

Agency Spot Light

By: Jean Becks, Public Information Section Manager

This month the OEAP is featuring the Ohio Department of Natural Resources. One of its many divisions is the State Parks, created October 7th 1949. The Ohio State Parks offers a variety of hiking trails and paths of all lengths and levels of difficulty. Many of these trails are perfect for a relaxing stroll or a brisk fitness walk, and some are multi-use trails shared with bicycles. A handful of trails feature paved or packed surfaces that are perfect for strollers, wheelchairs or other mobility aids. Here are a few recommendations for rewarding treks in each corner of the state:

- SE Ohio (Hocking County): cliffs, caves and waterfalls are your reward for your effort when you hike at Hocking Hills State Park and nearby nature preserves. The Ash Cave and Conkles Hollow gorge trails are level, wide and packed firmly to provide everyone access to these natural wonders.
- Central Ohio (Licking County): Blackhand Gorge State Nature Preserve offers a paved, 4-mile linear trail (8-mile round trip) for

woodland walking and bicycling.

- SW Ohio (Greene County): John Bryan State Park and neighboring Clifton Gorge State Nature Preserve are renowned for spring wildflowers. Nine miles of trails skirt the rim and the gorge of the cascading Little Miami River.
- NE Ohio (Stark County): Quail Hollow State Park's Nature for All Trail offers a multi-sensory experience on a paved path that links points of interest on the grounds and gardens of a historic family estate. Additional trails for hikers and mountain bikers weave through the park's 700-acre patchwork of woods and meadows.
- NW Ohio (Lucas County): Maumee Bay State Park's two-mile boardwalk trail along Lake Erie marshes promises interesting scenery and great birding near the park's nature center and lodge. Additional paved trails nearby are ideal for biking, skating, strollers and wheelchairs.

Visit our website at www.ohiostateparks.org, for more information about trails, overnight stays and all the fun the 75 state parks offer.

Walking: Trim your waistline, improve your health

Source: Mayo Clinic <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/walking/HQ01612>

Walking is a low-impact exercise with numerous health benefits.

Walking is a gentle, low-impact exercise that can ease you into a higher level of fitness and health. Walking is a form of exercise accessible to just about everybody. It's safe, simple and doesn't require practice. And the health benefits are many. Here's more about why walking is good for you, and how to get started with a walking program.



Benefits of walking

Walking, like other exercise, can help you achieve a number of important health benefits. Walking can help you:

- Lower low-density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol (the "bad" cholesterol)
- Raise high-density lipoprotein (HDL) cholesterol (the "good" cholesterol)
- Lower your blood pressure
- Reduce your risk of or manage type 2 diabetes
- Manage your weight
- Improve your mood
- Stay strong and fit

All it takes to reap these benefits is a routine of brisk walking. It doesn't get much simpler than that and you can forget the "no pain, no gain" talk. Research shows that regular brisk walks can reduce the risk of heart attack, by the same amount, as more vigorous exercise, such as jogging.

Getting started: Focus on the basics

As you get started, remember to:

Start slow and easy: If you're a seasoned walker, keep doing what

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April is Autism Awareness Month

Source: Autism Society



What is Autism?

Autism is a brain disorder that often makes it hard to communicate with and relate to others. With autism, the different areas of the brain fail to work together.

Most people with autism will always have some trouble relating to others. But early diagnosis and treatment have helped more and more people who have autism to reach their full potential.

What causes autism?

Autism tends to run in families, so experts think it may be something that you inherit. Scientists are trying to find out exactly which genes may be responsible for passing down autism in families. Other studies are looking at whether autism can be caused by other medical problems or by something in your child's surroundings.

False claims in the news have made some parents concerned about a link between autism and vaccines. But studies have found no link between vaccines and autism. It's important to make sure that your child gets all childhood vaccines. They

help keep your child from getting serious diseases that can cause harm or even death.

How can your family support a child with autism?

