Increasingly, improper conduct enters the workplace and causes disruption. You may notice a range of disruptive behaviors in the workplace and academic setting, such as inappropriate and disrespectful actions, and even bullying or verbal threats. Safe at Hopkins has developed a proactive way to think about, talk about, and manage these behaviors. It is important to understand that concerning behaviors left unchecked can escalate into violence.

The time for taking action is well before the point at which violence occurs. If you sense something, say something! If you don’t, maybe no one else will.

You have a role to play in making Johns Hopkins a great and safe place to work.
Johns Hopkins Continuum of Disruptive Behaviors at Work

The Johns Hopkins Continuum of Disruptive Behaviors at Work has been developed to standardize the way we discuss, identify, and respond to concerning behaviors. The continuum includes eight categories of disruptive behaviors. Behaviors on the left side of the continuum are less severe and should be considered within the context of the work or academic environment. The behaviors on the right side are more severe and pose a greater risk of escalating into violence. The specific actions associated with each behavior have been seen in past risk assessment cases at Johns Hopkins. For a more complete description of the behaviors and associated actions, visit www.safeathopkins.org.

Prevent Disruptive Behavior from Escalating at Work

Everyone has a role to play in prevention. Familiarize yourself with these behaviors and the specific actions of each. Know your resources and take action if you have a concern. In the spirit of prevention, members of the Johns Hopkins community are urged to report all behaviors of concern and acts of violence. Visit www.safeathopkins.org/report for more details.

Johns Hopkins Continuum of Disruptive Behaviors at Work

Inappropriate Behavior is often seen as the way a person “broadcasts” him or herself. When inappropriate behavior is not managed, one may push the limits and become disruptive. Some specific actions include: making rude, loud, and off-colored remarks, telling degrading jokes, and swearing in public.

Disrespectful Behavior is more hostile than inappropriate behavior and is usually aimed directly at another person. Some specific actions include: criticizing or dismissing achievements, degrading others, and shouting.

Bullying: Johns Hopkins has defined workplace bullying as repeated mistreatment of a person that may result in harm to one’s health and that takes one or more of the following forms:

- Verbal abuse; offensive conduct/behaviors that are threatening, intimidating, or humiliating; or interference that prevents work from getting done.
- Mild Bullying includes the behaviors defined above which are aimed directly at another person. Some specific actions are denying access to necessary information, creating isolation, and giving the silent treatment.
- Moderate to Severe Bullying includes the behaviors of mild bullying with increased frequency and personalization of mistreatment. Some specific actions are starting gossip campaigns about a person's character, falsely accusing someone of errors, imposing impossible deadlines, and retaliating for perceived wrongs.
- Stalking involves individuals who harass, follow, or give unwanted attention and gifts. Specific actions include: a pattern of repeated unwanted, intrusive, and frightening communication by phone, email, text, or social media.

Domestic/Intimate Partner Violence occurs when one partner uses physical violence, intimidation, threats, or emotional, sexual, or economic abuse to control the other partner. Because the controlling partner can easily locate the victim at work, domestic violence can create a workplace safety concern.

Stated Threats express an emotional, sexual, psychological, or economic message of future danger. Specific actions include: a direct threat – I’m going to kill you; an indirect threat – I’m going to make sure that you get what you deserve; or a conditional threat – If he fires me, I will kill him.

Domestic Violence is any action that threatens the safety of employees, residents, students, or patients; impacts their physical or psychological well-being; or causes damage to the institutions’ property.

For a more complete description of the behaviors and associated actions, visit www.safeathopkins.org.