

## *A Strong, Healthy Family Depends on a Parent's Guidance*

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Families come in all shapes and sizes: single-parent, blended families, multi-racial, multi-cultural, families where the father is the primary caretaker, families where the mother is the primary income source, domestic partnerships, or any number of other combinations. In fact, it's nearly impossible to define a "normal" family. Regardless of their makeup, healthy, strong families share certain attributes—attributes we can all use to improve the quality of our family life.

What makes a family strong and healthy? A family's strength depends on parenting in a way that fosters togetherness, love, respect for individual differences and an ability to adjust positively to stress or change. How a family functions and how family members care for each other are much more important than the form the family takes.

Still, healthy families share certain characteristics that are modeled by a parent's behavior:

- Communication
- Adaptability
- Clear responsibilities
- Shared time
- Shared spirituality
- Feeling part of a community
- Committing to each other

*A Strong, Healthy Family continued on page 4*

### NEWS YOU CAN USE:

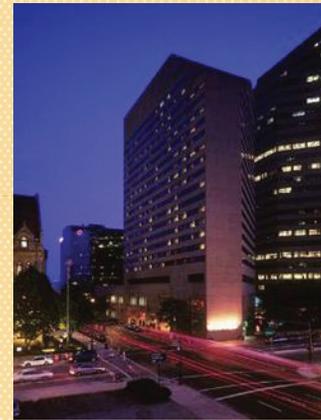
## **OEAP Transitions from ODH to new DAS Family**

Effective July 1, 2013, we are pleased to announce that the Ohio Employee Assistance Program (OEAP) has joined the Human Resource Division, Office of Benefits Administration Services (BAS). Authority was transferred in the State

Operating Budget Bill (Am. Sub. HB 59) from the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) to the Department of Administrative Services (DAS).

As an integrated statewide program, OEAP will be housed in the BAS. OEAP will remain a valuable resource to the State of Ohio workforce and will continue "helping and supporting you to live well and serve well."

OEAP will be relocated on August 5, 2013 to the Rhodes Tower, 30 E. Broad Street, 27th Floor, Columbus, Ohio.



## *Focus on the Family "Family Matters"*

*By liveandworkwell.com*

Families come in many different shapes and sizes, but the love, support and commitment that build a family are essentially the same. Whether you have a traditional or non-traditional family, improving your communication skills will always help.

# Summer Break

## Are You Ready for School to Start?

By © liveandworkwell.com

If you're like most families, preparation for a new school year is a mixture of anticipation and trepidation! Concerns and questions about new clothes, school supplies, new teacher and/or new school, new expectations and fitting in are probably on your child's as well as your mind. There are some things you and your child can do to ease the transition from summer to the new school year.

### Routines and Schedules:

- A week or so before school starts, begin waking your child at the time he or she will need to get started to be on time for school. Summer routines can get kids and parents out of practice. You can even rehearse your morning routines to see what will work best.
- The 'get-it-together' station: Establish an area to place things that need to go to school each day (books, lunches, papers, notes to/from the teacher). In families with more than one child, decorated cardboard boxes or folders marked with each child's name are handy receptacles for school papers.
- Lay out clothes that are to be worn the next day so no one is frantically trying to choose outfits or match socks three minutes before the bus comes or it's time to leave.
- The homework station: Establish a homework space with good lighting, a dictionary and other supplies. Keep this area away from the television or other distractions. Establish guidelines with your child about homework expectations.
- Make sure you have a large calendar for all activities and schedules. Post the monthly school schedule, including vacations, school closures and special events. Make a note of special family and work events. Post the calendar in a central area.



### Childcare and Safety:

- Do you need to plan for before and/or after school care? Is your child ready to stay home alone (some state have minimum age requirements for latchkey children—know what is legal before making any plans)? Many schools have on-site after school programs and many have before school provisions. Check early with your district regarding program availability and the enrollment process, as most have limited capacity. Lining up childcare now may save you having to 'settle' for a less desirable location or situation or no childcare options at all, later.
- Before your child returns to school or goes for the first time, make it a priority to teach them how to get to school safely whether by foot, bus, bike or car. Go over routes to/from school, safety precautions and what to do/who to contact in case of emergency or delay.
- If your child takes the bus, show your child where the bus stops and on the first day of school, make sure you introduce him/her to the bus driver. If your school district offers an orientation (which often includes a bus ride) take advantage of it. If possible, find a child in the neighborhood who is also taking the bus.

