



## Employee Assistance Program Services Newsletter

SUMMER 2007

### Workplace Violence on the Rise. What Can be Done?

Workers are experiencing increased stress that is driving them to tears, insomnia and other illnesses. Some causes include unrealistic goals, rudeness from clients and colleagues and organizational confusion. One of 10 Americans (10%) say they work in an atmosphere where physical violence has occurred because of stress, with 42% saying their workplace is a place where yelling and verbal abuse takes place. Productivity in America is soaring -- but at the price of a growing "desk rage." As employee shortages continue to boost individual workloads in many sectors, employers need to take steps to alleviate America's growing workplace stress and violence.

Employees not only deserve a safe work environment, several states mandate it. Labor attorneys recognize that employers may be exposing their corporations to potentially costly litigations if there is no Workplace Violence Prevention Program. What can be done to avoid violence in the workplace? Since proven methods exist to reduce workplace violence, every company has a responsibility to implement a Workplace Violence Prevention Program. However, those incidents that most people now call "workplace violence" and which involve present or former employees, clients and customers, require the efforts of a committee comprised of representatives of various departments. The program must also have the support and endorsement of top management. The committee should address the three primary opportunities to prevent workplace violence: at the time an employee is hired, when he is terminated, and through employee education.

Probably, the most effective way to identify a potentially violent employee, client, or customer is through employee education. Not until the system is explained to employees in a training session do they realize that reporting potentially dangerous behavior is in the best interest of all, including the offender. For example, it is true that commonalities exist among the offenders of past workplace violence and that these characteristics will probably appear in future suspects. However, it would be a grave mistake to disregard suspected symptoms simply because the individual does not fit the description of the "profile." Experts believe that violence as a form of communication and conflict resolution will continue to increase. Fortunately, answers and methods for addressing the problem are now available. There simply is no good reason for a business, large or small, not to have a Workplace Violence Prevention Program in place. It protects the employees, avoids costly litigations, preserves the company's reputation, improves the bottom line, but most of all is morally and ethically the right thing to do. After all, anyone who earns a living has a right to a safe and secure work environment. For more information on Workplace Violence Prevention Programs, feel free to contact your EAP, *AssistNOW* at 216.431.4140 or 1.800.840.4654.

### Summer Fun

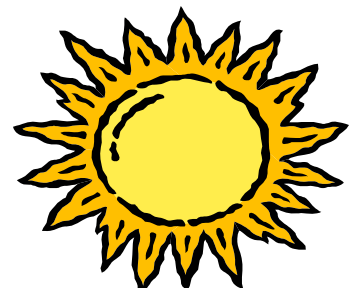
We asked some members of our *AssistNOW* team what they enjoy doing during the summer months for fun and here is what they told us:

**Tracy Tillotson**, our Director of *AssistNOW* told us that she loves to go camping during the summer stating that it takes away all the buildings, pavement, smog and structure and allows her to refresh and reconnect with her kids who are unplugged while they explore the natural world. No phones, no electronics, just family and time!

**Sharon Hawley** loves going to the Outer Banks of North Carolina with her children and grandchildren stating that this year there will be 19 of them. Everyone gets along and has a wonderful time!

**Peggy Kordic** says that in the summer she loves to walk on the beach, garden, go to flea markets and dog shows. She also loves going to the Indians games and to the July 4<sup>th</sup> orchestra performance and fireworks on Public Square. Peggy further stated that she loves to eat outdoors, at restaurants or parks or friends' cookouts.

**Patricia Bradford** recommends going to the park or just relaxing outside to relish the energy from the sun. She also enjoys having a cook-out and spending time with family and friends.



## Summer Safety Tips

Summer is the long-awaited time of year when children head outdoors to play, and adults fling open windows to let in sunshine and fresh air. Statistically, it is also the most dangerous time of the year. During summer months children play outside more, often with less supervision than in school. Summer-related injuries can range from a sunburn from a day at the beach without sunscreen, to a life-threatening head trauma for a rider without a helmet in a bicycle crash. Most children's injuries are preventable! Listed below are some precautions you can take to help your child's summer be safe and happy.

