

Mental Health First Aid for Leaders

SupportLinc Employee Assistance
Program (EAP)

Penn State Health



Disclaimer

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Objectives

This training is designed to help you:

- Learn the facts about mental health issues
- Identify common signs of mental health issues
- Learn how to connect with someone in distress
- Understand how to assist employees in need
- Discuss the importance of self-care for leaders

Making the case



Psychologically healthy workplace

Benefits to the organization

-  Improved quality, performance and productivity
-  Reduced absenteeism, less turnover
-  Fewer accidents and mistakes
-  Better able to attract and retain top-quality employees
-  Improved customer service and satisfaction
-  Lower healthcare costs

Perceptions

- Mental health
- Mental illness
- Psychological
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Stress



Mental health statistics

1 in 5 adults in the U.S. experiences a mental illness every year

- Approximately 1 in 20 adults in the U.S. experiences a serious mental illness in a given year that substantially interferes with at least one major life activity
- 1.1% of adults in the U.S. live with schizophrenia
- 2.8% of adults in the U.S. live with bipolar disorder
- 7.8% of adults in the U.S. had at least one major depressive episode in the past year
- 19.1% of adults in the U.S. experienced an anxiety disorder, such as post traumatic stress disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder and specific phobias

R U OK?

Meaningful connections

Sense of responsibility

Sense of belonging

1. Ask
2. Listen
3. Encourage action
4. Check-in



Virtual connection



- Make time for personal interaction
- Build upon existing foundations
- Embrace video conferencing
- Ask open-ended questions
- Maintain your cadence
- Foster team morale

Workplace signs and symptoms

Symptoms of distress

Sleep problems

Lack of concentration

Slowed thoughts

Aches and pains

Forgetfulness

Alcohol/substance abuse

Irritability or tearfulness

Low motivation or morale

Signs that affect work productivity

- Lower quality work, lateness to work

- Procrastination, more accidents on the job

- Indecision or trouble making decisions

- Trips to the doctor, increased healthcare costs

- Poor quality of work

- Missed deadlines, absenteeism

- Poor relationships with co-workers, boss or clients

- Decreased productivity

Signs of safety concerns

IS PATH WARM?

I	Ideation	Talking about wanting to hurt or kill him/herself
S	Substance abuse	Increased substance use (alcohol or drug)
P	Purposelessness	No reason for living; no sense of purpose in life
A	Anxiety	Anxiety, agitation or unable to sleep/sleeping too much
T	Trapped	Feeling trapped (like there's no way out)
H	Hopelessness	Feelings of hopelessness or helplessness
W	Withdrawal	Withdrawal from friends, family and society
A	Anger	Rage, uncontrolled anger or seeking revenge
R	Recklessness	Acting reckless or engaging in risky activities
M	Mood changes	Dramatic mood changes

Seek help when you or someone you know is struggling.

Contact your EAP or the National Suicide Prevention Hotline at **988**.

Call 911 in an emergency.

Ask “R U OK”?

- You don't seem yourself lately...
- How are you doing?
- How have you been lately?
- What's going on?
- Is there something on your mind?
- Do you want to talk about it?
- **How are you doing, really?**



Be prepared



- Am I willing to genuinely listen?
- Can I give as much time as needed?
- Do I understand that I can't fix it?
- Do I accept they may not be ready to talk?
- Have I chosen a private place?
- Am I the right person?

Listen

- Take what they say seriously
- Don't rush the conversation
- Stay calm
- Don't interrupt
- Encourage them to elaborate
- Don't take their reaction personally



Connect

- Express your concern and support
- Remind them that help is available
- Reassure them that you care
- Treat them with respect, compassion and empathy



Scenario

Michelle has been late to virtual meetings and has been submitting work late. Co-workers tell you Michelle has been having panic attacks in the middle of her workday at home.

What can you say to Michelle?

