

YOUR! EAP Newsletter

Please send no personal E-mail to the EAP.

Arlington Public Schools & Arlington County Government Employee Assistance Program

Verbal Abuse That's Hard to Put Words To

Name-calling and shouted commands instead of simple requests are examples of verbal abuse. However, not all verbal abuse is easy to spot despite its damaging impact. Recognizing verbal abuse and learning a different response are the way to empowerment, confrontation, and change. Three examples of verbal abuse many people overlook include: 1) abuse disguised as a joke (a comment meant to be funny but that makes you feel put down and victimized); 2) "whack-a-mole" (every time you speak, you are cut off so only the abuser's opinion or statements are fully heard); 3) being reminded of the downside (when you share good news, the abuser replies negatively to undermine your joy).



Alcohol Use and Breast Cancer Risk

Dinking just one glass of wine or another alcoholic drink per day increases the risk of breast cancer, the American Institute on Cancer Research found after examining numerous studies. The finding has their highest level of confidence. However, vigorous exercise such as running or fast bicycling decreases the risk of both pre- and postmenopausal breast cancer. Strong evidence confirmed earlier findings that moderate exercise decreases the risk of postmenopausal breast cancer, which is the most common type of breast cancer.



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The EAP is conveniently located in the Marshall Building, 2847 Wilson Blvd, Arlington, VA 22201. If you wish to speak with an EAP professional, please call the main number **703-228-8720**, during business hours (7:00am – 5:00pm).

EAP Professional Staff

Tara Wooldridge, LCSW, CEAP, SPHR - Director	703-228-8721
Wes Sanchez, LSATP, CEAP	703-228-8725
Kathy Young, LCSW-C, CEAP	703-228-8727
Bobbie Jaeger Agee, LCSW, CSAC, CEAP	703-228-8729

Wellness/OSHA/DOT

Kim Chisolm	703-228-8728
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Danger of Drowsy Driving

Sleepy drivers with less than four hours of sleep are 11 times more likely to experience a car crash than drivers with 7 hours of sleep the night before. Twenty-one percent of all fatal highway crashes involve drowsy drivers. Drowsy driving reduces alertness and attention the same way as being drunk or texting does. Know the signs of drowsy driving. These include lane swerving, falling asleep while stopped in traffic or at a traffic light, sudden braking (when the driver realizes he/she has fallen asleep and awakens in fright), slow reaction time, and poor decision making. There are many ways to increase alertness, but the best way is to pull over and take a nap.



Fatigue and Productivity

Frequent fatigue affects one out of three workers. Overwork, multitasking, and workplace demands are the main culprits. Although work pressures can feel inescapable, the strain you experience from them combined with communication and information-sharing technology makes fatigue a major health issue for the modern workplace. Work-life boundaries blur, making it seem like work is endless. We are more likely to hear about a major contract closing in the middle of the night by text than at work the next day! Proper management and awareness of fatigue is a personal health responsibility in the modern era. Fatigue is not just feeling tired. You feel exhausted, slow, and lethargic. Fatigue can lead to cognitive errors, safety infractions and injury, coworker conflicts, a higher risk of depression, health problems, and negative impacts on children and families. Ironically, it is not work per se that creates fatigue; rather, it is *how* you work that creates fatigue. Fatigue builds with effort and decreases with rest. You can combat fatigue by working intensely in the morning, much more slowly in the middle of the day, and then intensely at the end of the day. Or simply plan breaks—go for a walk for a change of scenery or spend time in a quiet room. Don't just rest when you feel tired. Make rest a part of a healthier day.

For more information, visit <https://ideas.darden.virginia.edu> [search: give it a rest*].



Be Perceived as a Potential Leader

If you don't supervise others, you can still demonstrate leadership skills by practicing the work habits of good leaders: 1) Be genuine and praise others when they deserve it, making sure to articulate what they did well. This is a leadership skill that helps develop talent. 2) Have clear goals for what you want to achieve in your position. This demonstrates engagement with the organization. 3) Practice empathy to perceive others' needs, not just your own. Empathy shows that you value and invest in relationships. 4) Be a great listener and prove it by asking effective questions. Effective questions tend to be thought-provoking, solve problems faster, and show that you can listen, learn, and suspend judgment. 5) Practice positivity with an attitude that encourages others to also be upbeat and productive. 6) Identify outstanding traits in others and help them see them too. Practicing these skills may help you get tapped for a management position someday.



Don't Let Worry Wear You Out

“Worrying doesn't take away tomorrow's troubles, it takes away today's peace,” wrote composer Randy Armstrong. Worrying is part of our survival makeup; when we worry, we consider threats and how to respond to them. However, when worry chronically interferes with happiness, then it's time for an intervention. Don't accept worry as a disability, and don't be frustrated when you fail to block out what's worrisome. This suppression causes worry to linger in the background, making you feel half-present and weighed down during fun activities with loved ones or during pleasurable events, which then lose their luster and joy as a result. Seek help from counseling resources available through your EAP or use your health plan to obtain a referral for professional counseling. Help for excessive worry is a broad field of healthcare because it is a common issue. The good news is that many practical exercises, stop-worrying techniques, and educational tips are available to help you get your life back.



Managing Emotions

Not all employees remain calm and collected when faced with change, disappointments, loss of resources, serious delays, and major stressors. It's not always easy, but managing one's emotions can demonstrate maturity, self-control, and focus. It also helps prevent negativity from affecting others. For this reason, the ability to manage one's emotions in the workplace is considered a valued soft skill. To gain better control of your emotions, practice two principles: 1) catch yourself when you experience an emotional response to a difficult workplace incident; and 2) focus on the best way to respond to it to remain level-headed. If you are not familiar with staying focused in this way, just remember that it takes practice, but it works. Keep a diary, and you will be able to cultivate this skill faster.



Learn more at <http://knowledge.wharton.upenn.edu> [search: "emotions workplace"].