previous question. We used the term "most worsened the workplace climate," which is a compound question and certainly confusing. The response options sorted into target-related factors, coworkers' reactions, and two types of management responses.

Question: Which factor most worsened the workplace climate for the bullied target, coworkers, and organization?

Table 16

Response Options	Proportion	Percentage
The targeted person's inability to defend herself or himself	.3326	33%
The target's decision to file a complaint	.1992	20%
Coworker reactions to incidents	.1807	18%
Human resources' response to the complaint	.1170	12%
High-level management's response	.1704	17%

The majority of respondents (53%) blame targets (mostly for their inability to defend themselves). There is research that suggests coworkers perceive bullied colleagues who are not seen fighting back, and therefore assumed to be incapable of doing so, somehow deserving to be bullied. It's a case of double condemnation – by the bully first, then by witnesses.

Survey respondents blamed coworkers in 18% of cases. Management, including HR, a management support department, was responsible in 29% of cases.

About Bullied Targets

Finally, we asked the American public what type of person is targeted for abusive mistreatment in the workplace. Though this was a short, not exhaustive, list of personality traits, the results are clear. Those who claimed to have been aware that workplace bullying happens, believe that the overwhelming majority of individuals targeted possess positive attributes.

That is, the same respondents who believed that targets are mostly incapable of defending themselves against bullying assaults believe targets are kind, cooperative and agreeable. Perhaps these same traits render the guileless person vulnerable to unpredictable attacks. This Survey does not provide a way to draw the causal link between the traits and targets' ability to defend themselves.

It is noteworthy that only 6% of targets are considered abusers themselves.

Question: Which personal style best describes the targeted person?

Table 17

Personality Style Choices	Proportion	Percentage
Compassionate & kind	.3723	37%
Cooperative	.1948	19%
Agreeable	.2229	22%
Aggressive	.1537	15%
Abusive	.0563	6%

Zogby Analytics Survey Methodology

The Workplace Bullying Institute commissioned Zogby Analytics to conduct an online survey of 1,000 adults in the US. All interviews were completed January 27 and 28, 2014. Using trusted interactive partner resources, thousands of adults were invited to participate in this interactive survey. Each invitation is password coded and secure so that one respondent can only access the survey one time.

Using information based on census data, voter registration figures, CIA fact books and exit polls, Zogby uses complex weighting techniques to best represent the demographics of the population being surveyed. Weighted variables may include age, race, gender, region, party, education, and religion.

Based on a confidence interval of 95%, the margin of error for 1,000 is +/- 3.2 percentage points. This means that all other things being equal, the identical survey repeated will have results within the margin of error 95 times out of 100. Subsets of the data have a larger margin of error than the whole data set. Additional factors can create error, such as question wording and question order.

One of the conventions used in Zogby surveys is to allow respondents a response option of "Not Sure." WBI chose to eliminate the "Not Sure" responses from the sample in all questions. Below are the sample characteristics.

Table 18

Sample Characteristics	Frequency	Valid Percent*
Sample size	1,000	100
Region		
East	220	22
South	260	26
Central/Great Lakes	300	30
West	220	22
Age		
18-29	220	22
30-49	360	36
50-64	250	25
65+	170	17
Race		
White	680	68
Hispanic	130	13
African American	120	12
Asian/Pacific	41	4.1
Other/mixed	29	2.9
Religion		
Catholic	260	26
Protestant	530	53
Jewish	30	3
Other/None (religion)	180	18
Respondent Gender		
Male	485	48.5
Female	515	51.5
Employment Status		
Working	532	53.6
Unemployed – Looking for work	63	6.3