

FrontLine Employee

Wellness, Productivity, and You!

Alcohol Awareness Month: Dispelling Myths about Addiction



Myths and misconceptions

still fuel stigma about alcoholism (now called “alcohol use disorder” or AUD). Are you surprised by any of these myths? 1) “Only ‘heavy drinkers’ develop alcohol use disorders.” Fact: Moderate drinkers can experience health problems related to alcohol, such as liver disease, high blood pressure, and certain cancers. 2) “AUD is a choice.” Fact: People do make the choice to drink, but they do not choose to become addicted, which is a disease process. 3) “AUD only affects adults.” Fact: Teenage-only alcoholism treatment programs have existed for over 50 years. 4) “You can cure an AUD by going cold turkey.” Fact: Delayed withdrawal symptoms can occur weeks, months, or years after the last drink, and they often explain relapse

Dozing Off with Digital Media



Is your child falling asleep with technology aglow? Children’s eyes are not fully developed, and research shows their eyes are more sensitive to light than the eyes of adults are. This can affect the brain and disrupt circadian rhythms (the biological clock). Lack of sleep can contribute to excessive tiredness at the end of the school day, grade slippage, conduct problems, loss of interest in other pursuits, depression, and an increase in suicide risk. Make rules early on concerning the use of digital media. Doing so later won’t be as easy.

Source: www.colorado.edu [Search: “kids, sleep, digital media”]

Prove Your Productivity as a Hybrid Worker



Remote workers can be more challenging to support, but here is how you can worry less. 1) Set clear, measurable, gradable goals. 2) Communicate regularly to keep your employer informed with regular check-ins and status updates. 3) Track and document your progress to show your full effectiveness. 4) Be able to explain not just the amount of work you do but also the results you achieved. 5) Be proactive with opportunities to go above and beyond, but more important is knowing what “outstanding, invaluable work” means to your employer.

Tax Season. . . Help with Tax Questions



April is tax season, so here are a few free resources you may not know exist. And they are staffed by IRS-certified volunteers.

1) Volunteer Income Tax Assistance: Available if you make \$57,000 or less, have a disability, or have limited English language speaking skills. 1-800-906-9887, or visit IRS.gov. 2) Tax Counseling for Seniors. Free tax help for people aged 60 and older. Contact IRS.gov, or phone 1-800-906-9887. 3) NYS Free File: Visit tax.ny.gov/pit/efile for the details. 4) Check with your EAP, as well as other non-profits in your community, especially associations, churches, and libraries.

Repairing a Workplace Relationship



You've had an argument with a co-worker and feel the need to repair a rough patch in your relationship. How do you proceed? 1) Start with giving yourself a pat on your back. Someone needs to make the first move, so let it be you. When you're ruminating about the conflict, it can be challenging to focus on work, leading to a reduction in productivity and efficiency. Start with a statement such as "I want to talk with you about the other day." Next, take responsibility for your part in the disagreement. Apologize for words, actions, tonality, or nonverbal behaviors that caused discomfort. Say you want to move forward and listen completely to your co-worker's perspective. This active listening may help you grasp their point of view, but more importantly, it may encourage your co-worker to reciprocate. Focus the discussion on the things you both care about and are trying to achieve. Consider agreeing on how to handle conflict in the future and your relationship "protocols" for managing conflict. Here's a key thing about co-worker conflict: It might feel difficult to make the first move toward repair, but conflict left unresolved can create a toxic work environment, where tensions are high, and communication becomes even more strained. Hint: Don't let positive relationships at work "just happen." Instead, consciously build on them and nurture trust, and you will observe that they are more resilient under stress.

Absenteeism: #1 Cause Is Depression

Are you missing work for any of the following reasons? Lack of energy and motivation, making it challenging to get out of bed; not being able to concentrate at work, and feeling more exhausted if you try to do so; feelings of worthlessness or guilt, making you feel you aren't good enough to be at work; fatigue, headaches, or stomach issues that seem to zap your energy; or feeling so anxious and nervous about interacting with others that you stay home. Any of these may be related to depression. Talk to your Employee Assistance Program, a doctor, or another professional. An assessment takes only minutes, and there are helpful ways to get you back on the job. Depression is the #1 issue contributing to absenteeism, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control, and the behaviors above are the most common symptoms.



