



THE EMPLOYEE ADVISORY SERVICE NEWSLETTER



STATE OF NEW JERSEY
CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

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September Employee Webinar

Managing the Stress of Change

Our constantly changing world creates stress and difficulty for most of us. This important session will provide several techniques designed to help individuals more effectively cope with, and adjust to, the changes in their lives. In addition, the presentation will cover strategies for increasing the overall resilience of the participants.

Thursday, September 14th
10:00 – 11:00 AM

Register here:

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/1658432256131159297>

About the Employee Advisory Service (EAS)

Life Can Be Hectic. EAS Can Help You Find Your Balance.

EAS is always available to you and your household members. If you are struggling with children, finances, or just want some practical advice on health or the mind-body connection, contact EAS by calling the Helpline. Counselors are available 24/7 to provide you with immediate care.

Take a Free Mental Health Screening

Stressed?

Take a free anonymous mental health screening at:

<http://screening.mentalhealthscreening.org/NJEAS>

Phone: 866-327-9133
Web: www.state.nj.us/csc
Email: EAS_help@csc.nj.gov

Top 10 Sleep Myths

Myth 1: Sleep is a time when your body and brain shut down for rest and relaxation.

No evidence shows that any major organ (including the brain) or regulatory system in the body shuts down during sleep. Some physiological processes actually become more active while you sleep. For example, secretion of certain hormones is boosted, and activity of the pathways in the brain needed for learning and memory is heightened.



Myth 2: Getting just 1 hour less of sleep per night than needed will not have any effect on your daytime functioning.

This lack of sleep may not make you noticeably sleepy during the day. But even slightly less sleep can affect your ability to think properly and respond quickly, and it can compromise your cardiovascular health and energy balance as well as the ability to fight infections, particularly if lack of sleep continues. If you consistently do not get enough sleep, eventually a sleep debt builds up that will make you excessively tired during the day.

Myth 3: Your body adjusts quickly to different sleep schedules.

Your biological clock makes you most alert during the daytime and most drowsy at night. Thus, even if you work the night shift, you will naturally feel sleepy when nighttime comes. Most people can reset their biological clock, but only by appropriately timed cues—and even then, by 1-2 hours per day at best. Consequently, it can take more than a week to adjust to a dramatically altered sleep/wake cycle, such as you encounter when traveling across several time zones or switching from working the day shift to the night shift.

Myth 4: People need less sleep as they get older.

Older people don't need less sleep, but they often get less sleep or find their sleep less refreshing. That's because as people age, they spend less time in the deep, restful stages of sleep and are more easily awakened. Older people are also more likely to have insomnia or other medical conditions that disrupt their sleep.

Myth 5: Extra sleep at night can cure you of problems with excessive daytime fatigue.

Not only is the quantity of sleep important but also the quality of sleep. Some people sleep 8 or 9 hours per night but don't feel well rested when they wake up, because the quality of their sleep is poor. A number of sleep disorders and other medical conditions affect the quality of sleep. Sleeping more won't alleviate the daytime sleepiness these disorders or conditions cause. However, many of these disorders or conditions can be treated effectively with changes in behavior or with medical therapies.

Myth 6: You can make up for lost sleep during the week by sleeping more on the weekends.

Although this sleeping pattern will help relieve part of a sleep debt, it will not completely make up for the lack of sleep. This pattern will not make up for impaired performance during the week because of not sleeping enough. Furthermore, sleeping later on the weekends can affect your biological clock so that it is much harder to go to sleep at the right time on Sunday nights and get up early on Monday mornings.

Myth 7: Naps are a waste of time.

Although naps do not substitute for a good night's sleep, they can be restorative and help counter some of the impaired performance that results from not getting enough sleep at night. Naps can actually help you learn how to do certain tasks quicker. But avoid taking naps later than 3:00 p.m., as late naps can interfere with your ability to fall asleep at night. Also, limit your naps to no longer than 1 hour, because longer naps will make it harder to wake up and get back in the swing of things. If you take frequent naps during the day, you may have a sleep disorder that should be treated.

Myth 8: Snoring is a normal part of sleep.

