



The
Solutions
Group

Making Great Companies
Better Places to Work

Work & Well-being

December 2021

Managing Differences at Holiday Gatherings

It might be a challenge to safely host a holiday gathering this season—but if you do, look to CDC recommendations and follow local official guidance. Are you determined to curtail political talk in order to reduce conflict, especially among family members? If you believe the tension of political bickering will undermine the enjoyment of your event that you've worked so hard to arrange, consider these tips: 1) Speak with each of your guests separately beforehand and request a commitment to avoid political discussions. 2) Ask these same guests if they can play a monitoring role to help change the subject if conversations steer into a political realm. This turns each guest into both an ally and a gatekeeper. 3) Consider inviting a guest having difficulty following your rules to help with a task at your event that will occupy them in a different way.



Making Holiday Family Conversations Merrier

The annual Stress in America survey consistently reports strain among families caused by their ideological differences, and the holidays have a keen reputation for these conflicts, even at the dinner table. Try the following tips to help make your get-togethers a little merrier: 1) steer conversations that appear to be drifting into conflict toward those things you can agree on; 2) if you are angry about what's in the news, avoid displacing this tension onto loved ones; 3) challenge yourself to be a tension de-escalator, not an aggravator; and 4) rehearse how you might respond to conflict because doing so will dramatically improve your ability to act calmly while avoiding hair-trigger reflexes.



Yes, That's Emotional Abuse

Emotionally abusive relationships are full of confusion and denial for victims. Delays in seeking help are influenced by cycles of abuse followed by remorse, stigma and fear about leaving, damaged self-esteem, blaming yourself, questioning your sanity, and telling yourself, "Deep down he/she really is a good person (or doesn't mean it)." To get traction on change, examine an awareness checklist from an authority website like WomensHealth.gov. It will help you move along the decision path to reaching out for help, like the EAP.



Source: WomensHealth.gov [search "emotional abuse"]

Pandemic Pain and Young People

Teens need peer interaction and emotional validation to grow mentally healthy. So, isolation for teens during the pandemic is difficult. It's not just a drag, it's a risk issue because over one-third of teens periodically have suicidal thoughts. Not knowing when "normal" will return adds to their anxiety. As a parent, trust your gut. If your teenager demonstrates agitated behavior, moodiness, problems with self-motivation, disinterest in school, or is apathetic with unusual sleeping and eating patterns, talk to a professional counselor. A simple assessment may help identify a mental disorder and prevent self-harming behavior or even suicide. Call your EAP if you have concerns about your teen's well-being.

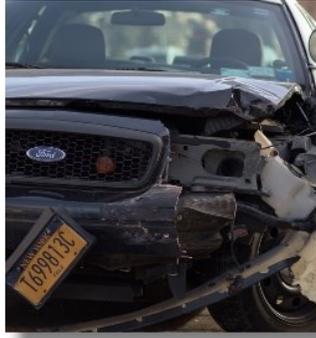


Work and Wellbeing is a monthly publication for employees and their family members

Call our toll-free number for 24 x 7 support: 1-866-254-3555

National Impaired Driving Awareness Month

Will you soon find yourself on the road trying to get home safely this holiday season? You'll of course want to avoid impaired drivers. Do you know the warning signs of a drunk driver? Spotting these signs—the same ones taught to law enforcement—could save your life. They include making turns too widely, veering to the side of the road, hugging the center line, almost hitting objects or other vehicles, driving on the wrong side of the road, driving too slowly, sudden stops without cause, braking erratically, not moving when the light turns green, illegal turns, and driving after dark with no headlights. So, what about your ability to resist drinking at a social event? Are you frequently prodded and elbowed by family or friends to cut back and avoid alcohol when you walk into a party? Social pressure can be a challenge for anyone. But is the inability to say no to a drink a symptom of an alcohol use disorder? Fifteen million Americans have this health condition, according to National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism. Alcohol use disorders are easily diagnosed, but overcoming denial and getting a five-minute assessment is not so easy. Still, don't wait for a crisis to motivate you to take this step. Talk to your EAP or a health provider. Within minutes you'll know what to do next, and you'll be given a plan to end the confusion and bewildering tussle you experience with drugs or alcohol.



Learn more: foundationsrecoverynetwork.com [search: "peer pressure drinking"]

The EAP Can Do That

Mental health might come to mind when you think about your employee assistance program, but this is only scratching the surface. There are numerous ways EAPs can help, so never dismiss the program as an avenue to resolve a problem you face. Ways EAPs help that are often overlooked: 1) Acting as a sounding board when you face a tough decision. 2) Help for deciding whether you need a professional counselor or a completely different type of resource. 3) Problem solving about how to help a friend who won't get help or admit they have a problem. 4) Guidance on handling a personality clash with a coworker or boss. 5) Help to rule out whether you are depressed, burnt out, or experiencing signs of any other condition.



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Happy Holidays from The Solutions Group

Helping a Loved One Cope with Chronic Pain

Over 40% of households have a family member who experiences chronic pain. However, when pain experts focus on helping victims, family members are often overlooked. Family members have a powerful role in helping, but they need support. Do you feel helpless not being able to comfort a family member in chronic pain? You are not alone. Frustration, stress, anxiety, depression, anger—and guilt for being angry—are common family experiences. Your household may feel toxic, cycling between conflict, isolation, and the inability to be an effective and willing support for your loved one. Read the insightful handout "Ten Tips for Communicating with a Person Suffering from Chronic Pain" at www.practicalpainmanagement.com/Handout.pdf. It hits every key point from how their pain affects you to communication, taking care of yourself, what you can do, reading nonverbal cues, and more. Talk with your EAP about your unique situation.



Learn more: www.practicalpainmanagement.com [search "family role impact"]

Alone, In a Relationship

Loneliness is a national health crisis experienced by one-third of the population across all generations. You are "hard wired" for close emotional connections. Without them, you can suffer high blood pressure, heart disease, obesity, a weakened immune system, anxiety, depression, and cognitive decline. Research shows the same negative effects can extend to couples who have grown apart emotionally due to unresolved marital or couple conflicts but who still live under the same roof. You don't have to live alone to be lonely. Exploring professional counseling to resolve couple conflicts that have lingered for years can be difficult, but reversing the effects on your health is new motivation for doing so.



Source: www.news.uga.edu/marital-conflict-causes-loneliness-health-problems