

FrontLine Employee

Wellness, Productivity & You!



UConn Health Center EAP 860-679-2877 or 800-852-4392

Schizophrenia Families on the Front Lines



Schizophrenia is a devastating illness affecting about 1 percent of the population. Along with this statistic is a larger percentage of affected family members who struggle to cope, wondering if a loved one will ever return to normal. Classic symptoms of schizophrenia include hallucinations, delusions, and severe thought disorder, but there are many others. If you have a newly diagnosed schizophrenic patient in your family, take advantage of education, training, and relationship management instructions available from mental health resources. Relapse and hospitalization of patients have been shown in some studies to be five times less frequent when their family members acquire effective relationship management skills. The EAP can lead you to sources of support in your community.

Suggested resource: www.schizophrenia.com.

Stay Active Live Longer



A health insurance company that specializes in insuring centenarians, conducted a survey of one hundred people over 100 years of age. They were asked what they believed to be the secret of living to 100. The common denominator appeared to be acting young and staying in touch with what was going on—keeping up with trends, technology, news, their faith, and activity that helped them stay connected to the larger world. There are 80,000 people in the United States over the age of 100. In thirty years, the figure is expected to be almost 600,000.

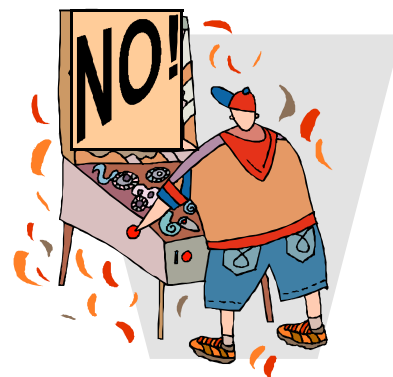
Source: 100 at 100 Survey, Evercare Health Insurance Company

Stress Tips from the Field Avoid Lunch at Your Desk



Seventy-five percent of us eat lunch at our desks two to three times a week, according to a study conducted by the American Dietetic Association. If you aren't using that time to get fresh air, move around, and take a stretch, chances are you are starving your body of socializing with others, sunlight, exercise, and better food than lunch in a cup. You will feel better about your job or at least manage your stress better by getting together with a coworker or friend and changing your lunch venue *today*.

Say Yes to Teaching Youth to Say "No"



A federally funded study of over 1500 Hispanic youths in New York City found that those teens with high assertive refusal skills and the ability to say "no" to drugs, alcohol, or tobacco fared better in remaining abstinent from those substances than their peers without such training. Even when these young people had older siblings who drank, smoked, or used drugs at home, the level of non-use was still lower. The lesson from the research is that children should continue to develop competencies in assertiveness in saying "no."

Source: Press Release, Weill Cornell Medical College, www.med.cornell.edu

What an Employer Wants



As graduation season arrives, it is helpful to take a look at what employers say they want from new hires. Here is a checklist that may not be in writing, but one an employer will surely have in mind during an interview if you are new to the workforce or moving up the ladder. *Initiative:* It's at the top of the list of desirables. Employers want new hires to have energy and aptitude displayed by a willingness to act without being told, complete assignments on time, spot the needs of the organization, and act in its best interests. *Work ethic:* Closely related to initiative is work ethic—behavior that demonstrates that you are not a clock-watcher. You will do what it takes to get the work done on time. *Personable:* Do you come across as friendly, mature, and dependable, with a strong character? Look your prospective employer in the eye when you shake hands or speak, or you risk losing some points in this area. *Personal development:* Do you seek continuing education to further develop your skills and abilities? *Quality of work:* Do you deliver above and beyond what's required, without errors and omissions? *Skilled communicator:* Do you speak clearly and listen well? *Leadership skills:* Do you have the ability to lead others and feel comfortable directing a larger group of people toward the completion of a common goal?

Virginia Tech and Secondary Trauma

It's well known that the impact of vivid news stories of extraordinary violence can have secondary trauma effects for viewers of television or listeners of radio. Being a victim of this vicarious trauma can cause some people not present at the event to experience symptoms of traumatic stress. Like the terrorist attacks of 9/11, the country is now reacting to a mind-boggling shooting massacre at Virginia Tech. If you experience frustrating personal reactions to this tragedy that linger, contact the EAP for support. A few of these symptoms may include sleep disturbances, visualization of the tragedy, lingering fear, concentration problems, feeling detached from others, and avoiding people, things, or places related to the event or that remind you of it.



Confronting a Coworker's Personal Habits

Poor hygiene, weird noises, and strange habits. Nothing beats the challenge of tactfully asking a coworker to change a personal habit or behavior that you find disagreeable. Avoid a larger conflict by asking yourself if the problematic behavior or issue is one that your coworker can control and whether your productivity is adversely affected by it. Consistently foul language or clipping fingernails near your desk can easily pass both of these screening questions, while some personal habits associated with appearance or even personal hygiene may not. Be discreet in your approach. With a multicultural workforce and the trend toward greater acceptance of differences, respectful communication is important. Conferring with your manager when you are in doubt, or perhaps with the EAP about your approach, is a good idea. Discuss the validity and importance of the issue, and whether you should confront it or accept it as just an inconvenience.



Tips for Team Leaders



Incorporate these frequently overlooked skills into your leadership style and you will build a stronger team with loyal followers. 1) Show your team members that you trust them highly. 2) Rather than viewing your team as a group of individuals to monitor, see them as a garden, with each member needing to be understood, nurtured, supported, and cultivated. 3) Consistently show up at team meetings on time and end them on time. 4) Be hard on problems, not on your team members. 5) Don't sit on need-to-know information. Pass it on quickly.