August 2022 Newsletter

TotalCare EAP
A division of ESI

Don't Forget!

EAP services are available to you and your household members as well as dependent children living away from home, up to age 26.

When The News Is Too Much...

It seems like the news is worse than ever, but that's partly due to the 24-hour nature of our modern news cycle, magnified further by social media.

Never before in history did people have so much access to so much news in living color and excruciating detail. When painful events occur, it can be too much. You don't have to be directly involved in events to be affected - you can experience *"vicarious trauma"* that some call *"the cost of caring."*

An unhealthy obsession with terrible news can lead to increased stress, anxiety, pessimism, isolation, and other problems.

Experts say the best remedy for vicarious trauma is strictly rationing your exposure to the news and to social media. Allocate a certain amount of time to news and social media each day and then detach. Spend time with positive people. Take positive actions, such as donating to victims or volunteering for a cause.

Exercise and spend time outdoors. If the news causes too much stress or anxiety, consider professional counseling with your EAP!

New Suicide & Crisis Lifeline

Starting on July 16, 2022, **call or text 988** to reach the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline if you experience thoughts of suicide or a mental health/substance use crisis. People can also call if they are worried about a loved one who needs crisis support.

Cycling Safety

Summer is a great time for you to enjoy that bicycle, but it's also peak time for biking-related injuries and deaths. Here are summer cycling safety resources.

- Smart Cycling
- Bicycle Helmet Safety Institute
- How to Not Get Hit by Cars
- 8 tips from the pros for staying cool when cycling in the heat
- State bike laws

Prep Now to Ease Back to School Stress

As summer winds down, families should lay the groundwork for the transition of *"back to school"* by re-establishing healthy routines and patterns. New schedules can pose challenges for adults and kids alike. Minimize potential stress by prepping a few weeks in advance. Work with your kids to map out plans, times and rules for homework, chores, hobbies, and free time. Here are tips to consider when planning:

- **Talk to your kids about how they feel about returning to school.** Understand and address their hopes and concerns for the new school year.
- **Wrap up loose ends.** Finish summer assignments and plan post-school extracurricular activities for the coming year.
- **Set regular times for turning in at night and getting up in the morning.** Establish a healthy breakfast time and routine.

- **Plan safe routes to and from school.** Check them out in advance. Review pedestrian, bike, and bus safety rules with your children.
- **Make sure backpack loads are appropriate for kids.** Backpacks should weigh no more than 10% of a child's body weight.
- **Have a family emergency plan and drill.** Include a communication plan and set meeting points both at home and in central places should you not be able to return home. Train all kids in making 9-1-1 calls.
- **Watch for signs of stress.** Each fresh school year can bring fresh challenges. Watch for signs of stress and adjustment as kids adapt to new teachers, academic challenges, and peer interactions.

If you or a family member faces a challenging or stressful situation during this transition, call your EAP 24-7 for help, support, and tools! Be sure to check out resources for families and parents in our online **Work/Life Center.**

Get Smart This Summer

Get smart this summer the easy way with more than 10,000+ online E-Learning courses, many of them in short micro-learning bursts you can take at your convenience. We add new topics every month. Log in at www.theEAP.com, click the **"Training Center"** icon and choose **"New & Improved Trainings."**

- **Stand Your Ground! Standing for Ethical Principles When Others Don't** | **Course ID: SVL_061119**
  In this 5-minute character-building video, learn how to stand up for your principles in the face of peer pressure, even when it's hard or intimidating.
- **How to Control Your Stress…Instantly** | **Course ID: SVL_014373**
  In this 9-minute video, learn how to control stress instantly with a few simple, but powerful techniques from best-selling author Liz Nead.
- **NEW! Expert Insights: Identity Theft Prevention with Robert Siciliano** | **Course ID: SVL_1021603**
  Learn to prevent identity theft from happening to you, how to prevent fake accounts being set up in your name, common types of scams, and how to protect your credit cards and devices in this 50-minute course.

Accessing Your EAP Training Center

1. Go to www.theEAP.com and click **Employee and Family login**.
2. If you've already created an account, log in with your User Name/Password.
3. If it's your first time, click **REGISTER** to create your User Name and Password. **You only need to register once.**
4. Click the **'Training Center'** and then choose **'New & Improved Trainings'**.
5. In the **Search** bar at the top of the screen, type the course code or search for a topic.
6. Click the course icon, and click the **'Play'** or **'Start'** button to begin.

To get a certificate: View the course and take the quiz. Not all courses require a quiz, but if so, you must score at least **80%** for a certificate. To get your certificate, click on the ribbon icon below the right corner of the video. The certificate will download to your computer.

Learn More!

Scan the QR code with your device or smart phone to explore more of your employee benefits!

How to Scan a QR Code

1. Open the camera app.
2. Select the rear-facing camera in Photo mode.
3. Center the QR code you want to scan on the screen and hold your phone steady for a couple of seconds.
4. Tap the notification that pops up to open the link. (You will need to be connected to the internet to do this.)