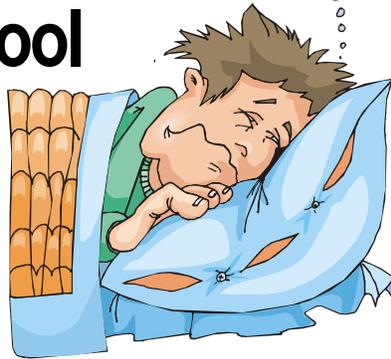




August 2012

## Back to School Wake-up Time



**S**chool's back in session. Will you struggle to get your teenager out of bed on time again this year? Your teen could be an award-winning, straight A student and this problem might still exist if you have unwittingly taken away responsibility for your teen getting up on time. Assuming no illness explains the behavior, turning this situation around can be tough, but the science is sure. To reverse course, face the fear, discuss the problem, and establish the "new order." The transition may be turbulent—anger at you, lateness, and grumpiness. Stick with it and self-discipline, improved self-esteem, independence, and life's most important skill will be learned. Say good-bye to lecturing, nagging, and screaming from the kitchen!

## How Do You Spell Relief? Checklists!



**P**lan a camping trip and you are likely to wonder whether you've forgotten something as soon as you hit the road. Eliminate stress by using checklists. The secret is creating your next list in real time as you plan and then saving it for the future. Interactive Checklists, at <http://www.interactivechecklist.com>, will help you produce any checklist free of charge. Whether you're planning a business function or a day hike, your activity checklist will help you plan and pack faster, be more creative about adding new "must haves" to your list, and help you have more fun.

## Is Your Second Job Getting in the Way?



**A** word of caution if you have a second job: your primary employer cares more about your primary job than your second one. Check your company's policy on moonlighting so you can avoid issues associated with conflicts of interest. Don't overestimate the hours you can work, and if a graveyard shift sounds inviting, know that it is difficult to feel fresh as a daisy when morning comes around. Hint: performance isn't just quality of work. It's also attitude, attendance, timeliness, availability, and conduct on the job. Now you can determine whether your second job is interfering with your first.

## Protecting Grandma from Medicare Scams



**L**ast year Medicare fraud cost the American government \$90 billion. Every state provides Medicare fraud protection information, and the federal government offers educational programs you can access at <http://www.stopmedicarefraud.gov>. Medicare does not sell anything, so if a salesperson phones to say he or she is from Medicare, assume it's fraud. Medicare personnel may call about other issues but won't ask for your Medicare number, because they already have it! If you go to <http://800notes.com> you can look up any phone number to check its history of potentially fraudulent activity.

## Keys to Helping a Friend

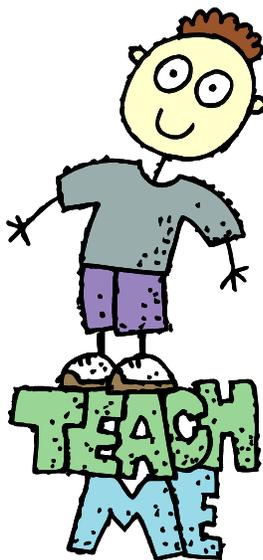


**A**re you seeing signs of denial in a friend with a personal problem requiring urgent action to resolve it? Personal problems with tough choices usually include denial.

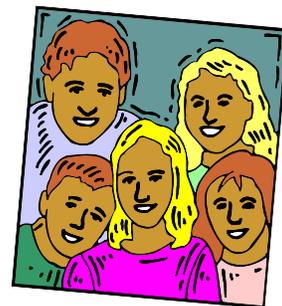
Others use minimization (your friend knows there's a problem but denies it's serious) or projection (they admit it is serious but say it's not their responsibility to deal with it). Absent a crisis, your friend simply isn't motivated to get help yet. Denial-laden personal problems include compulsive shopping, refusal to see a doctor, ignoring creditors, struggling with alcohol dependence, staying in an abusive relationship, and many more. Start by talking with your friend. Mention your concerns, but don't threaten or be aggressive. Key is stating your observations and their impact on you, loved ones, and your friend's life. Ask to help. Mention your obligation to support him or her as a friend. If you sense anger or defensiveness, remain calm and understanding. Rarely do friends part ways over honesty, at least not permanently. If needed, talk to an expert about the problem to get more pointers. This could be a counselor, an attorney, or even the police. Stay healthy, detached, and objective. Remember, your goal is to encourage the first action step toward help, not to "own" the problem of a friend who won't seek it.

## Teaching Life Skills to Kids

**F**amily vacations and fun summer trips provide the perfect venues to teach life skills to children. Planning, managing time, managing stress, budgeting, and thinking positive when things don't go according to plan are only a few of life's survival skills worth instilling in youngsters. Peak levels of excitement and anticipation are what produce the leverage that can help drive these skills home. Start with saving money for special fun experiences such as an extra ticket for a second ride on a roller coaster. Teach planning ahead and prioritizing when time does not permit participation in every activity available. Fill waiting time with constructive and satisfying activities. Give guidance on coping with disappointment by switching on positivity when an event is rained out. Give a lesson in budgeting the few remaining dollars for the rest of the trip, and on the way home review the life skills, offering praise for a job well done.



## Build Family Resilience and Thrive



**P**ersonal resilience means the ability to bounce back from adversity—tough times and tough events. Families can be resilient too. Seek to build resilience within your family and you can weather tough times and improve your chances of thriving despite it all. If you answer no to the following questions, consider how you can build these traits, each one of which reinforces the other. (1) Do individual family members feel confident in their abilities to cope with change? (2) Do family members not shy away from hard work? (3) Do family members demonstrate the ability to cooperate with one another, despite the minor squabbles most families experience? (4) When wronged, do family members forgive each other? (5) When stressful events happen, does your family adapt? (6) Do family members nurture one another? (7) Do family members stick up for one another? (8) Are family members open and honest with one another? (9) Does the family interact and build relationships within its community?

## Are You a Good Communicator?

**D**o you consider yourself a good communicator? Failing to communicate well can brand you like a bad credit rating within your organization. For better or worse, all of us judge others based upon how easy it is to communicate with them. Both speed of communication and clarity of communication count. To boost your "communication credit rating," reply to urgent emails urgently and acknowledge receipt of important communications or attachments, even if not requested to do so. Despite what time management books may say, never manage your personal stress by letting valid workplace emails be ignored because they appear to have no business or financial gain for you.



**For confidential counseling with a personal, work, or family problem, please call your**

**Ohio Employee Assistance Program  
at 1-800-221-6327 or 614-644-8545**