

# Psychological and Social Support

Think of your workplace. Have you ever noticed a change in the way someone behaved? Perhaps they started coming in later... or maybe they were missing meetings or deadlines when normally they're on time with these types of things.

What did YOU do in that situation? Did you speak to them about what you saw? Maybe that person was YOU and maybe you were worried what others would think of you. Did YOU feel supported?

Let's look at an example. This is Eileen. Eileen has been a bit more quiet and keeping to herself lately. This is not typical of her. She has also been coming in late to work. Her supervisor, Marco, is becoming concerned about the changes he sees. Marco takes Eileen aside and says, "You don't seem to be yourself lately. How is everything going?". Eileen explains that her partner has recently been injured and can't work. She's been feeling anxious about her family and it's making her feel distracted at work. Since her partner is injured, she also has had double the responsibilities at home. Eileen now has to get her son to childcare before and after school, which is why she has been showing up late.

Her supervisor had no idea this was going on with Eileen. As a supervisor, he can thank her for explaining her situation, which will help him to support her better while still ensuring that she is able to keep her work on track.

When we talk about "psychological and social support" we are talking about the level of trust and connections that exist in a workplace. It also refers to the level of help and assistance provided by others while performing tasks.

As a supervisor there are many things you can do to support your staff. You can suggest workplace Employee Assistance Programs... or EAP... that can help during times of need. There are also other counseling services in the community that you can recommend. Other options include creating a "stay at work" plan that can accommodate your employee's needs.

As an employee, be sure to let your supervisor know that you are going through a difficult time. Even if you don't want to share details, letting them know that you require support or flexibility to get through a difficult time can be helpful. They might be able to give you the flexibility you need to get through a hard time.

So, what is ONE way that YOU can promote psychological and social support in your workplace TODAY?

Psychological and social support is one of 13 factors of psychological health and safety in the workplace.

Learn more at: [MentalHealthCommission.ca/NationalStandard](https://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/NationalStandard)

For more resources for your workplace, check out [haveTHATtalk.ca](https://www.haveTHATtalk.ca)

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