

Spot on Agency About DODD

Source: Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities

The Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD) is responsible for overseeing a statewide system of supports and services for people with developmental disabilities and their families.

The mission of DODD is continuous improvement of the quality of life for Ohio's citizens with developmental disabilities and their families. DODD wants families to experience lifestyles that provide opportunities for personal security, physical and emotional well-being, full community participation, productivity, and equal rights.

In Ohio, services for people with developmental disabilities are provided through a system of local, state and federal resources. DODD system supports approximately 90,000 citizens — providing services that assure individual health and safety, provide residential services and support, increase opportunities for meaningful employment and foster full and complete community inclusion and participation.

DODD's role is to provide leadership, oversight and funding for 88 county boards of developmental disabilities, thousands of certified agency and independent providers, and hundreds of licensed facilities. DODD and these entities collectively serve thousands of individuals and families throughout the state.

DODD maintains a Central Office in Columbus, where most of its administration, program management and leadership functions occur. Also, there are ten residential Developmental Centers throughout the state, which provide temporary residential placement and offer programs to teach skills needed for a move to a less intensive, more community-based setting. In addition, the Developmental Centers provide extensive outreach services to county boards and other providers, including case consultation and staff training.

Vital Vacations

Source: Parlay International

Periodic respites, with and without the kids, are a must in order to re-energize your life and your family relationships. This is especially true for families going through major transitions. For example, if you and your spouse are relatively new parents, consider taking a short vacation. Although you may exclaim, "I can't leave now," it may be the best time to spend a couple days with your spouse. It can help revitalize your relationship as well as give you time to reflect on the changes you are sharing.

If your children are old enough, it can be a real delight to take them with you — even on a long vacation. Family vacations strengthen relationships and provide a wealth of memories you can all share for years to come. You might first want to take them through a "trial run." Try a long day at a museum or an overnight outing to a friend's and see how they handle being away from home.

There are ways to create a little home on the road, too. For instance, if you plan a three-week trip somewhere, try setting up a home base in three different, strategic locations for a week's time each. You can then take day trips to surrounding sights and your children will have a familiar place to go home to at the end of the day. *Continued on Page 4*



Q&A on Stress for Adults:

How it affects your health and what you can do about it

Source: National Institute of Health

Stress — just the word may be enough to set your nerves on edge. Everyone feels stressed from time to time. Some people may cope with stress more effectively or recover from stressful events quicker than others. It's important to know your limits when it comes to stress to avoid more serious health effects.

What is stress?

Stress can be defined as the brain's response to any demand. Many things can trigger this response, including change. Changes can be positive or negative, as well as real or perceived. They may be recurring short-term or long-term and may include things like commuting to and from school or work every day, traveling for a yearly vacation or moving to another home. Changes can be mild and relatively harmless, such as winning a race, watching a scary movie or riding a rollercoaster. Some changes are major such as marriage or divorce, serious illness or a car accident. Other changes are extreme such as exposure to violence, which can lead to traumatic stress reactions.

How does stress affect the body?

Not all stress is bad. Animals have a stress response, which can be life-saving in some situations. The nerve chemicals and hormones released during such stressful times, prepares the animal to face a threat or flee to safety. When you face a dangerous situation, your pulse quickens, you breathe faster, your muscles tense, your brain uses more oxygen and increases activity — all functions aimed at survival. In the short term, it can even boost the immune system.

However, with chronic stress, those same nerve chemicals that are life-saving in short bursts can suppress functions that aren't needed for immediate survival. Your immunity is lowered and your digestive, excretory and reproductive systems stop working normally. Once the threat has passed, other body systems act to restore normal functioning. Problems can occur if the stress response goes on too long such as when the source of stress is constant or if the response continues after the danger has subsided.

How does stress affect your overall health?

There are at least three different types of stress, all of which carry physical and mental health risks:

- Routine stress related to the pressures of work, family and other daily responsibilities.



- Stress brought about by a sudden negative change such as losing a job, divorce or illness.
- Traumatic stress experienced in an event like a major accident, war, assault or a natural disaster where one may be seriously hurt or in danger of being killed.
- The body responds to each type of stress in similar ways. Different people may feel it in different ways. For example, some people experience mainly digestive symptoms, while others may have headaches, sleeplessness, depressed mood, anger and irritability. People under chronic stress are prone to more frequent and severe viral infections, such as the flu or common cold and vaccines such as the flu shot are less effective for them.

Of all the types of stress, changes in health from routine stress may be hardest to notice at first. Because the source of stress tends to be more constant than in cases of acute or traumatic stress, the body gets no clear signal to return to normal functioning. Over time, continued strain on your body from routine stress may lead to serious health problems, such as heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, depression, anxiety disorder and other illnesses. *Continued on Page 3*

How can I cope with stress?

