



Helping Hands

District Lodge 141



Employee Assistance Program

www.iam141.org/eap/eap.html

June 2009

If a Strike Occurs, Are You Ready?



No one wishes for a work stoppage during contract negotiations, but there is always the possibility that strike action is the only alternative.

Would you be ready if one does occur? One way to prepare for any disruptive event is to create an emergency fund. You should set aside enough funds to cover between three and six months of living expenses. How do you get started?

1. Set up a separate savings account.
2. Contribute as much as you can.
3. Treat it like a monthly bill.
4. Cut back on unnecessary expenses.
5. Start now.

By taking these steps, you're preparing for the unknown and buying yourself financial security and peace of mind.

Postponed Retirement



Many of our members have seen their long-awaited plans for retirement placed on hold because of the current economic recession. Such an event can be so disturbing, it may contribute to depression. Although no one can replace a reduced pension or depleted 401(k) account, support for coping with this reality—and help in overcoming the anger and grief associated with it—might be necessary. Talk about these issues with your employee assistance program coordinator or qualified financial counseling advisor. Feel good about yourself again and renew your determination to work at meeting revised retirement goals.

Heavy Smokers Can Quit

Research shows that the majority of smokers at any one time are interested in quitting. Your family and friends will love it if you decide to make another attempt. Fifty-one percent of smokers in the most recent national study tried quitting in the past year; only 20% succeeded—about one in five. Here's the kicker: If you are a heavy smoker—officially, more than 20 cigarettes a day—you are almost twice as likely to be successful if you decide to quit smoking! Go for it.



Source: Smoking in the U.S. Workforce, National Health Interview Survey [NHIS] and the Tobacco Use Supplement to the Current Population Survey, 2003.

Water Safety Tips Worth Heeding

Summer is here—so be safe, especially when participating in water sports. Eighty percent of people who drown aren't wearing life jackets. Wear one if you need one. Here's a rarely reported safety tip: Stay out of the water when you are around boats using electricity at a dock to avoid the possibility of being shocked from by an electrical current leaking into the water. Only a small current is needed to cause paralysis and possible drowning. If you feel tingling sensations while swimming toward a boat, a boat lift, or a dock—back away and get out of the water.



Payoffs for Not Sweating the Small Stuff



Just reported, a long-term study examined the health of seven-year-olds to see what kind of health problems they came to experience later in their mid-30s—and whether those participants with fewer health problems had exhibited attitude or behavioral differences from their peers at age seven. Results: Those in their mid-30s with fewer physical health problems had exhibited better skills at age seven when it came to staying focused and not sweating the small stuff. A superior attention span and a more positive outlook in youth seem to have had a positive effect on health in older subjects. Could the study provide evidence that behavior and emotions associated with certain temperaments play a crucial role in long-term health? Help children cope with frustrations and alter their way of responding to *distressful* events. It may influence positive health outcomes later in life.

Source: Health Psychology, May 2009

IAM-EAP Peer Coordinators

The mainstay of the District 141 EAP is the local lodge EAP peer coordinator. These dedicated men and women volunteer much of their personal time to assist our brothers and sisters who are experiencing personal difficulties. EAP coordinators do not make clinical diagnoses or clinical evaluations. However, coordinators are trained to make a basic assessment of the situation and then refer to a professional resource for a more detailed evaluation and course of action. A complete listing of IAM EAP coordinators, including phone contact numbers, can be found on the District 141 Website at www.iam141.org/eap/eap.html.



Parents: Beware Eating Disorder Web Sites



You can find almost anything on the Internet, including Web sites that worsen deadly eating disorders. Called “pro-Ana” Web sites because they promote anorexia and similar illnesses, they have loyal followings. Evidence that your child may be visiting such Web sites can provide important early clues to the potential onset of an eating disorder or reveal an existing though well-hidden illness. Many of these Web sites focus on helping victims “do it right.” Some pro-Ana Web sites masquerade as helpful resources, weaving useful and accurate information into their mixed messages. Unfortunately, these home-built, privately run Web sites make eating disorders worse. Photos of glamorized models and famous ultra-thin people are used for inspiration. Discussion forums encourage inappropriate weight-loss goals. Web sites hook users and bond them into superficial online friendships. The result is a normalization of these illnesses that can make it tougher to overcome them, to have effective relationships with parents or loved ones, and to maintain positive mental health. Pro-Ana sites usually contain images of overly thin people to inspire others with eating disorders to stay focused on their misguided weight-loss goals. With slogans like “You can control your life from the inside out” and “If it tastes good, it’s trying to kill you,” these Web sites have their own language. For example, the phrase “my ‘thinspo,’” is slang for “my thin inspiration.” It refers to anything—usually an image or a video—that inspires a person with an eating disorder to keep losing more weight.

Shop Less Often

How many times do you go to the grocery store in a week? Is it more than once? If so, here is a great way to save money over the next month: Stop this practice. Try shopping for groceries only once per week. You are less likely to put items in your shopping basket that you do not need. These expenditures can add up. So, make a list and stick to it for a once-per-week visit.

