

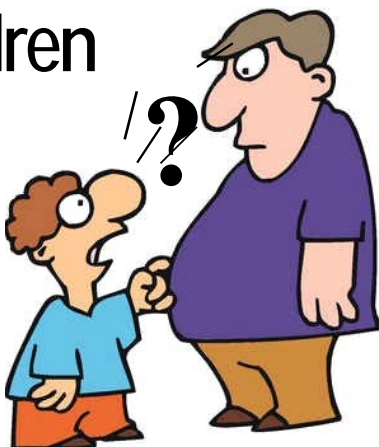
FrontLine Employee

Wellness, Productivity, and You!

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

Helping Children Get the Right Information

What are your young children hearing from peers about substance abuse, sexuality, reproduction, and other sensitive topics? It can be hard to know, but it is crucial to correct the misconceptions and falsehoods. To know how much needs correcting about all things great and small, start with this rule of thumb: If you are unsure if your child is too young to discuss certain topics, start by asking your child what he or she knows about those certain topics. Then simply base the scope and depth of your discussion on the answers provided. You'll quickly discover what Susie or Johnny knows, what needs correcting, and how much more information is required.



Workplace Harmony

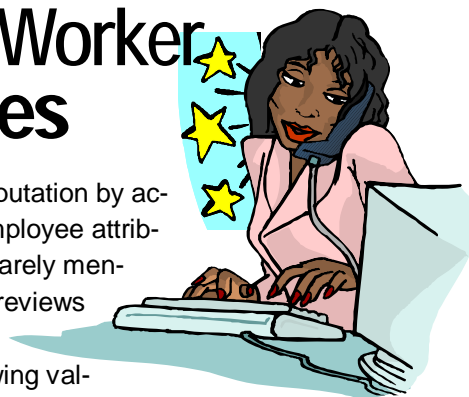
Respond Rather Than React

You have two ways of dealing with unpleasant interactions with others at work. You can "respond," or you can "react." Learn the difference between the two, and you'll experience fewer conflicts while having more control over everyday communication. You'll be happier and feel less exhausted when you go home. If you're a "reactor," it will take practice to make the shift to being a cool responder. Your goal is to remain in control of what you say so that your communication goals are met. With a reactive style of communication, you lose this control and risk becoming a victim of your own emotions.



Powerful Worker Attributes

Power up your reputation by acquiring prized employee attributes. Some are rarely mentioned in performance reviews or even found in writing. Examine the following valued attributes: 1) Viewing uncertainty as an exciting challenge; 2) Asking effective questions that develop better ideas; 3) Not being rattled when things are unclear and uncertain; 4) Seeking alternatives when roadblocks appear; 5) Knowing how to be constructively self-critical; 6) Being more likely to overcommunicate than under communicate; 7) Taking initiative—being a "plus 1" worker. See any new attributes for you to acquire or improve upon?

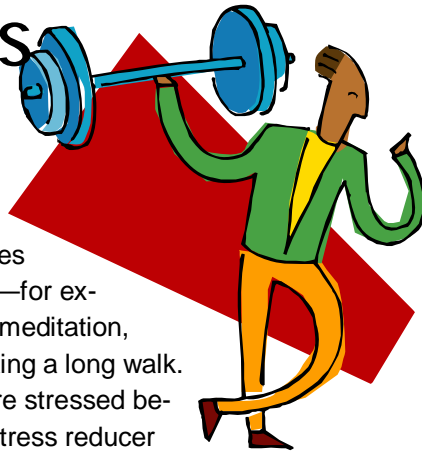


Furlough Stress and Unexpected Opportunities

Afurlough brings with it not only financial stress, but also opportunities. Revisit and retool your budget, fix cash flow by eliminating unnecessary expenses, sell some stuff, or even grab a part-time job. You may come out ahead financially despite the initial hit. Beyond money, focus on completing projects you've put off, spend time with family or friends, or tinker with a new hobby or recreational pursuit. Be cautious about unstructured time. It can prompt domestic quarrels, depression, substance abuse, or boredom for some. Don't hesitate to reach out for support, either from your company EAP or from other community resources.



Ultimate Stress Management: Resilience!



There are countless techniques to help you cope with stress—for example, breathing exercises, meditation, counting to 10, relaxation, and taking a long walk. Most of us wait until our senses are stressed before we take advantage of these stress reducer techniques. But there is another side to stress management—building resiliency. Its focus is your ability to withstand stress better and bounce back sooner from difficult situations or crises. The new awareness of resiliency's role in stress management is being pursued by the military in programmatic ways called resiliency initiatives. The idea is to reduce the climbing suicide rate among military personnel, but this is just one of its benefits. Make resiliency training a part of your personal stress management program. Consider any or all of these five areas of well-being: emotional, social, spiritual, family, and physical. Seek to develop strengths in these core areas of your personal being, and you will build resilience that allows you to weather stress, strain, and crisis better. This empowers you to return more quickly to a pre-stress or pre-crisis level of health and mental health. Learn more at <http://www.apa.org/helpcenter/road-resilience.aspx>.

Definition of a Designated Driver



The “designated driver” can be a lifesaver. This person is supposed to be the one in your group who elects not to drink.

Unfortunately, many people aren't following this safety principle. Instead, they are asking the person in the group who appears least affected by alcohol to do the driving. Have you done this? Researchers at the University of Florida found that 35 percent of designated drivers drank alcohol, and most had blood alcohol levels high enough to impair their driving. Picking the person to drive who appears least affected by alcohol is a faulty recruitment strategy. A person may still have a high blood alcohol level but not appear drunk—even if they drank more than their peers—due to nervous system tolerance to alcohol. Relying on a friend to do the driving because he or she appears to be unaffected by alcohol could put a person behind the wheel who has the highest blood alcohol level in your group! If you find yourself in this situation, the safest bet is to take a cab.

Protecting Yourself Against MERS

Avoid contracting Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS), which is caused by a mysterious and newly discovered contagious coronavirus originating in Saudi Arabia. It is spreading to Europe and is an aggressive illness with a high fatality rate. The CDC is declaring MERS its number one priority. No cases have been reported in the US yet, but that could change with contagion. To help prevent infection, wash your hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds, and help young children do the same. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze; then throw the tissue in the trash. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands. Avoid close contact, kissing, or sharing cups or eating utensils with sick people. Source: <http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/mers/index.html>.



Overcome Fear of Disciplining a Child



Parents are far less strict than they were decades ago.

Twenty-five percent of parents are afraid to discipline their children at all, according to one study published in 2010. The reason: fear of their child's reaction. Education and know-how may be all you need to change course. Increase your knowledge of effective child discipline and best practices by grabbing the long list of child discipline tips at the National Institutes of Health—<http://NIH.gov> (type “PMC2719514” in the search bar). You'll soon take back command of your ship with newfound confidence in managing difficult child behaviors. Parental discipline is both art and science, but with a commitment to a healthier family and some practice, you'll fast become the decisive mom or dad you want to be.