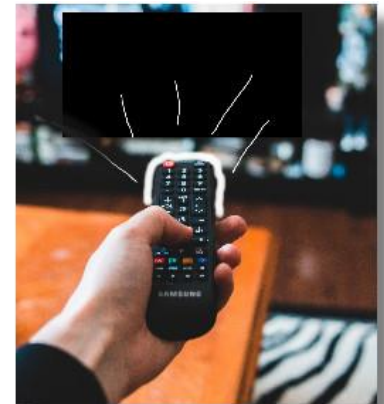
Stress Management Tips from the Field: Work Mistakes Happen

Big mistakes can cause panic to well up inside you. Don't panic; instead, manage them with a cool head. 1) Own up to your mistake. It is the fastest way to move forward toward finding a solution. 2) Apologize to those affected by the mistake because a sincere apology rebuilds trust. You'll discover a nearly universal truth that people want to forgive and move forward. 3) Understand why the mistake happened and take time to reflect on what went wrong so you can avoid it in the future. 4) Develop a plan to fix the mistake and rectify the situation. 5) Be visible in the process of implementing the solution, and others will observe and remember how committed you are to fixing mistakes and moving forward. 6) Move on. You've learned from the experience. Don't dwell on mistakes. Forgive yourself because your organization needs you back.



Should You Consume Less News?

Broadcast news can be distressful, but if it's causing too much unease, be more strategic about consumption. Set aside a specific time daily to catch up, but only to your limit of exposure. You'll avoid "doom scrolling"—behavior of frequently checking news. You'll feel more in control. Engage in mindfulness and meditation to reduce anxiety. Easily learned, these stress management techniques can quickly calm your mind and are powerful resilience tools for general stress management. Mindfulness involves the skill of focus, while meditation involves focusing on your breath or a mantra to help quiet your mind. Take the time to learn more about meditation and mindfulness practices.



WellNYS Everyday Monthly Webinar Create and Stick to a Budget



Wednesday, April 5, 2023
12:00 noon – 12:30 P.M.

A budget can take you from where you are,
to where you want to be with your finances.

Join us as we share a monthly budget that assigns every dollar
to a budget category which includes monthly bills, debt, savings,
giving and an allowance for you. After it's created, we will share how
to stick with it.

Presented by:

Linda Carignan-Everts
EAP Wellness Coordinator

To register for this webinar

Go to <https://meetny.webex.com/weblink/register/rf8d130897facbbcbcd112e38410aabf>



You will receive a confirmation email with instructions for joining the session. This session will be recorded and made available on the WellNYS Everyday website.



WellNYS Everyday

WellNYS Everyday is a wellness initiative dedicated to educating, engaging, and empowering New York State employees to choose to eat foods that are healthy for them and to be physically active. This initiative encourages employees to:

- Sign-up to receive the WellNYS Daily To-Do by email every day
- Run or walk your First or Next 5K
- Find out where to be physically active in New York State
- Celebrate your wellness success with “I Did It!”
- Engage in healthy behaviors while in your workplace
- Find a NYS Walking workplaces map
- Learn about Physical Activities in your region.

For more information go to:
oer.ny.gov/wellnys-everyday

WellNYS Everyday is sponsored by NYS Work-Life Services.

WellNYS Daily To-Do

April 2023

Create and Stick to a Budget

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

MONTHLY WELLNYS DAILY TO-DO'S

May

Choose an activity you enjoy to keep fit.

June

Start and end your day with a positive habit.

July

Go outside and enjoy nature in New York State.