### School Supplies and First Day:

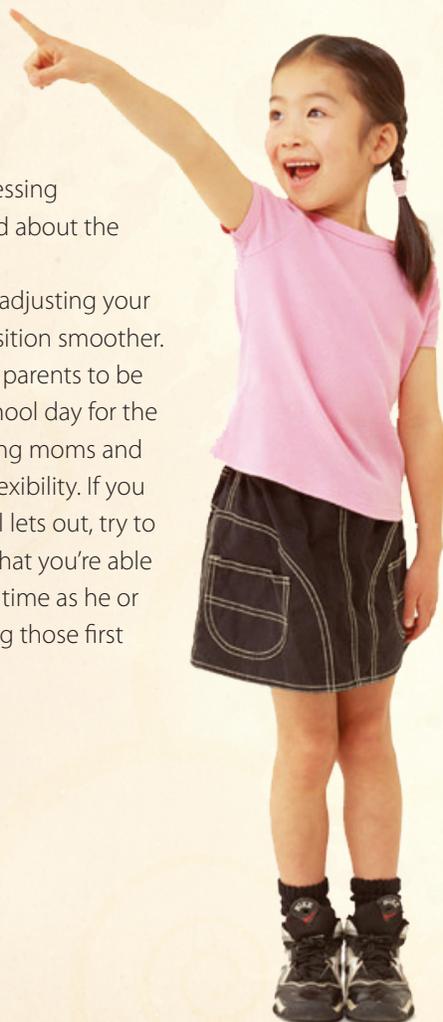
- Have you done your school supplies shopping? School supply lists are often found on the District or specific school websites, as well as posted in local stores. Have your child help shop and pre-pack school supplies in his/her backpack or special supply bag!
- Have you done your back to school clothing shopping? Now's the time to try on clothes and shoes to assess needs for the fall season. Has your child outgrown his existing school clothing? We all like to start a new job with something new and children are no different. A couple of new outfits will make a positive beginning to the new school year.
- Is your child familiar with the layout of the school, especially where the school office is located? Some schools offer a new/returning student orientation day and most schools post or mail class assignments a few days before the first day of school. If yours does not, you may want to make sure your child knows how to get to his/her new class or where to go to find out.

**School Requirements:**

- Have you made the necessary doctor’s appointments for required immunizations or pre-sports/activity checkups?
- If it’s a new school for your child, whether due to school level changes or to relocation, have you registered your child?
- If your child’s school has a dress code or uniforms, are you following the guidelines?

As with any new or potentially unsettling situation—be it starting school for the first time or entering a new grade or a new school—allow your child time to adjust. Remind your child that everyone feels a little nervous about the first day of school—even mom and dad and probably even the teacher—and that it will all become an everyday routine in no time. Emphasize the positive things about going back to school, such as hanging out with old friends, meeting new classmates, buying cool school supplies, and showing off the new fall duds (or snazzy accessories if your child has to wear a uniform).

It’s also important to talk to kids about specific worries and offer reassurance: Are they afraid they won’t make new friends or get along with their teachers? Is the thought of schoolwork stressing them out? Are they worried about the bully from last year? You may want to consider adjusting your schedule to make the transition smoother. It’s especially beneficial for parents to be home at the end of the school day for the first week. But many working moms and dads just don’t have that flexibility. If you can’t be there when school lets out, try to arrange your evenings so that you’re able to give your child as much time as he or she needs, especially during those first few days.



