



Employee Assistance Program
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FrontLine Employee

Wellness, Productivity, & You!

Know about Colorectal Cancer



If you don't smoke, what cancer presents the highest risk, even if you feel healthy as an ox? Answer: colorectal cancer (CRC). CRC is the leading cause of cancer deaths in the United States among nonsmokers. The good news is that CRC deaths are dropping because of education and the willingness of people to get screened for it. Nearly 50% of people between 50 and 75 years of age have not been screened for CRC. What about you? Don't procrastinate. Talk to your doctor or health care provider to learn about screening options, how early you should get screened, associated risk, and your next steps. Avoid being one of the 140,000 people diagnosed each year with CRC.

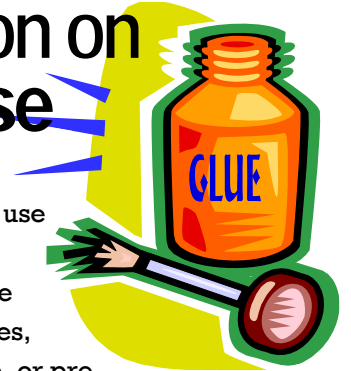
Binge Drinking and the College Brain



Could binge drinking and its effect on cognition be the cause of the surprising decline in the academic performance of your college student? The American Medical Association has compiled evidence that the brains of teenagers and young adults are more sensitive to the negative effects of alcohol from binge drinking than those of mature adults. The brain is still growing at this age, and researchers noted that young binge drinkers do worse on memory, learning, and thinking tests. Girls do worse on spatial relations and boys do worse on attention.

Source: American Medical Association's *Report on Alcohol's Adverse Effects on the Brains of Children, Adolescents, and College Students*, 2009.

New Information on Inhalant Abuse



Research shows that a 12-year-old will be more likely use an inhalant to get high or to feel good than any other substance except alcohol, including cigarettes, marijuana, hallucinogens, cocaine, or prescription drugs. This same pattern was found among both girls and boys. Inhalants are legal, everyday products—such as spray paints, glue, and gasoline—the vapors of which can be inhaled intentionally to get high. When they are used as inhalants, these substances can be dangerous or deadly. Some indicators of inhalant abuse may include hiding rags or empty containers of the abused products in one's room/closet, unusual bodily odors, dazed looks, or dizziness.

Source: *National Survey on Drug Use and Health*, 2010 and Consumer Product Safety Commission: *A Parent's Guide to Preventing Inhalant Abuse*, #389

Talking to Children about the Oil Spill Disaster



Like other national and international disasters that get significant media attention, the grief, loss, and change caused by the oil spill disaster can leave children feeling frightened, confused, and insecure. Children may experience personal consequences of the oil spill through their family or community, watch it on television, or overhear it being discussed by adults. Parents and educators can respond to emotional or physical reactions with the help of a new resource, "*Tips for Talking to Children and Youth About the Oil Spill*". Search and find it at www.Samsha.gov

*Source/Search: "Tips for Talking to Children and Youth About the Oil Spill Disaster", www.Samsha.gov

Dealing with Grief—Some Dos and Don'ts



Grief is painful, but it is a natural part of healing from loss. If you learned, while growing up, that feelings should not be shared, you may find grief additionally challenging. Not all grief involves the death of a loved one. You can experience grief from the loss of health; a teenager growing up and leaving home; a change in life status; no longer feeling safe after a violent incident; loss of possessions; or a change in environment, like a neighborhood you've moved away from. Grief doesn't come with instructions, but if it did, it might include the following: 1) Do talk about what you're feeling, even if it's hard to identify what you're feeling when you experience loss. 2) Do believe that it is OK to ask loved ones for help and support. 3) Do take care of your daily responsibilities so you do not later feel even more overwhelmed. 4) Do try to get regular exercise. 5) Do eat healthy foods and get plenty of sleep. 6) Do not use alcohol to manage emotions related to grief. 7) Do stick with your routine or get back to it soon. 8) Do consider postponing important decisions in the acute stages of grief. 9) Do believe that a professional counselor, even one without your personal grief experience, can be a source of support.

Just Do It: Explained!

You've heard of the "just do it" motivation technique. Most people do not understand that there are two parts to this simple "take action" strategy. Whether it's sticking to an exercise program or trying to clean out a messy garage, this technique can get you moving if you remember these two steps: 1) visualize yourself doing the task while simultaneously acting on it and, just as critical, 2) *avoid trying to "motivate" or "psych" yourself into wanting to do it.* Trying to motivate yourself undermines your goal. Why? It is difficult to overcome resistance to something your brain knows is inherently "painful". Instead, win over this resistance with success and feel motivated as a *result of* taking action. Use this strategy with your action goals and you'll find with practice that "just doing it" works.



Source: *Why Can't I Change*, available at www.thinkingthingsdone.com.

Tempted to Quit Your Job?



A lot of people have the impulse to quit their jobs

out of anger, but if the urge ever strikes in the heat of the moment, cool down by considering: 1) You're angry now, but will you be able to work with the people around you going forward? 2) Can your employee assistance program help you examine issues you are facing that are prompting a desire to quit? 3) What are the chances that things will change or can be changed for the better soon (i.e., the environment, coworkers, ability to handle the event that you are facing at this moment, etc.)? 4) Is this the job that can take you forward toward your goals? 5) What immediate needs does your job fill? Suddenly quitting a job is not like in a TV show. Almost always, the stakes are high if you quit and enter a pool of other job seekers while losing the potential of a positive reference. Consider your options. Avoid the emotional anguish, relationship stress at home, and the financial impact of suddenly leaving your employer, especially if you do not have another job lined up.

Exercise for Brawn and Brain

Exercise is not underrated, but it is undersold. Physical stamina, strength, and endurance are all known benefits of exercise. But what about increased mental acuity, building neuropathways, improved mental stamina, and improved cognitive functioning? It's all there. Research increasingly points to the benefits of exercise for improved brain functioning. If increased physical stamina alone isn't enough to get you moving and shaking, knowing that it may help you think better should give you second thoughts!



Source: Womenshealth.gov, Search: "Fitness Boosts Brain Power".