



March 2012

Teaching Children Stress Management Skills

Are children more stressed today than in years past? Tougher academics, more competition, social challenges, health risks, and rapid-fire audiovisual hype from media certainly appear greater. The uncertainty of a secure financial future is felt by 30% of children, says one research study. Coping isn't about eliminating stress.

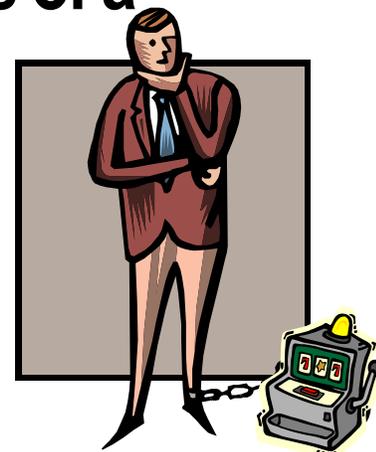
It's about learning resistance and adaptation skills. Exercises abound for teaching kids stress management, but cover these bases: Learn sleep skills, relaxation skills, detachment-from-worry skills, how to understand positive thinking, the benefits of proper diet and regular exercise, and how to pursue balance. Improved self-esteem, increased self-confidence, improved creativity, and healthier relationships with peers and family will result.

Source: <http://usat.ly/kidstress>



Earliest Signs of a Gambling Disorder

Most people have heard of compulsive gambling (gambling disorder), but do you know the earliest symptoms of this addiction? Legalized avenues for gambling are increasing nationally, so more people are likely to eventually be afflicted. Knowing the early signs can make intervention easier to stop the devastating condition. Reportedly, the earliest signs of the disorder are chasing losses, betting more than you can afford to lose, and feeling guilty about gambling. Sound familiar? Help is available. Start with your organization's employee assistance program or a professional counseling resource. See the official description of gambling disorder at bit.ly/gambling-problem.



Empty Nest Syndrome

Empy nest syndrome (ENS) is the term coined to describe the loneliness felt by parents or guardians when their children leave home. Marriage, heading off to college, and enlistment in the military are common experiences that precede ENS. Sadness, grief, ambivalence, fear, lost purpose, and facing aging add to the distress of empty nest syndrome. Empty nest syndrome is a normal life crisis. As such, it can represent a jumping-off point to more magnificent experiences if faced head-on. One popular resource recommended to empty nesters is "Letting Go: A Parents' Guide to Understanding the College Years." 5th Edition.



Saving Money on Autopilot

When saving money, go for the gain without the pain by using an automatic savings withdrawal arranged with your bank. The idea is simple and well proved. If you don't see the money, you won't spend it. Most people adapt to this "missing" amount instantly and discover it works like magic. To guess the likelihood of your success, examine unplanned and unnecessary purchases in the last 30 days. See any lattes, impulse buys from checkout lines, or expensive meals out? If so, you're a candidate for success!



Better Reflexes for Respectful Workplaces



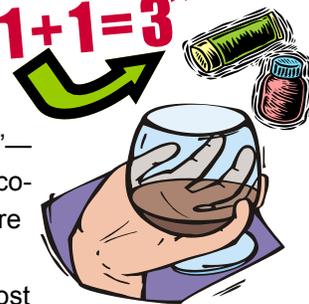
Are you ready to experience a more respectful workplace, to have coworkers speak more civilly to each other, and “quit playing defense” so you feel closer to others, supported, and happier coming to work? That may sound like a tall order if you’ve experienced persistent communication problems for a while. Still, you can make the switch to more positive communication. The key is interrupting your “defensive reflexes.” Use the following questions to increase empathy between you and your coworkers. You’ll build respect, add courtesy, make a positive impact, and walk away at the end of the day feeling better about communication, rather than fed up. Keep these questions in mind or handy in writing: 1) What is my coworker’s concern about this issue we are discussing right now? 2) What does my coworker need from me? 3) What’s behind his or her thinking? 4) What am I learning from my coworker’s viewpoint at this moment? 5) How can I contribute to this discussion or meet my coworker’s needs and move forward with our mutual goal? These questions reflect the positivity of functional teams and how they naturally interact. Your daily practice of them will lead you to more civil discourse and the job satisfaction you deserve.

Using Your Employee Assistance Program



Your employee assistance program offers confidential help for personal problems and concerns. The different types of problems an EAP could tackle are so varied that no brochure could ever catalog them. Concerned about a troubled family member who won’t get help? Want coaching to deal with a difficult workplace relationship? Feel tired and exhausted, but don’t know if it’s burnout, loss of motivation, depression, or all three? Living in financial fear? Can’t sleep? Late for work too often? Concerned about a teenager’s unusual behavior? Has use of alcohol or drugs created a crisis you are facing right now? The bottom line: Never wonder if your concern is suitable for the EAP. Assume the answer is yes. Extremely strict confidentiality laws govern the protection of EAP records. They have rare exceptions. So if you’ve been putting off taking action to solve a serious issue that is weighing on you, give the EAP a try.

Alcohol & “1+1=3” Depressants



It’s called “Hollywood death”—the fatal combined use of alcohol and sedative drugs. There are many types of prescription sedative drugs, but the ones most notoriously abused are benzodiazepines. They are used to treat anxiety, insomnia, panic attacks, and other conditions. Xanax, Ambien, and Valium are common name-brand benzodiazepines. Addiction to benzodiazepines creates a need to use more of the drug in order to obtain its effect. Drinking alcohol while using these drugs amplifies the drug and alcohol’s effect, represented by $1 + 1 = 3$. This creates the danger. Never drink alcohol when using sedative prescription medication. Follow your physician’s instructions. Read the cautionary information accompanying your prescription. Be especially careful if you have a family history of alcoholism, drug addiction, or pill addiction (sometimes referred to as “sedativism”). Your risk of acquiring tolerance to benzodiazepines may be greater and the drinking of alcohol even more dangerous as a result.

Spotting Opportunity When It Knocks



You’ve heard the saying “Opportunity knocks but once.” Opportunities are often situational and fleeting, so developing a mind-set for acting efficiently and missing fewer of them is a life skill to learn and teach others. Three filters or road-blocks thwart ability to see or seize opportunities: 1) fear of change, 2) “impossibility thinking,” and 3) a lack of anticipatory thinking that keeps you looking forward and on the look out for good things coming your way. These are habits of thinking you can overcome. Remove these filters that prevent spotting opportunities and you will be less inclined to view others’ fortune as “getting all the breaks,” having better luck, knowing the “right” people, or having the inside track.

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