*Family Fun - Ohio Festivals*

07/09 - 07/15	<i>The Starwood Festival (Pomeroy)</i>
07/10 - 07/13	<i>Ohio Hills Folk Festival (Quaker City)</i>
07/11 - 07/13	<i>Crooksville Roseville Pottery Festival</i>
07/11 - 07/13	<i>Olde Canal Days Festival (Canal Fulton)</i>
07/11 - 07/14	<i>Rhythm and Ribs BBQ Festival (Carroll)</i>
07/12 - 07/13	<i>Cridersville Fireman's Jamboree</i>
07/12 - 07/13	<i>Shamrock Club Music Festival (Columbus)</i>
07/12 - 07/13	<i>MidUSA Ohio Challenge (Middletown)</i>
07/12 - 07/14	<i>Summit County Italian American Festival (Akron)</i>
07/12 - 07/14	<i>North Market Food and Wine Festival (Columbus)</i>
07/13 - 07/14	<i>Summer Festival of the Arts (Youngstown)</i>
07/12 - 07/13	<i>Westerville Music and Arts Festival</i>
07/12 - 07/21	<i>Zanesville Potter Festival</i>
07/14	<i>Blues Festival (Dayton)</i>
07/18 - 07/27	<i>Lancaster Festival</i>
07/19 - 07/20	<i>Johnny Appleseed Festival (Apple Creek)</i>
07/19 - 07/20	<i>Sweet Corn Festival (Mt. Gilead)</i>
07/19 - 07/21	<i>Islandfest (Kelleys Island)</i>
07/19 - 07/21	<i>Columbus Jazz and Rib Fest</i>
07/20	<i>Columbus Hungarian Festival</i>
07/20	<i>Fremont Art and Music Festival</i>
07/24 - 07/27	<i>Pickerington Violet Festival (Pickerington)</i>
07/26 - 07/27	<i>The Summer Market (Avon Lake)</i>
07/26 - 07/28	<i>Dayton Celtic Festival</i>
07/26 - 07/28	<i>Celina Lake Festival (Celina)</i>
07/27	<i>Serbian Festival (Columbus)</i>
07/27	<i>LKWD Music Festival (Lakewood)</i>
07/27 - 07/28	<i>Downtown Ashtabula Multi-Cultural Festival</i>
07/31 - 08/02	<i>Brats and Crafts Festival (Columbus)</i>
07/31 - 08/03	<i>Roy Rogers Festival (Portsmouth)</i>

# Coping with Mental Illness and Addiction in a Family Member

*A Strong, Healthy Family continued from page 1*

By © [liveandworkwell.com](http://liveandworkwell.com)

Many families struggle with mental illness and addiction in their homes. It is hard enough when a loved one is affected by one of these conditions, but when both are present it becomes especially challenging and can take a toll on any family. Here are some things you can do to help yourself and your family member:



## Helpful Strategies

- Learn all you can about both problems
- Get involved in the treatment planning
- Encourage your family member to stick with treatment
- Encourage your family member to take their medications as prescribed
- Don't sabotage your family member's progress
- If your family member is not in treatment, encourage them to seek professional help
- Do not tolerate violence or abuse
- Learn the warning signs of suicide
- Don't do it alone.

Communication, respect and acceptance are the building blocks of a healthy family. Also, a healthy family has clear limits, disciplines without using debilitating shame or guilt and maintains well defined boundaries.

Every family has stressful periods or times of conflict. As with all human relationships, there will to be disagreements or times when not everybody feels happy with a situation. Families that learn to resolve conflicts in a positive, supportive manner can turn such challenges into an opportunity for growth and cooperation. Every family member can meet ones needs without violating other family members' needs. This is called win-win. It doesn't mean there are no rules or no discipline. It does mean parents must be thoughtful rather than reactive, and parents must establish clear limits, as well as reasonable consequences for behavior. Also, win-win means that parents offer children choices, which promote cooperation and positive decision-making.

Here are some basic principles to remember, as a parent:

- Be consistent. Treat children with respect
- Do away with double standards
- Emphasize the positive. Be supportive
- Set children up for success
- Establish clear boundaries

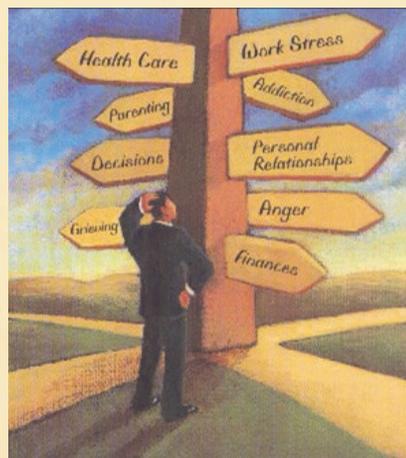
Having healthy family relationships also means that you take time for yourself and know your own limits. Assess your schedule and try to set aside time for rest and healthy activities.

Here are some suggestions:

- Set aside time for exercise.
- Plan for time alone with your spouse or significant other. Get a babysitter, if needed and go out, even if it's only for a few hours.
- Call for time out when you're under pressure. For example, say "I can't help you with that now. Let's do it at three o'clock."



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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