### Water Safety

Drowning is one of the greatest summer risks for children ages 14 and under, so always watch children closely when they are near water. Whenever your children swim, make sure they are supervised by an adult who knows how to swim.

- ⇒ Watch young children carefully, even if you're not near a pool, lake, river or ocean. Small children can drown in as little as one inch of water, and have drowned in wading pools, bathtubs, buckets, toilets, and hot tubs.
- ⇒ Even if your child can swim, never let him or her swim without supervision.
- ⇒ Learn CPR so you are ready for an emergency. Children aged 13 and older should learn CPR, as well.

### Sun Safety

Protect your children's skin by limiting the time they are in the sun between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., when the sun's rays are strongest.

- ⇒ Use at least 15 SPF (sun protection factor) sunscreen on your children before they go outside, even on cloudy days. Reapply sunscreen every two hours and after your child swims.
- ⇒ Have your children wear sunglasses to help block UV rays that can be harmful to eyes. Just as the sun can damage our skin, it can be just as harmful to eyes. Overexposure to ultraviolet radiation from the sun can greatly increase the chances of cataracts (a clouding of the lens of the eye) and damage to the retina. Both conditions can seriously impair vision, and it is rarely impossible to reverse either.

### Bee Stings and Insect Bites

Bees and other insects usually are looking for food, not trouble. But cross their paths, or their nests, and you could feel their sting, which is never pleasant. Without allergy, a typical reaction is burning pain, redness, swelling and itching on the skin in the area of the sting. In an allergic reaction, symptoms are not limited to the area that is local to your sting. Look for swelling that moves to other parts of the body, especially the face or neck. Check for difficulty in breathing, wheezing, dizziness or a drop in blood pressure. Get the person immediate medical care if any of these signs are present.

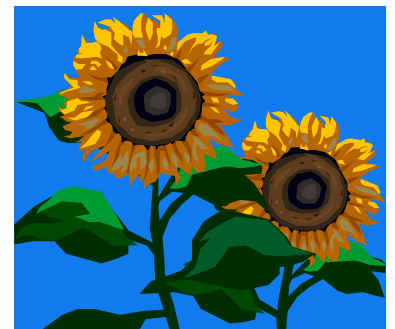
Allergic reactions to bee stings can be deadly. People with known allergies to insects stings should always carry an insect sting allergy kit and wear a medical ID bracelet or necklace stating their allergy.

To learn more about summer safety and how to protect loved ones, call *AssistNOW* at 216.431.4140 or 1.800.840.4654.

## TRAITS OF A HEALTHY FAMILY

- ◇ Communicates and listens
- ◇ Affirms and supports one another
- ◇ Teaches respect for others
- ◇ Develops a sense of trust
- ◇ Has a sense of play and humor
- ◇ Exhibits a sense of shared responsibility
- ◇ Teaches a sense of right and wrong
- ◇ Has a balance of interaction among members
- ◇ Has a shared sense of values
- ◇ Respects the privacy of one another
- ◇ Values service to others
- ◇ Fosters honest conversation
- ◇ Shares leisure time
- ◇ Admits and seeks help with problems

*Source: Health Sentry, Volume 9*



### HEALTH TIP

*If you're trying to slim down to fit into last summer's shorts, don't skip breakfast to lose weight! Breakfast provides higher late morning energy, allowing you to concentrate and solve problems more efficiently. Low blood sugar levels after eight or more hours of sleep cause sluggishness and irritability. So, eat a healthy, low fat breakfast to keep yourself going all morning long!*

Remember,  
for confidential assistance call:

### **AssistNOW**

The EAP Division of  
Recovery Resources

216.431.4140

1.800.840.4654