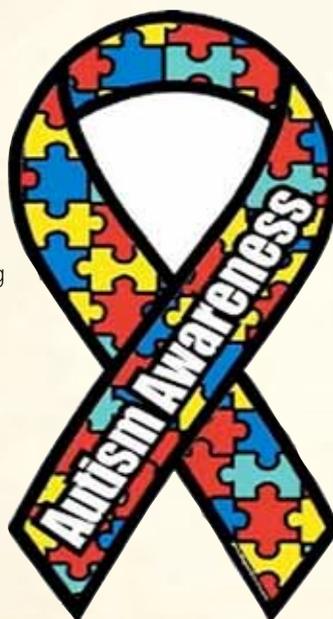
An important part of your child's treatment plan is making sure that other family members receive training about autism and how to manage symptoms. Training can reduce family stress and help your child function better. Some families need more help than others.

Take advantage of every kind of help you can find. Talk to your doctor about what kind of help is available where you live. Family, friends, public agencies and autism organizations are all possible resources.

Remember these tips:

- **Plan breaks.** The daily demands of caring for a child with autism can take their toll. Planned breaks will help the whole family.
- **Get extra help when your child gets older.** The teen years can be a very hard time for children with autism.
- **Get in touch with other families who have children with autism.** You can talk about your problems and share advice with people who will understand.

Raising a child with autism is hard work. But with support and training, your family can learn how to cope.



Disclaimer:

The Autism Society provides information but it does not constitute medical or legal information. Referrals provided are suggestions to organizations that might help, but do not constitute a recommendation. The Autism Society cannot be held responsible for consequences that arise from individual dealings with a professional or organization. The Autism Society provides an I & R service but individuals must assume personal responsibility for what they do with the information provided. Inclusion of any organization does not imply endorsement, and omission does not imply disapproval.

Manage Your Money: Facing Financial Troubles

Source: ©1999 Parlay International

Money problems can be as upsetting as they are commonplace. By understanding how money problems affect us and what we can do to prevent them, we can relieve unnecessary stress and help take control of our lives.



The Trouble with Money

Money problems can cause a range of emotional and physical problems such as divorce, illness or ulcers. Money means different things to different people. Ask yourself, "How important is money? What does it mean to me?" For most people, it's associated with power, success, happiness and self-esteem.

If creditors are breathing down your neck, it's easy to see that you're in trouble. But you can still be under "money stress" if you use too many credit cards too often, have no savings, or simply don't know your own financial situation.

Common Causes

A common problem is misuse of credit (especially credit cards). It's best to limit your monthly debt payments, aside from housing, to 20% or

less of your monthly take home pay. Instead of charging purchases, stay on the safe side by saving for them. Use credit for large purchases such as a car, that will last much longer than your payments on them.

Mismanaging money is another problem. Keep good records and make a budget, so you can see what you are able to spend on items such as entertainment, vacation or clothes. Set long term savings goals for items such as a home purchase or education for your children.

Crises such as divorce, fire, illness or layoffs can happen to anyone without warning. Protect yourself by having a three-month emergency fund at all times. Shop carefully for insurance which will meet your needs.

Where to Get Help

If you find yourself struggling financially, there are many confidential places to turn. At work, your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) or Human Resources (HR) may have information and advice. The phone book usually lists many other advisors. Look in the white pages under Consumer Credit Counseling, a non-profit organization. Or check in the government section for a city or county agency, family services, and Jewish Family Services. These organizations often provide free or low-cost financial counseling to anyone in need. They can make a big difference in your financial picture, now and in the future.

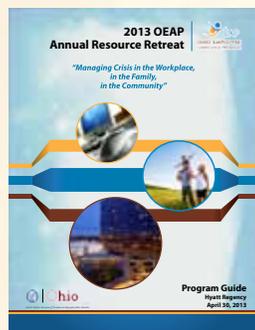
OEAP Focusing on Managing Crisis

By: OEAP Staff

The center of attention for this year's retreat is found in its thematic goal: Managing Crisis in the Workplace, in the Family, in the Community.

The day will be kicked off with words of insight from Tracy Plouck, Director of the Ohio Department of Mental Health. The event will continue as an informative and worthwhile opportunity for agency EAP Coordinators, Human Resources, Labor Relations and union representatives to network as well as learn more about current behavioral health trends.

