



rEAP the Benefits

State Employee Assistance Program 1-800-308-4934

Heat stroke is sneaky

Heat stroke is sneaky and the most serious of heat-related illnesses. Heat stroke occurs when the body is exposed to an excessive amount of heat and becomes unable to dissipate the heat through sweating. It can happen on a summer beach or in a hot, confined area. Symptoms include hot, dry skin; a rapid, strong pulse; and dizziness. When heat stroke happens, the body's temperature rises rapidly. The critical stage can arrive within minutes, and a 106° temperature is possible. If emergency treatment is not provided, death can ensue. Permanent disability is also possible. Protect yourself from the sun, stay hydrated, and don't sleep deeply on a hot summery beach! Myth: An open car window is enough to prevent heat stroke of a person or an animal in a hot car.

Teaching teens about debt

Help your children to grow up to be savvy about the hazards of debt and credit. Consider starting with keeping track of pocket change and learning lessons of managing a savings account. Be cautious, however, if you decide to co-endorse a debit or credit card. There is an explosion in teen-created debt, and only 26% of teens know how finance charges on credit cards work. Internet vendors are aware of this fact, making the teen market a key target for them. Note: Most teens still can't pass the National Financial Literacy Challenge, a 35-question financial competence exam offered by the U.S. Department of the Treasury at the recommendation of the President's Advisory Council on Financial Literacy. The average score for 2008 was only 48%, the lowest in its 10-year history.

Source: Jumpstartcoalition.org

Are your headaches from stuffing anger?

According to psychology researcher and migraine treatment expert Robert Nicholson, Ph.D., anger is more responsible for people's headaches than anxiety is. Anxiety, smells, and allergies are headache triggers, too, but anger management may be one of the least suggested treatment approaches for those who suffer from chronic headaches. Those who suppress anger may find new hope by examining their anger management skills. Admitting to an anger management issue is not an easy thing to do. Everyone must manage this human emotion. It's normal to get angry, but society doesn't treat it that way. That may explain why the approach is pursued less often than other treatments that may be less psychological in their origins. If you suffer from chronic headaches, consider examining your anger management style more closely. Your employee assistance professional or health care provider can provide an assessment or refer you to one.

Economic stress and child abuse

Prevention of child abuse is an important issue in any kind of economy, but when the economy slumps, the risk of child abuse goes up. Stressors such as unemployment and lost savings can contribute to the loss of patience with younger children. Could you use support to maintain your cool? Prevention can be as simple as learning to count to 10 or taking deep breaths to regain composure. Counseling can also prove valuable. Ask your EAP or professional counselor about available resources.

Disagreeing with the boss

Most bosses are willing to listen to different ideas offered by subordinates. You may have a different opinion, however, if your approach to disagreement with your boss gets in the way of having your idea accepted. If current struggles exist in your relationship with the boss, the following steps can still be effective, but self-awareness and self-discipline are the keys to making your approach work. 1) Mentally do a quick analysis of your disagreement. Does it have a clear rationale? 2) Since your goal is acceptance of the idea or a better way of doing something, avoid treating your boss like an opponent or launching into a declaration of your disagreement. 3) Ask for permission (e.g., "May I offer an idea for doing this differently?"). This is a negotiating skill that few employees master. It's not a demonstration of lack of assertiveness. It promotes interest by the listener, which is the pathway to acceptance. 4) Present your idea by sharing your thoughts and line of thinking and then present the conclusion or different approach, option, or way of solving the problem you believe is worth considering. Ask for your boss's reaction to your idea or suggestion. Notice how this approach to disagreement places importance on your desire for an effective relationship with your boss and ahead of your desire to gain acceptance for your opinion. This is what makes for a winning approach.

Are you a "see me" person?

Respect in the workplace takes on new meaning in a tough economy, especially since resigning to find another job may not be possible. Consider dropping some personal habits that have a disrespectful impact. Whether it is no longer dropping notes on a subordinate's desk that say only "See me!" (to avoid heart-pounding uncertainty about what it could possibly mean) or wiping spaghetti sauce splatters from inside the office's kitchen microwave, think about your effect on others and what you can do to improve workplace respect. We're all in this together, so team up to promote an environment in which effective relationships and camaraderie rule.

Sign of the times — stress and suicide

The economy is in bad shape from Wall Street to Main Street. Financial stresses come attached with significant psychological consequences. There is no question that the economic downturn is causing havoc with people's mental health. For most people economic woes alone are seldom enough to tip the scales toward suicide. However, for some it could be the last straw, the final huge problem that pushes them over the edge. A failing economy could conspire with existing problems and stresses. Stress is a huge factor in suicide and looming very large is stress related to the economy. Suicide can be a response to hard economic times especially if other stresses or problems are present. Consider what happened when the stock market fell in 1929. There was a rash of suicides, more than twice the rate we face today. There are many types of help and ways you can support someone who may be at risk of suicide. One way is to give the person the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline number (1-800-273-TALK). This number will connect them to the nearest crisis center where support and help are available. It could save a life. For more information about suicide and resources in Tennessee, go to the Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network's (TSPN) web page — www.tspn.org

Compulsive buying can be beat

Do you find shopping at the mall fun? Many people do. But do you find shopping and spending intensely exciting, and have you linked this activity to feelings of happiness or empowerment? Do you use shopping to change or improve your mood? These feelings can be so strong that a compulsive pattern can emerge for some people. Compulsive buying, an addiction-like behavior, is followed by feelings of anxiety, guilt, and stressful behavior, such as hiding purchases. Don't put off getting help if this sounds familiar. Stopping compulsive buying and getting your sanity back is not a simple willpower exercise. Don't let denial and embarrassment stand in your way of getting help. Contact your EAP or health care provider to learn more.