

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM NEWSLETTER



THE DOH/HRI EAP COMMITTEE ANNOUNCES ...

The EAP Committee is proud to announce the following newly appointed officers.

Kathie Bruso, a ... year veteran of the EAP Committee has been unanimously voted in and has accepted the position as EAP Chair. Charles Teuscher, an employee with the EPIC Program under OHIP and PEF Division 205 Steward has been voted in as Vice Chair, and Valerie Ridgeway a 23 year DOH employee and PEF Division 205 Secretary, has been voted in as Secretary. At an earlier meeting, upon

Dolores Wilson's retirement, Carol Bailey from HRI was voted in as Treasurer for the Committee.

Transitions will take place in June. We would like to thank our current officers for their service, Debra Hotaling, Chair, Barb Ryan, Vice-Chair and Kathie Bruso, Secretary and congratulate all of the newly appointed officers!

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The EAP Committee would like to Thank Dolores Wilson for her 17 years of dedicated service to the EAP Committee.

Congratulations on your Retirement!!



SPRING GARDENING TIPS

Follow the 5 tips outlined below for a welcoming garden that's filled with color and fragrance:

Order Tools and Plants

Tune up tools so everything is ready when things start growing. Make note of what is missing, and order tools for the new growing season. Choose new plants for the garden. Order perennials, trees, and shrubs for spring planting.

Prune Trees and Shrubs

Remove dead, damaged, and diseased branches from woody plants. Thin and trim summer-blooming shrubs such as butterfly bush, hydrangea, and most roses, except for old-fashioned once bloomers. Prune cold-damaged wood after plants resume spring growth. Prune spring-blooming shrubs and trees after flowering.

Prepare New Beds

Clear the planting area as soon as soil can be worked, removing sod or weeds and debris. Spread a 4-inch layer of compost or well-rotted manure and any amendments over soil, and cultivate it to a depth of 10 to 12 inches with a spading fork.

Plant

Plant bare-root trees, shrubs, and perennials such as hostas and daylilies by early spring. Choose a cool, cloudy day if possible. Transplant container-grown plants anytime during the growing season except midsummer; be sure to water them thoroughly. Sow seeds of cool-season flowers like sweet peas, poppies, and calendula, and vegetables such as lettuce, parsley, and spinach.

Fertilize

Apply balanced fertilizer (6-6-6 or 8-8-8), fish emulsion, or other soil amendments recommended by soil-test results around trees and shrubs when new growth appears. Spread high-acid fertilizer and pine-needle mulch around acid-loving shrubs like azaleas and camellias. Begin fertilizing perennials when active growth resumes.

*Adapted from <http://www.marthastewart.com/article/spring-gardening-tips>



DEALING WITH CONFLICT



Workplace conflicts naturally emerge from the incompatible or opposing needs, wishes, external demands, or perceived demands of others. Conflict between coworkers can be visible in the work environment or stay hidden from others. Conflicts frequently grow worse without resolution.

Myths about Workplace Conflict

Conflict is Bad: In the workplace, conflict is not inherently bad. It is usually a symptom, not a problem. It is a signal to do something to manage differences.

Conflict is Win-Lose: Conflict is often mistakenly viewed as an undesirable contest of wills and determination where one person wins and the other loses. This view reduces the potential benefits of conflict and can make it worse.

Only Bad Employees Cause Conflict: Difficult employees may contribute to conflict, but most workplace conflicts are between productive and dedicated employees. Problems in

resolving conflicts, and inadequate approaches to resolution, contribute to the belief that conflict must be a disciplinary matter.

Because conflicts have the potential of becoming crises, early intervention is important. Consider these two tips to conflict resolution:

Expect Conflicts: Decide that conflicts will occasionally emerge in the discourse of human relationships. Don't fear conflict, rather, learn to spot its symptoms early and see opportunity in the resolution of conflict.

Practice Preventative Maintenance: "Don't let a tree grow between you and a coworker." Practice talking about your relationship with your coworker. Avoid retreating to the safety of withdrawal, avoidance, or the simplistic view that your coworker is a "bad person." These are defense mechanisms that prevent the resolution of conflict.

**2008 EAP Tools

MAY IS NATIONAL PHYSICAL FITNESS & SPORTS MONTH

May is Physical Fitness and Sports Month, a perfect time to keep that promise to start a regular exercise program. Yet, it seems many Americans never quite take that first step. A progress report on *Healthy People 2000* goals released in mid-April claims that about 24 percent of Americans never exercise.

What are the benefits of a regular exercise program?

Breaking out of a sedentary lifestyle and making exercise a regular part of your life can have impressive benefits. It can increase the amount of blood your heart can pump, lower your heart rate when you are at rest, improve your cholesterol level, lower your blood pressure and reduce body fat. Regular exercise also can help you mentally by making it easier to manage stress, leaving you more energetic, making daily chores easier to accomplish, helping you sleep better and improving your self-image. The best part about these benefits is that they are accessible, to some degree, to almost any individual who builds exercise into his or her daily routine.