- 1.** The monthly WellNYS Daily To-Do is to create and stick to a budget. Join us on Wednesday, April 5 at 12:00 noon for the wellness webinar, "Create and Stick to a Budget." Go to <https://meetny.webex.com/webink/register/rf8d130897facbbbcbcd112e38410aabf> for more information and to register.
- 2.** To set up a budget, start by writing down your take home pay then list all your expenses (rent/ mortgage, electric, cell phone, food, gas, debt, gifts, spending money). Establish a monthly budget, either electronically or on paper, and assign every dollar to a budget category. Track every expense daily, then review the budget during the last week before planning next month's budget. If you don't budget on a regular basis, it may take up to 90 days to adjust to it.
- 3.** Do you have consumer debt (car loans, lines of credit, personal loans)? Use the debt snowball by listing all debts lowest to highest, pay the minimum on all except the lowest debt then put as much money as you can to pay it off. Your excitement to pay off your debt will pick up speed like a snowball and you will be ready to conquer the next debt.
- 4.** One of the easiest ways to pay bills is to have them automatically paid directly out of your bank account. Your payment will always be on time and without incurring late fees.
- 5.** Food is likely one of the largest expenses in your monthly budget. Write down every grocery item and the associated cost. Be diligent about what you purchase and use. What is your weekly food budget amount?
- 6.** Are there any birthdays this month you need extra money for? If so, how much? Your friend's birthday may be this month and you'll need an additional \$50, whereas next month there may not be any birthdays. Remember to add this into your budget.
- 7.** Television subscriptions can add up quickly. What used to be one cable bill with one charge is now multiple charges of \$5 and \$10 subscriptions for channels. Are there any subscriptions that you can cancel to save dollars?
- 8.** Do you have savings accounts for holidays, future travel, automobile maintenance, and a new car? Instead of using a credit card or a loan for these expenses, budget a set amount of money every pay period in separate savings accounts. A small amount deposited each week will add up over time.
- 9.** Are you on the monthly budget plan for your electric and gas company? Utility bills are more expensive in the winter and summer than in the spring and fall. Call your company and get on their budget plan. This will help with budgeting as you can expect the same payment every month.
- 10.** Do you have \$1,000 emergency fund? If you don't, start by saving any extra money to set aside to be used only in case of an emergency (flat tire, washing machine breaks, etc.) If you use this money, replace it as soon as you can.
- 11.** Are you getting the best price for your cell phone service? Call today and ask the customer service representative for a review of your account and if they have a new plan to save money.
- 12.** Do you have any vices? How much do you spend every month on these vices? Can you go without for one week and see how much money it adds to your budget?
- 13.** If you spent all your entertainment money the first two weeks of the month, and a friend wants to spend \$200 on a concert, saying "no, I'm sorry I can't," might be a difficult thing to say but may be important. It's not forever, just not now.
- 14.** Do you need more money to pay off your debt? Head to the basement, closet, or garage and look for what you can sell. The stuff you no longer use may be another person's treasure and worth money. Use any of the marketplaces on social media to sell your goods.
- 15.** It's the 15th of April and the middle of the month. How are you doing sticking to your budget? Are you spending more than you budgeted for or are you on track?
- 16.** Sports and extra activities for children and adults can cost hundreds of dollars per month. Be realistic and ask the hard questions. Can your family's budget afford this at this time or is it stretching the budget too much? It's okay to say no, we cannot do this now.
- 17.** Every single day make it a habit to go online and check your checking account balances, deposits and withdrawals. Checking daily may remind you to stay within your budget.
- 18.** Today is Tax Day! File and pay your federal and state taxes by midnight tonight.
- 19.** To save money on groceries, shop around. Find the least expensive grocery store to get most of your items and get the specialty items at another store. What are your favorite and least expensive stores in your area?
- 20.** Do you have a store credit card? The average interest rate is 26.99%, which is an all-time high. When the cashier asks you if you'd like to sign up for their card, and save \$20, please say "no, thank you."
- 21.** It's Friday, and it's so easy to order pizza. The average price for one large pizza with one topping is \$22. Save money by making pizza at home. The costs: dough \$3, sauce \$3, cheese \$4, then add toppings that are already in your fridge and pantry. The cost of the home pizza is \$10. That's a savings of \$12 just for one pizza, \$24 for two pizzas.
- 22.** Do you have a budget accountability partner? Ask a friend or family member if you can check-in every month. If you live with your partner, as if they will be your accountability partner as well. Hold each other accountable for staying within your budget.
- 23.** Do you have any gift cards? Go out and spend them! It's free money. But remember, spend no more than the amount listed on the card.
- 24.** If you have ever ordered something, you are on a vendor's permanent email list. Are you ever tempted to just buy something because you received an email announcing a sale? If you are having trouble controlling your spending, maybe you want to unsubscribe to these emails.
- 25.** Are you an emotional spender? Before clicking on buy now, or bringing an item to the cashier, ask yourself, "Will buying this make me feel better or more fulfilled?" Take a deep breath and walk away from the transaction. Think about it for 24 hours, and if you really want and need it, go back to get it.
- 26.** Going out with friends to a restaurant is a quick way to spend \$100 and may bust your budget. Go for happy hour when drinks and food are less expensive. The \$100 just turned into \$40. That's a quick way to save an additional \$60.
- 27.** Budgeting puts you in control of your money instead of letting money control you. Budgeting gives you permission to spend. If you make it a habit to live within a budget, you will win with your finances. Have discussions with friends and family and ask if they use a budget.
- 28.** Be intentional with how you spend and save money. Remember the hours it took to earn this income. Your time is valuable.
- 29.** Look back on your April budget and ask yourself: What went well? Where did I spend more than I should of? What will I do differently in May? As you move forward throughout 2023, budget every month BEFORE the next month begins.
- 30.** If you created and stuck to a budget in April, congratulations! It's no small feat. If you didn't, the good news is you can start again tomorrow for May.

Number of days completed