Snoring during sleep is common, particularly as a person gets older. Evidence is growing that snoring on a regular basis can make you sleepy during the day and more susceptible to diabetes and heart disease. In addition, some studies link frequent snoring to problem behavior and poorer school achievement in children. Loud, frequent snoring can also be a sign of sleep apnea, a serious sleep disorder that should be treated.

Myth 9: Children who don't get enough sleep at night will show signs of sleepiness during the day.

Unlike adults, children who don't get enough sleep at night typically become more active than normal during the day. They also show difficulty paying attention and behaving properly. Consequently, they may be misdiagnosed as having attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) .

Myth 10: The main cause of insomnia is worry.

Although worry or stress can cause a short bout of insomnia, a persistent inability to fall asleep or stay asleep at night can be caused by a number of other factors. Certain medications and sleep disorders can keep you up at night. Other common causes of insomnia are depression, anxiety disorders, asthma, arthritis, or other medical conditions with symptoms that become more troublesome at night. Some people who have chronic insomnia also appear to be more revved up than normal, so it is harder for them to fall asleep.

Source: Patlak, M. (2011, August). Top 10 sleep myths. In Your Guide to Healthy Sleep (National Institutes of Health [NIH] Publication No. 06-5271). Retrieved August 7, 2013, from the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute Web site at <http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov>

Suicide Warning Signs

The more warning signs, the greater the risk someone may be headed toward suicide, according to the NIH News in Health. Get help from a mental health professional or the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at (800) 273-TALK.

Warning signs –

- Talking about wanting to die
- Actively looking for a way to kill oneself
- Talking about feeling hopeless or having no purpose
- Talking about feeling trapped or in unbearable pain
- Talking about being a burden to others
- Abusing alcohol or drugs
- Acting anxious, agitated, or reckless
- Having sleep troubles
- Withdrawing or feeling isolated
- Having extreme mood swings
- Giving away belongings, including treasured objects

Health-e headlines™

How To: Help Aging Parents with Money Management

Are you in the sandwich generation? Those in the sandwich generation are caring for their own children while also assisting aging parents. This can be a financial stress on you, so it's important that you figure out a plan that helps both your parents and yourself. As with most important financial and personal situations, it's essential that you and your spouse be in agreement with how to assist your parents with money management.



Analyzing your parents' financial situation

When helping aging parents with their finances, the first step is to understand exactly what their current financial situation is. This discussion is easier if your parents live close to you, but regardless of their residence, talk to them about their finances in person. Understand what bills your parents currently have and whether they are being paid on time, as well as what their savings and revenues are. If everything is in order and your parents aren't overwhelmed taking care of things on their own, then you probably only need to check on them periodically.

However, if your parents are having financial difficulties, it's in your family's best interest to identify the problem and work toward a solution. Determine if the problem is with cash flow, or with the work required to actually pay the bills. These are two very different problems, with very different solutions.

When the problem is lacking the financial means

If your parents do not have the financial means to cover their bills, you'll have to consider some options, such as selling their home or taking out a reverse mortgage. There is also some financial assistance for seniors available. The National Council on Aging has set up a Website that offers information on benefits available to seniors. Look into all options before choosing the one that's best for your family.

When the problem is the work required to pay the bills

Your parents may have the financial means to cover their bills, but could have difficulty with the amount of organization and work required to pay their bills and manage their investments appropriately. In that case, you or another family member may want to consider taking over bill payments. You could set up automatic bill pay for most of the bills, and manually pay the others. For financial advice, consider hiring a personal financial planner.

Regardless of the current situation and solution, you or another family member need to continually assess your parents' financial standing, as it could change even in a short period of time. Keeping the lines of communication open is the best way to ensure you help manage their situation, and avoid any financial penalties from late payments.

About Money Management International

Money Management International (MMI) is a nonprofit, full-service credit-counseling agency, providing confidential financial guidance, financial education, counseling and debt management assistance to consumers since 1958. MMI helps consumers trim their expenses, develop a spending plan and repay debts. Counseling is available by appointment in branch offices and 24/7 by telephone and Internet. Services are available in English or Spanish. To learn more, call 800.432.7310 or visit www.MoneyManagement.org.