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## NSS Members

Watch out for a number of important consultations coming to your homes in December.

Are you a member?

Join the Scottish Health Care Branch at [www.unisonshcb.co.uk](http://www.unisonshcb.co.uk)

Visit the Branch website at [www.unisonshcb.co.uk](http://www.unisonshcb.co.uk) for up to date information about what is happening in your Branch.

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## Bullies making life hell for 1 in 3 young working women

"A senior colleague would hit me with a ruler when I made mistakes in my work. I did the same job as her, but was paid half as much, and put up with abuse on a daily basis."

This 26-year-old's case is common, according to shocking survey statistics to be revealed by UNISON and Company Magazine (Wednesday 14 October).

The UK's largest public sector union and the top leading young women's monthly are launching a Bully Busters campaign, as figures show more than a third of young women are suffering in silence.

Results revealed that 66 per cent of respondents bullied in the last six months say it is ongoing and that the most common bully is an older woman in a more senior professional position.

The majority of bullied women suffer from anger, mental stress, depression, lowered confidence and insomnia.

Around 80 per cent of respondents are



demanding that bullying legislation is put in place, to make it as serious as harassment.

UNISON and Company Magazine launch the Bully Busters campaign.

The Bully Busters campaign is calling for the government to revise the current Dignity in the Workplace bill to include an anti-bullying policy, which is enforced by employers.

Dave Prentis, UNISON's General Secretary, said:

"This shocking survey shows that the bullying and harassment of young women in the workplace is spiralling out of control. "More women are working now than ever before, yet one in three young women are victimised and suffer in silence.

# Public Works: A million voices for change

UNISON Scotland has launched its 'Public Works' campaign with the message that public service cuts will increase costs for ordinary families and will delay economic recovery.

'Public Works' is the Scottish arm of the union's 'Million Voices for Change' campaign. And branches and members need to play their part in getting the message over.

Matt Smith - UNISON's Scottish Secretary, said "A day in the life..." follows an average woman through her day and points out our dependence on public services - from water and sewerage, through environmental health and refuse collection, to education and health care.

"It points out that all of us rely on public services, not just the most vulnerable, for whom they can be a lifeline." What can you do?

Matt Smith added, "We are keen to involve members in this campaign. After all we are both the front-line providers of public services and the users of public services. Who knows their importance and their value better than us?"

"We are asking you all to

sign up individually to the "Million Voices" campaign at national level. We would also like you to tell us what you do in your job and why it is important. And tell us your own experiences of using public services - how they have supported you and your families." Why public services are so important

Affordable and value for money

Matt warned, "We need to get across the message that if these services are cut back or privatised the increased costs of paying for them individually can only increase the cost burden on hard-pressed families.

"We estimate the average household gets more than £10,000 a year in benefits and public services. Public delivery provides value for money through economies of scale and stopping shareholders taking profits out of the pot.

"A year's domestic waste collection sourced privately would cost around £2,500, and the average cost of a year's education outside the public sector in Scotland is around £8,200."

Important for the economy



"But it is not just that public services are essential for all of us. They also play a key part in the economic well-being of our communities. Cuts in public sector jobs, pay and pensions will only lead to less money being spent to stimulate the economy, and if public services were cut they would order and contract less with the private sector.

"Far from being the drain on the economy argued by those who created the economic crisis, the public sector contracts for supplies and services from the private sector - especially important when private industry faces reduced order books.

A just and fairer society

"In addition money spent in the economy by public service staff will not be there if we accept the advice of the right wing think tanks to cut jobs, pay and pensions.

# Bullies make life a living hell - continued

"Many people do not realise that a drip feed of bullying behaviour can be as devastating as a major incident.

"Serious mental and physical illness is a common result for those being bullied and this can have a damaging effect on these women for the rest of their lives.

"Our research has shown that bullying is accepted in many organisations – we need to change this attitude now.

"The recession has surely added to this problem and the cost to employers, to cover absence and replace trained staff, makes it clear that tackling bullying makes economic sense.

"UNISON is committed to banning the bully, as it is important for young women to know that joining a union, is crucial."

Company Editor, Victoria White, said:

"We at Company, the magazine for young UK women in their freedom years, were shocked by

the results of the survey which show one in three young women are being bullied at work.

"What's even worse is that the experts believe the credit crunch has made the situation even more rife.

"Company is proud to have teamed with UNISON to raise awareness of workplace bullying and to encourage young women to stand up for themselves and stop this kind of harassment going at work."

Sarah Lewis, 27, from London, who works as a Management Accountant at a hospital, said:

"My boss enjoyed having control and power over me.

"This included having to tell her when I was leaving the department on every occasion, including using the toilet.

"And when I requested annual leave she made it difficult and would wait until the last minute to approve it, which meant I had to pay more for my holidays.

"If I made an error, I was persecuted for it, I felt so helpless, as my every move was being watched and recorded.

"As a result of the bullying incidents I experienced, I decided to become a UNISON Branch Secretary to help others.

"The hospital has since changed its bullying and harassment policy to include better ways of dealing with bullying, like mediation.

"However, I think more needs to be done across all workplaces and I am backing the Bully Busters campaign to help stop other young women from suffering."

More information can be found on the UNISON website at [http://www.unison.org.uk/safety/pages\\_view.asp?di d=6076](http://www.unison.org.uk/safety/pages_view.asp?di d=6076)

If you need any advice on bullying in the workplace contact your local steward.

Duncan Service  
Communications Officer

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PUBLIC WORKS CONT  
Now is the time to build a fairer society based on social justice, good jobs and quality public services. It is up to all of us to highlight the

importance of public services and to get across the message that Public Works!"  
For more information visit the UNISON Scotland website at

<http://www.unison-scotland.org.uk/publicworks/index.html>

Duncan Service  
Communications Officer

## UNISON Welfare

For any of our members who don't already know, UNISON has a registered charity called UNISON Welfare. This service can assist members in a variety of ways.

Advice is available on serious debt issues. We can put you in touch with the relevant professionals in conjunction with UNISON to assist in the way forward. Financial assistance can also be given, where members meet the criteria for this.

Other issues such as domestic violence, bereavement, serious illness etc can also have a serious impact on UNISON members everyday lives, and UNISON Welfare may also be able to offer assistance in these areas.

Family holidays, and get well breaks are also granted. Once again, there is criteria that must be met to qualify, but unless you make an initial



enquiry, you may never know if you could have and applications are treated in the strictest of confidence between yourself, a caseworker in London, and myself, Tam Hiddleston, as your Branch Welfare Officer.

UNISON Welfare has a section on the Main UNISON website, where you can read more information on the services provided.

If you want a quiet chat with myself, feel free to e mail me at [welfare@unisonshcb.co.uk](mailto:welfare@unisonshcb.co.uk) or give me a call on 0787 546 2088.

<http://www.unison.org.uk/welfare/index.asp>

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