Two fantastic speakers and experts in the field will inform and inspire the attendees! Keynote speaker Sheryl Clinger, Director of Advocacy/Policy and Community Engagement, The Center of Family Safety and Healing will be the featured speaker of the morning. Also, United Behavioral Health (UBH) will bring to the table one of its high level resources, Dr. Joe Hullett, the National Medical Director for the



Employer Market for Optum Health Specialty Networks, the nation's largest Managed Behavioral Healthcare Organization. Dr. Hullett will focus particularly on behavioral health and the workplace. Both will be joined by OEAP Assistant Director Ken Kirksey and the Ohio Department of Health's, Debra Seltzer on a much anticipated panel discussion on Abuse, Bullying and Violence in the Workplace.

Other thought provoking topics examined during this full day of learning will be: Pre-Incident Education, The Abuser at Work, Understanding Trauma and a special break-out session on Stopping Human Trafficking. A round-table discussion is scheduled to engage agency EAP Coordinators on those areas supervisors and employees seem to encounter the most, in the workplace, according to the recent OEAP survey.

Ken Kirksey states, "One of the most important reasons we hold the conference is to inform the agency OEAP Coordinators of the changing trends and the nature of our work so that we all are working together to meet the needs of state employees." For more information about the retreat, please contact Roderick Cheatham, Training Officer at (614)-644-0624 or email Roderick.Cheatham@odh.ohio.gov.

you're doing. If you've been inactive and tire easily, it's best to start slow and easy. At first, walk only as far or as fast as you find comfortable. If you can walk for only a few minutes, let that be your starting point. For example, you might try short daily sessions of five to 10 minutes and slowly build up to 15 minutes twice a week. Then, over several weeks' time, you can gradually work your way up to 30 to 60 minutes of walking most days each week.

As you walk, measure the intensity of your workout by checking your heart rate. Knowing your heart rate allows you to increase the intensity to maximize your workout or slow down to avoid overdoing it.

To find out if you're exercising within the range of your target heart rate, stop walking to check your pulse manually at your wrist (radial artery) or neck (carotid artery). Another option is to wear an electronic device that displays your heart rate.

Stay motivated

Starting a walking program takes initiative. Sticking with it takes commitment. But when you think of the potential health benefits, it's well worth your effort. Over time you'll likely feel more invigorated. To stay motivated:

- **Make it fun.** If you don't like walking alone, invite your spouse, partner, friend or neighbor to join you. You might also join a health club and use a treadmill.
- **Vary your routine.** Plan several different walking routes for variety. But if you're walking alone, be sure to tell someone which route you're taking.

Sometimes things happen to keep you from sticking to a regular walking program. Don't be too hard on yourself when this happens. You don't have to let a few days off sabotage your plan to reach a higher level of fitness and improved health. Just revisit your goals and get walking.

You'll be glad you started

Even though the first steps of any journey can be the most difficult, it helps to keep your goals foremost in your mind. So remember, once you take that first step, you're on the way to an important destination — better health.



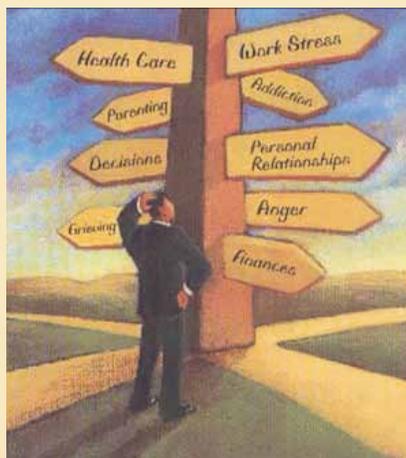
2013 OEAP Annual Resource Retreat

"Managing Crisis in the Workplace, in the Family, in the community"

The Ohio Employee Assistance Program (OEAP) will host its 2013 Annual Resource Retreat for agency EAP Coordinators from across the State. This exciting one day event is scheduled to take place on April 30, 2013 at the beautiful Hyatt Regency Downtown Columbus. This event provides an incredible opportunity for EAP Coordinators and managers to network, and learn about current behavioral health care trends, as well as gain new knowledge, skills and tools to be more effective. This year's retreat promises to be an unforgettable experience!



Your employee assistance program offers confidential help for personal problems and concerns. Concerned about a troubled family member who won't get help? Feel tired and exhausted, but don't know if it's burnout, loss of motivation, depression, or all three? Late for work too often? 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 OEAP. So, if you've been putting off taking action to solve a serious issue that is weighing on you, give the OEAP a call today.



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