

PROJECT FACT SHEET

Workplace Violence: Policing, Nursing, and Teaching All Violent Jobs

Investigators: Stephen Perrott
Associate Professor of Psychology
Department of Psychology
Mount Saint Vincent University

Kevin Kelloway
Professor of Management
Professor of Management
Saint Mary's University



Two local researchers, Stephen Perrott and Kevin Kelloway, have conducted the first substantial study into workplace violence for police officers, nurses, and teachers. Their goal was to understand where workplace violence occurs — and their results are surprising.

The study consisted of in-depth surveys conducted with 189 police constables, 564 public school teachers, and 193 registered nurses in Nova Scotia. These professionals were asked extensive questions about their experiences with workplace violence.

Stephen Perrott Understandably, police officers were found to experience the highest level of violence and hostility from the public. Less expected were the high levels of hostility experienced by teachers and nurses. For example, nurses reported being hit while on the job as much as police officers.

“Our results suggested that nurses experience the least positive work environment of the three professions studied and that teachers experience the best,” said Dr. Kelloway, who is also a Professor of Management at Saint Mary’s University.

“We also found that inadequate staffing had a significant impact on the amount of hostility experienced in work environments,” he noted.

The study calls for initiatives that will reduce workplace violence by setting down strict rules for the public. A decline in public respect for professionals and institutions is partially to blame for increased workplace violence, and greater attention to protecting and defending employees in the case of client-initiated assaults is needed to improve the situation,” said Dr. Perrott.

Contact information:
Stephen B. Perrott
Mount Saint Vincent University
Phone:(902) 457.6337
Email :Stephen.Perrott@msvu.ca