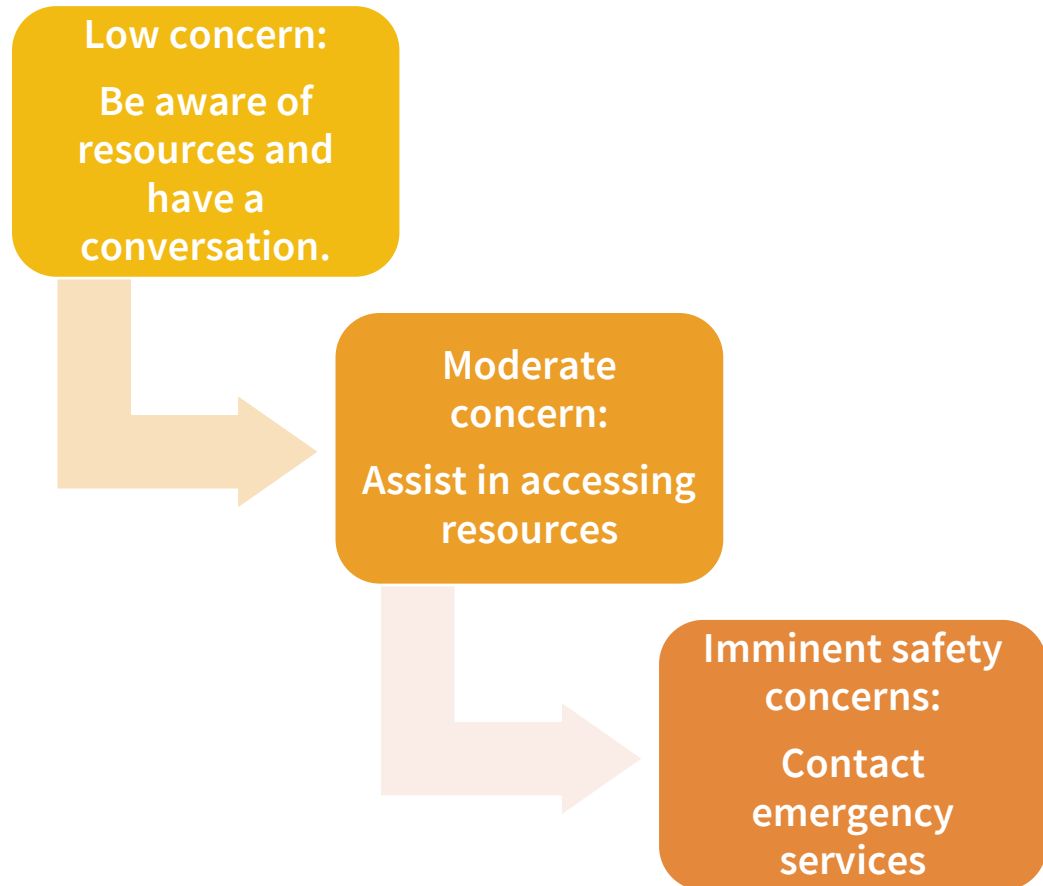
Encourage action

- How can I help?
- What have you done in the past?
- Where do you think we go from here?
- What would be a good next step?
- What do you need from me?

In the potentially harmful category:

- Putting off the conversation until later in the week
- Suggesting they simply work it out with their manager
- Telling them to “just hang in there”

When to get backup



Your role:
Provide resources.
Not “assess” or fix.

Check-in



- Check back in a few days
- Ask how they're doing
- Ask if they pursued help
- Provide encouragement
- Offer assistance
- Be patient but gently persist

Expectations

- Be the voice of reason
- Be a problem solver
- Show up and lead
- Avoid criticism
- Be supportive



Importance of self-care for leaders

Negative impacts to leadership:

- Secondary trauma
- Burnout

How to prevent negative impacts:

- Prioritize your own self-care and emotional needs
- Reach out for support from friends and family or contact your EAP



Take care of yourself



- Stay positive
- Get enough sleep
- Have a healthy diet
- Connect with others
- Stay physically active
- Develop coping skills
- Seek professional support

Interactive toolkits

Mindfulness

www.mindfulness.tools

Practical tools and exercises for incorporating mindfulness into everyday life.

Meditation

www.meditate.tools

Easy-to-use collection of resources that includes guided meditations, tip sheets and more.

Resiliency

www.resiliency.tools

Skill development resources to help you 'bounce back' from challenging situations.

Sleep fitness

www.sleepfitness.tools

Information and resources to help you learn good sleep habits and achieve healthy sleep.

What is SupportLinc?

The SupportLinc Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a health benefit, separate from your medical insurance, offered by your employer to help you manage life's daily challenges.

SupportLinc can refer you to professional counselors, services and resources that will help you and your eligible family members resolve a broad range of personal and work-related concerns.

How can your EAP support you?



- Resources
- Counseling
- Confidential benefits
- Management consults
- Crisis Response
- Training

What services are included?