Regular exercise does not have to entail expensive fitness club dues or high-priced equipment to fill your spare bedroom. It can be as simple as walking. One expense you should afford yourself, however, is the correct shoe for your activity. Walking shoes should not be used for running; running shoes should not be used to play basketball or tennis.

How do I get started?

Before starting an exercise program, you should heed some basic principles:

- **Be sure to check with your physician.** Most people who wish to start a gradual, sensible exercise program do not need to see a doctor before they start. However, if you have a health problem like high blood pressure, if you have pains or pressure in the chest or shoulder area, if you tend to feel dizzy or faint, if you get very breathless after a mild workout, or if you are middle-aged or older and have not been active, check with your doctor first.
- **Choose an activity that you enjoy.** If you do not like what you are doing, you probably will not stick with your program. And remember, light activities, if done daily, can help you become more fit. Physical activity can be fit into your daily routine in small but important ways: take a walk at lunch or after dinner, use the stairs instead of the elevator, get off the bus one or two stops early and walk the rest of the way to your destination, park farther away from the store or office, ride a bike, work in the yard or garden, or go dancing.
- **Build variety into your program.** A program that includes several fitness activities--for example, weight training on Tuesdays and Thursdays, running on Mondays and Wednesdays, and swimming on Fridays and Sundays--will help maintain your interest and will help you exercise different muscle groups.

- **Train with regularity.** Fitness is cumulative. Increased strength and flexibility result from regular physical activity. Sporadic exercise, especially if intense, can result in injury.

- **Soreness from an intense workout should not last more than 24 hours.** If it does, you should re-examine how you are performing the activity and the intensity of your workout. Listen to your body; it will tell you if you are overdoing it.

- **More is not necessarily better.** Your body needs time to rest between workouts. Try to alternate between hard and easy workouts.

What phases make up a good workout?

Regular exercise has four phases:

- **Warming up** elevates your pulse slowly. Start at a fairly light pace and gradually increase it until you begin to perspire--about five to 10 minutes. A good warm-up will help prevent muscle strains and raise the internal body temperature, which makes muscles more flexible.

- **Stretching** improves the flexibility of your joints, making movement easier and injuries less likely. Stretches should be done slowly and without bouncing. Move until you can feel the muscle stretch but not to where you feel any pain. Hold the position for several seconds (10-20) and repeat three to five times. Stretch before and after you exercise.

- The **aerobic** phase is the most important part of your daily exercise routine because this is when you temporarily elevate your resting heart rate. This phase involves three factors. The **frequency** of your exercise program is an important factor. In order to improve your fitness level, you should try to exercise at least three times per week. The **length** of time you exercise is important. The body needs approximately 20 minutes to reach its fat-burning stage. (Individuals who are extremely out of shape and those who have cardiac or respiratory problems are exceptions to this rule and should start with shorter workouts. These people, especially those who are out of shape, may be able to gradually increase the length of their workouts.) The **intensity** of your workout is crucial and should be determined by your level of fitness. Your workout should increase the number of times your heart beats to about 60 percent to 80 percent of its maximum rate.

During **cool down**, you should reduce your pace slowly so that your heart rate and blood pressure decrease slowly. This is the final phase of your workout.

**<http://www.idph.state.il.us/public/hb/hbfitnes.htm>

R-E-S-P-E-C-T

Ask anyone in your workplace what treatment they most want at work. They will likely top their list with the desire to be treated with dignity and respect. Popular songs tout the need for respect.

Everybody needs a little respect. You know when you have respect. You know when you don't. But what is respect really? And, how is respect demonstrated at work? You can demonstrate respect with simple, yet powerful actions. These ideas will help you avoid needless, insensitive, unmeant disrespect, too.

Treat people with courtesy, politeness, and kindness.

Encourage coworkers to express opinions and ideas.

Listen to what others have to say before expressing your viewpoint. Never speak over, butt in, or cut off another person.

Use people's ideas to change or improve work. Let employees know you used their idea, or, better yet, encourage the person with the idea to implement the idea.

Never insult people, name call, disparage or put down people or their ideas.

Do not nit-pick, constantly criticize over little things, belittle, judge, demean or patronize. A series of seemingly trivial actions, added up over time, constitutes bullying.

Treat people the same no matter their race, religion, gender, size, age, or country of origin. Implement policies and procedures consistently so people feel that they are treated fairly and equally. Treating people differently can constitute harassment or a hostile work environment.

Include all coworkers in meetings, discussions, training, and events. While not every person can participate in every activity, do not marginalize, exclude or leave any one person out. Provide an equal opportunity for employees to participate in committees, task forces, or continuous improvement teams. Solicit volunteers and try to involve every volunteer.

Praise much more frequently than you criticize. Encourage praise and recognition from employee to employee as well as from the supervisor.

The golden rule does apply at work, or, as professional speaker Leslie Charles, says, "Implement the platinum rule: treat others as they wish to be treated."

There are many other ways to demonstrate respect at work. These ten constitute a solid foundation. Implemented consistently at work, these respectful actions help ensure a respectful, considerate, professional work place.

