

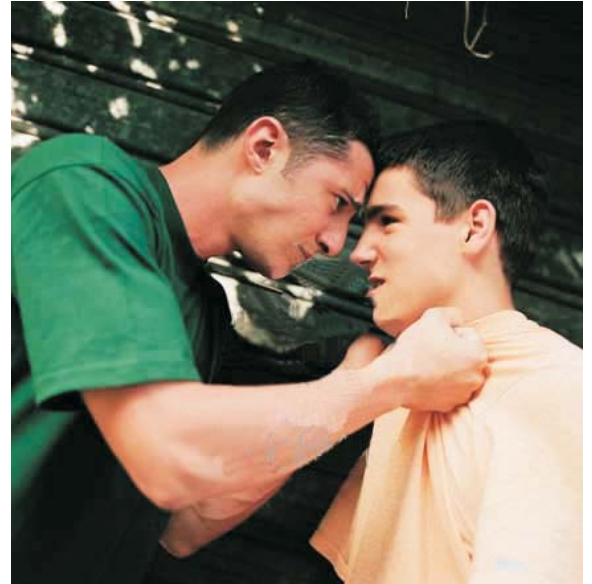
Preventing violence at work: Activities of the Berufsgenossenschaften in Germany

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Prevention, rehabilitation and disability pensions are the common responsibilities of the German institutions for statutory accident insurance and prevention – the Berufsgenossenschaften (BGs). These tasks include the prevention of work related health hazards. In this context workplace violence appears to become an increasing problem, which may be the case in the retail trade, in banks, in guard and security services, in hospitals, public passenger services as well as in restaurants for instance.

What is meant by „violence at work“?

The BGs agree to a large extent that by the term „violence at work“ verbal or physical attacks by external persons or colleagues is understood. Mobbing and verbal threatening are only included in the term of workplace violence to some extent, sexual harassment and discrimination are predominantly excluded.



Which measures for prevention of workplace violence are offered by the BGs?

Depending on the trade rather condition- or behaviour-oriented prevention measures are offered. Three examples are specified below:

BG for vehicle owners (BGF):

As a consequence out of several criminal attacks against **taxi drivers**, resulting in severe injuries, psycho trauma or even death, we began to train the ability of taxi drivers in de-escalation and conflict-management. Our aim was to demonstrate, how to avoid a physical conflict and that there is more advantage in using the chance for escape than in searching the struggle with the aggressor. Our experiences show that combining this topic with other themes of general concern, we can increase the interest in the workshop.

Institution for statutory accident insurance in the health and welfare service (BGW)

Handout

A great number of those insured by the BGW are concerned with the treatment, care for and nursing of older, chronically ill and handicapped patients. Within this target group the BGW has more recently observed an increase of injuries inflicted by patients and convalescents arising from heightened aggression, disorientation and other causes. This was the reason for the BGW to develop a workshop for the introduction of professional strategies dealing with aggression and de-escalation. The target group of the workshops are **multiplicators** (opinion leaders) who are supported by the seminar and strengthened, instilled with self-confidence in order to take the initiative to introduce methods of dealing with violence and aggression in their specific organisations.

BG Institute Work and Health:

Handout

This **non-branch-specific** seminar is focussed on improving human communication skills, especially in situations of conflicts with impending violence. Communicative skills and strategies of de-escalation will be imparted.