Work-life benefits



Manager consultation

Expert guidance and referrals for: interpersonal communication, effective time management, conflict resolution, navigating team dynamics, cultural diversity in the workplace and more



Legal consultation

Free in-person or telephonic consultation with a licensed attorney

No employment law



Identity theft consultation

Free consultation with an identity theft recovery professional

Tailored recovery action plan



Financial consultation

Expert guidance and consultation from financial professionals



Dependent care referrals

Expert referrals to child and adult/elder care providers, facilities and other resources



“Convenience” referrals

Guidance and referrals to a variety of daily living resources: home improvement, entertainment services, pet care, auto repair, wellness, travel, handymen, volunteer opportunities etc.

Getting started



Call: 1-888-881-LINC (5462)



QR Code:



Visit: www.supportlinc.com



Log in or create account
(code: psh)

SupportLinc

Support for everyday issues. Every day.

Additional resources

Anyone can experience mental health problems. Friends, family and supportive team members at work can make all the difference in a person's recovery process.

Supporting a team member with mental health concerns

You can help your team member by recognizing the signs of mental health problems and connecting them to professional help.

Talking to team members about mental health problems can be an opportunity to provide information, support, and guidance. Learning about mental health issues can lead to:

- Improved recognition of early signs of mental health problems
- Earlier treatment
- Greater understanding and compassion

If a team member is showing signs of a mental health problem or reaching out to you for help, offer support by:

- Finding out if the person is getting the care that he or she needs and wants - if not, connect him or her to help
- Expressing your concern and support
- Reminding your team member that help is available and that mental health problems can be treated
- Asking questions, listening to ideas and being responsive when the topic of mental health problems come up
- Reassuring your team member that you care about them
- Offering to help your team member with everyday tasks
- Educating other people so they understand the facts about mental health problems and do not discriminate
- Treating people with mental health problems with respect, compassion and empathy

How to talk about mental health

Do you need help starting a conversation about mental health? Try leading with these questions and make sure to actively listen to your team member's response.

- I've been worried about you. Can we talk about what you are experiencing? If not, who are you comfortable talking to?
- What else can I help you with?
- I am someone who cares and wants to listen. What do you want me to know about how you are feeling?
- Who or what has helped you deal with similar issues in the past?
- Sometimes talking to someone who has dealt with a similar experience helps. Do you know of others who have experienced these types of problems who you can talk with?
- It seems like you are going through a difficult time. How can I help you to find help?
- How can I help you find more information about mental health concerns?
- I'm concerned about your safety. Have you thought about harming yourself or others? (Asking this question will not increase the chance of them harming themselves or others.)

Additional resources

When talking about mental health problems:

- Know how to connect people to help
- Communicate in a straightforward manner
- Speak at a level appropriate to a person's age and development level (preschool children need fewer details as compared to teenagers)
- Discuss the topic when and where the person feels safe and comfortable
- Watch for reactions during the discussion and slow down or back up if the person becomes confused or looks upset

Sometimes it is helpful to make a comparison to a physical illness. For example, many people get sick with a cold or the flu, but only a few get really sick with something serious like pneumonia. People who have a cold are usually able to do their normal activities. However, if they get pneumonia, they will have to take medicine and may have to go to the hospital.

Similarly, feelings of sadness, anxiety, worry, irritability or sleep problems are common for most people. However, when these feelings get very intense, last for a long period of time, and begin to interfere with school, work and relationships, it may be a sign of a mental health problem. And just like people need to take medicine and get professional help for physical conditions, someone with a mental health problem may need to take medicine and/or participate in therapy in order to get better.

Get help for your team member

Seek immediate assistance if you think your team member is in danger of harming themselves. You can call a crisis line or the National Suicide Prevention Line at 1-800-273-TALK (8255) or you can just dial 988. **Call 911 in an emergency.**

For further resources, please go to your portal and use the search bar to type in “Mental Health First Aid Basics Flash Course,” “Cultural Diversity and Mental Health Flash Course,” “When It’s Time to Seek Support Flash Course” and “Effective Remote Leadership Flash Course.”

Moving ahead



What did you get out of today's presentation?

Which concepts are working in your life and why?

Who can be a support for you to make change?

Which concepts are *not* working in your life and why?

What 3 ideas are going to be the most helpful for you?

How can you support someone else with change?

What can you do in the next 24 hours to apply these concepts?

What are your biggest barriers for change?