

May 2020

EAP NEWS

A worksite newsletter for employees provided by your Employee Assistance Program.



NEW! COVID-19 Action Center for Employees

To get guidance on COVID-19 related questions and assistance with challenges in your work and daily life, go to the COVID-19 Action Center at ibhworklife.com. The new site includes information on a range of topics such as the enhanced unemployment benefits, student loans, emotional wellness and more.

Challenges of Working Remotely

If you are new to working remotely, then you are discovering the challenges that come with it. The most frustrating are distractions. As soon as the last one is gone, the next one appears. To deal with distractions, rely less on willpower and more on strategies for each one. Start by keeping a list of distractions you notice. How many did you find or experience, such as dings from email, TV and radio, pet needs, social media, phone calls, text messages, wandering thoughts, and leftover pie that calls out to you? Next, decide on an intervention for each one. If you still struggle, try setting a kitchen timer for 10 to 15 minutes of solid chunks of work time that you blast through—then repeat.

Coping with Your Coronavirus Anxiety

As you make your way through the uncertainties of the new normal, knowing how to cope with feelings of anxiety will make you, the people you care about, and your community stronger. Anxiety often peaks and subsides in a few minutes and passes more quickly if you practice coping strategies regularly. The wellbeing website virusanxiety.com includes free resources and an app to help you care for your coronavirus anxiety and mental health in a global climate of uncertainty. You can ask an expert questions, listen to a mindfulness meditation, take a humor break, practice the daily mantra, or access links to current articles on COVID-19 related topics including parenting, resilience, isolation and financial fears.

Staying Active While Sheltering in Place

The coronavirus pandemic has closed gyms and shut down pools, community centers and other places where we're used to getting our exercise in. Staying fit and healthy while sheltering in place is still important and there are several ways to keep yourself accountable. Here are a few suggestions for staying active during the pandemic 1) Try a virtual "30 Day Challenge". Pair up with a friend virtually and join one of many challenges you can find online. There are challenges for everything from yoga to push-ups, designed to increase your fitness and instill a habit over the course of a month. 2) Head outside. This is the simplest way to get a solid cardio workout, and the sunlight and fresh air will help your mood, too. 3) Get into chores. Now's a great time to do those energy-intensive chores around the house that you've been putting off. Whatever you do, remember to do something. One of the most important things you can do for your health is to stand up, and move for 5 minutes of every hour you spend sitting in front of your computer.

Financial Planning and Support

As the number of unemployed workers continues to rise, and declining retail sales bring up worries about the nation's economic health, more Americans are feeling the effects of stress and anxiety about their financial futures than ever before. You or someone in your family may be working remotely, have reduced work hours, or be at risk of losing their job. As a parent or caretaker you may be unable to work or find yourself scrambling to find resources so you can continue working. The EAP can help. In addition to the online Financial Resource Center you also have access to no cost telephonic consultations with financial professionals and certified public accountants including unlimited telephonic counseling and 30 days of financial coaching. The EAP can help you take stock of your current financial situation and develop a road map to help you better prepare for the uncertainties of your financial future.

Coping with Grief and Loss

Those needing to attend or arrange funerals are facing extreme challenges because of social distancing and travel restrictions related to COVID-19. These circumstances can make grief and loss worse. Thoughtful and effective answers to almost every question imaginable about funerary services and COVID-19 can be found at www.rememberingalife.com, with new content posted by the National Funeral Directors Association. You will find the answers about communication, support, grief, overcoming long-distance challenges, funeral options, safe viewing professionals, planning, leveraging technology, holding multiple small ceremonies, and dozens of other issues.

Thinking About Your Drinking

Studies have found that alcohol consumption increases within 12 months following a major disaster, either man-made or natural. One way that people may choose to cope with stress is by turning to alcohol. Drinking may lead to positive feelings and relaxation, at least in the short term. Problems arise, however, when stress is ongoing and people continue to try and deal with its effects by drinking alcohol. Excess alcohol consumption can actually make you feel more stressed because it's a depressant. Signs of dependence may include anxiety, irritability, extreme mood swings, and drinking alone. Do you feel like your drinking is causing stress or affecting your home or work-life? If the answer is yes, it might be time to contact the EAP to speak with a mental health professional. Source: <https://www.drinkaware.co.uk/>

Support for Domestic Violence

Your home is supposed to be a place where you can feel safe and secure, where your troubles can be left outside, and where you can rest and recover. But for victims and survivors of domestic violence, including children exposed to it, being home may not be a safe option—and the unprecedented stress of the pandemic could breed unsafety in homes where violence may not have been an issue before. When your home becomes a place of fear because your spouse, partner, or child is in danger, your life can feel out-of-balance and filled with fear. Domestic violence occurs when someone controls a spouse, partner, or elderly relative through fear and intimidation. It can include both physical and emotional battering. Take a stand against domestic violence and seek professional help. The EAP includes no cost, confidential telephonic and video counseling sessions with qualified counselors. Source: <https://www.apa.org/>

(Future written communications may be in English only.)

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May Webinar



Identity Theft: What Can You Do About It?

As COVID-19 continues to impact the world, Americans are becoming increasingly aware of the risk of scams, fraud and identity theft that could occur during this time. In this webinar, you will learn what identity theft is and how to prevent it. What should you watch out for in your email? What about suspicious text messages? Learn the red flags. And know what to do if it happens to you.

Log-in any time this month to watch the webinar and ask the expert questions!



College Corner

Parents of high school sophomores & juniors... ATTENTION! If you're concerned about the cost of college and college-related debt, help is available.

May 1 is traditionally "decision day" for seniors. The day to "commit" to their college of choice, and send in their deposit (this year many schools have changed to June 1). Parents often now hit maximum stress levels, as paying for college becomes a reality. You can avoid (or lower) this stress!

Finding the maximum amount of free money is not an easy task. Last year, more than \$60 billion in free money was given directly to students from colleges.

Unfortunately, brand name recognition often impacts a family's decision. "Popular" schools don't have to lower (discount) the price, and won't. Your state school can't. A school that you have never heard of before can give your student a great education, without breaking the bank, or having to leverage yourself to pay for it.

Want the best education at the best price? Arrange your free 15 minute consultation, and see if the EAP College Planning Program is right for you. Go to <https://my.TimeTrade.Com/book/n62gh>. 15 minutes can save you tens of thousands of dollars. We can help lower existing debt too.

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