The effects of stress tend to build up over time. Taking practical steps to maintain your health and outlook can reduce or prevent these effects. The following are some tips that may help you to cope with stress:

- Seek help from a qualified mental health care provider if you are overwhelmed, feel you cannot cope, have suicidal thoughts, or are using drugs or alcohol to cope.
- Get proper health care for existing or new health problems.
- Stay in touch with people who can provide emotional and other support. Ask for help from friends, family and community or religious organizations to reduce stress due to work burdens or family issues such as caring for a loved one.
- Recognize signs of your body's response to stress such as difficulty sleeping, increased alcohol and other substance use, being easily angered, feeling depressed and having low energy.
- Set priorities, decide what must get done and what can wait, and learn to say no to new tasks if they are putting you into overload.
- Note what you have accomplished at the end of the day, not what you have been unable to do.
- Avoid dwelling on problems. If you can't do this on your own, seek help from a qualified mental health professional who can guide you.
- Exercise regularly, just 30 minutes per day of gentle walking can help boost mood and reduce stress.
- Schedule regular times for healthy and relaxing activities.
- Explore stress — coping programs, which may incorporate meditation, yoga or other gentle exercises.

If you or someone you know is overwhelmed by stress, ask for help from a health professional. If you or someone close to you is in crisis, call the toll-free, 24-hour National Suicide Prevention on Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (1-800-273-8255).



Senior Health Exercise: Benefits of Exercise

Source: National Institute of Health

One of the Healthiest Things You Can Do

Like most people, you've probably heard that physical activity and exercise are good for you. In fact, being physically active on a regular basis is one of the healthiest things you can do for yourself. Studies have shown that exercise provides many health benefits and that older adults can gain a lot by staying physically active. Even moderate exercise and physical activity can improve the health of people who are frail or who have diseases that accompany aging.

Being physically active can also help you stay strong and fit enough to keep doing the things you like to do as you get older. Making exercise and physical activity a regular part of your life can improve your health and help you maintain your independence as you age.

Be as Active as Possible

Regular physical activity and exercise are important to the physical and mental health of almost everyone, including older adults. Staying physically active and exercising regularly can produce long-term health benefits and even improve health for some older people who already have diseases and disabilities. That's why health experts say that older adults should aim to be as active as possible. *Continued on Page 4*



If you really feel like just escaping with your spouse, do so. It's healthy for you to want to spend time alone together. You need not feel guilty about leaving youngsters behind. If you don't have a regular caregiver, have the person who will be responsible for the kids stay with you off and on for a couple of weeks prior to your departure. Your children will become accustomed to the new person, with the security of you being there. During this two-week period, leave for various lengths of time. Your children will eventually get used to the fact that when you leave, you will come back.

Vacations are designed for you to recharge your life, so you can give your best possible as a parent and an employee. Design your vacation to provide a relaxed and meaningful experience. Maybe this time it will be just the two of you and next time you can bring the kids.

OEAP Moves to DAS

As an integrated statewide program, OEAP is now housed in the Office of Benefits Administration Services. Effective August 1, 2013 OEAP is now located at the Rhodes Tower, 30 E. Broad Street, 27th Floor, Columbus, Ohio.

Being Inactive Can Be Risky

Although exercise and physical activity are among the healthiest things you can do for yourself, some older adults are reluctant to exercise. Some are afraid that exercise will be too hard or that physical activity will harm them. Others might think they have to join a gym or have special equipment. Yet, studies show that "taking it easy" is risky. For the most part, when older people lose their ability to do things on their own, it doesn't happen just because they've aged. It's usually because they're not active.

According to the U.S. Surgeon General's Report on Physical Activity and Health, inactive people are nearly twice as likely to develop heart disease as those who are more active. Lack of physical activity also can lead to more visits to the doctor, more hospitalizations and more use of medicines for a variety of illnesses.

Prevent or Delay Disease

Scientists have found that staying physically active and exercising regularly can help prevent or delay many diseases and disabilities. In some cases, exercise is an effective treatment for many chronic conditions. For example, studies show that people with arthritis, heart disease, or diabetes benefit from regular exercise. Exercise also helps people with high blood pressure, balance problems or difficulty walking.

Manage Stress, Improve Mood

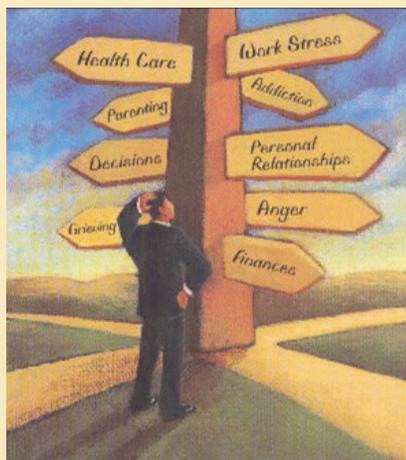
Regular, moderate physical activity can help manage stress and improve your mood. And, being active on a regular basis may help reduce feelings of depression. Also studies suggest that exercise can improve or maintain some aspects of cognitive function such as your ability to shift quickly between tasks, plan an activity and ignore irrelevant information.

Physical Activity or Exercise?

Some people may wonder what the difference is between physical activity and exercise. Physical activities are activities that get your body moving such as gardening, walking the dog and taking the stairs instead of the elevator. Exercise is a form of physical activity that is specifically planned, structured, and repetitive such as weight training, tai chi or an aerobics class. Including both in your life will provide you with health benefits that can help you feel better and enjoy life more as you age.



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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