*http://humanresources.about.com/od/workrelationships/a/respect_quote.htm

"Every human being, of whatever origin, of whatever station, deserves respect. We must each respect others even as we respect ourselves." --Ralph Waldo Emerson

5 TIPS FOR PARENTS OF CHILDREN WITH AUTISM

As a result of her work with many families who deal so gracefully with the challenges of autism, Family Therapist, Kathryn Smerling, Ph.D., offers these five tips for parents:

Learn to be the best advocate you can be for your child. Be informed. Take advantage of all the services that are available to you in your community. You will meet practitioners and providers who can educate you and help you. You will gather great strength from the people you meet.

Don't push your feelings away. Talk about them. You may feel both ambivalent and angry. Those are emotions to be expected. It's OK to feel conflicting emotions. Try to direct your anger towards the disorder and not towards your loved ones. When you find yourself arguing with your spouse over an autism related issue, try to remember that this topic is painful for both of you; and be careful not to get mad at each other when it really is the autism that has you so upset and angry.

Try to have some semblance of an adult life. Be careful to not let autism consume every waking hour of your life. Spend quality time with your typically developing children and your spouse, and refrain from constantly talking about autism. Everyone in your family needs support, and to be happy despite the circumstances.

Appreciate the small victories your child may achieve. Love your child and take great pride in each small accomplishment. Focus on what they can do instead of making comparisons with a typically developing child. Love them for who they are rather than what they should be.

Get involved with the Autism community. Don't underestimate the power of "community". You may be the captain of your team, but you can't do everything yourself. Make friends with other parents who have children with autism. By meeting other parents you will have the support of families who understand your day to day challenges. Getting involved with autism advocacy is empowering and productive. You will be doing something for yourself as well as your child by being proactive.

*<http://www.autismspeaks.org/family/index.php>

Keep your eyes open for an informative Noon Hour discussion on Autism Spectrum Disorders.



Coordinators:

Lynn Keyes, CEAP
MMK01 Tower, Rm 1286
473-1408

Katie MacVeigh
KLM06 Frear Bldg, Troy
408-5444

Michael Walters
MRW02 Tower, Rm 1142
474-7633

DAI
Tuesdays 474-3274

Practical Help ...from people you trust

DISCLAIMER: Material presented in this newsletter is intended for educational or informational purposes only. It is not intended to replace the advice of your qualified health professional

Have an idea for the EAP Newsletter?

Please contact Katie MacVeigh at KLM06@health.state.ny.us if you would like to submit an article, or if you have an idea for a piece you would like to see.

COMMUNITY CORNER

You may not always think of DOH/HRI as a community, but here's some information that will make you think again.

In this first quarter of 2011, from January-March:

Donations of time have been requested for ten employees, resulting in a total of ____ donated hours! Hours given away by employees to their co-workers who need them.....for free!

____ appeals for office supplies and offers of "extras" have been posted on News on Notes. Here at DOH/HRI, we help each other!

News on Notes contained ____ notes of gratitude and appreciation ranging from thanks for support in times of trouble, to recognition of professionalism and friendship extended over a long career.

Sounds like a community, doesn't it? Let us know of other ways DOH/HRI employees build our community.

Submitted by Lynn Keyes, CEAP

EAP Committe

- Debra Hotaling
- Barbara Ryan
- Carol Bailey
- Kathie Bruso
- Andrew Elitzer
- Georgina Raus
- Jeanne Behr
- Colleen Driscoll
- Mark Yanulavich
- Nadia Thomas
- Sandy Draper
- Amy DeMarco
- Valerie Ridgeway
- Charles Teuscher

DID YOU KNOW?

Just as watching someone yawn can induce the behavior in yourself, recent evidence suggests that laughter is a social cue for mimicry. Hearing a laugh actually stimulates the brain region associated with facial movements. Mimicry plays an important role in social interaction. Cues like sneezing, laughing, crying, and yawning may be ways of creating strong social bonds within a group.



*www.livescience.com

5 TIPS TO A BETTER STATE OF MIND

- 1. Look on the Bright side**—Making a conscious effort to think optimistically or to hold on to compliments, may make a positive view more instinctive over time.
- 2. Be curious**—Take an interest in exploring and understanding your environment. By approaching ambiguous situations, you will be constantly growing and discovering new strengths.
- 3. Fake it**—Forcing yourself to be talkative and energetic for as little as ten minutes is enough to improve your mood.
- 4. Make a list**—Everyday for a week, write down everything that makes you smile.
- 5. Be kind**—Committing five acts of kindness a day can elicit feelings of what is called "helpers high" and significantly improve your mood.

*Capital District Psychiatric Center Newsletter



EAP Upcoming Events:

ALBANY

- 4/12—Deferred Compensation
- 4/14—Moment of Laughter Day
- April—Stress Awareness

TROY

- 4/14—Moment of Laughter Day—Frear Building; Saratoga Room
- 4/20—Recognize and Manage Stress—Hedley Building; 6th Floor
- Zumba Continues at the Frear Building

CAPITAL DISTRICT

- 4/13—Consumer's Guide to Arranging a Funeral—Menands