



## What Your EAP Can Do for You

Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) are one of the most effective ways to identify and address personal problems. Companies use EAPs because it makes good business sense—healthier, happier employees are more productive and reliable. In this way, EAPs enhance and enrich the organization by promoting the health and well-being of all employees and their families.

### How do EAPs work?

EAPs are confidential, multifaceted counseling, education, and referral programs designed to help with personal problems, particularly those that affect job performance, including:

- Stress
- Parenting problems
- Adolescent behavioral problems
- Adolescent substance use disorder
- Marital difficulties
- Financial trouble
- Substance use disorder
- Coping with an accident or trauma
- Depression and the blues
- Anxiety
- Grief and loss
- Legal problems
- Life phase adjustment: early adult, midlife, retirement
- Caregiving issues

Most EAPs offer a range of services including:

**Education.** EAPs commonly provide education and prevention programs on goal setting, stress, substance use disorder, weight management, coping with grief and loss, and illnesses such as depression and anxiety. Education is also available on budgeting and improving your financial health.

**Individual assessment.** Whether it's stress at home or on the job or concerns about a family member, EAP counselors are available to provide confidential screening, assessment, and support at no cost to you or your family. By addressing problems early, the EAP can help prevent small problems from

becoming overwhelming, costly, and destructive. In addition to listening and talking about a problem, EAPs will often use a short paper and pencil test to help identify and clarify symptoms of particular problems such as depression or anxiety. This enables the EAP to accurately assess the problem and provide the help that is indicated.

**Short-term counseling.** Many stress-related problems or concerns about a loved one do not require long-term counseling. We have all been overwhelmed and overloaded and in need of someone objective to talk with. The EAP is designed to provide short-term support, to simply listen, assist in problem solving, or identify new ways to cope with common, but sometimes painful problems. In general EAPs have expertise in stress reduction counseling, crisis and conflict resolution and substance use disorder.

**Referral.** It is difficult to know where to turn when personal problems arise. The EAP keeps abreast of the best providers in your area. For example, if a child is exhibiting behavioral or learning problems, a specialist in child psychology would be needed. The EAP can facilitate this referral and guide the family through the treatment process—saving time and headaches.

**Support.** With some problems there are no quick fixes. Individuals recovering from alcoholism, depression or the loss of a loved one may require ongoing support from the EAP or a designated professional. The EAPs work with the employee to develop and coordinate a support plan.

Remember that there are no problems too big or small for the EAP.

*By Drew Edwards, MS, EdD*

**Looking for support? We're here to help.**

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