



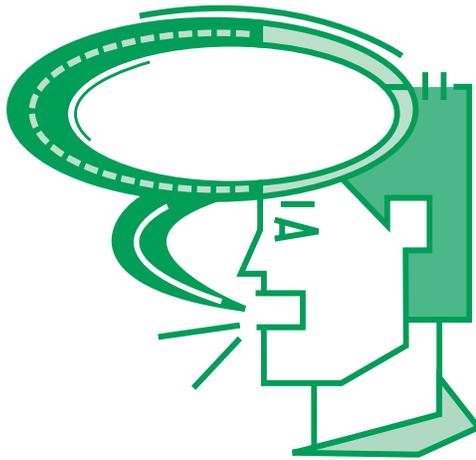
# A Healthy Outlook!

301-460-2100 • FAX 301-460-2113 • [www.mcps.k12.us/departments/EAP](http://www.mcps.k12.us/departments/EAP) • Vol . 3, No. 1

## Talking to Your Kids About Violence

Violence is becoming a fact of life for many children. Even in neighborhoods where violence is low, children should know how to respond to dangerous and potentially violent situations. Talk with your school-age children about safe street behavior, focusing on the following common sense suggestions:

- ✓ Avoid dark, deserted, or dangerous streets—even if it means taking the long way around.
- ✓ Pay attention to what's going on around you. Walk away from possible danger such as groups of older kids or adults behaving in a threatening or suspicious way. If you get scared, go into a store, restaurant, or gas station where other people are around.
- ✓ Let your parents, a trusted neighbor, or a police officer know about anything going on in your neighborhood that doesn't seem quite right.
- ✓ If you're mugged, give the mugger what's demanded. Don't fight back or talk to the mugger. Better to lose your possessions than your life. Report the incident to the police.
- ✓ If someone tries to hurt you or you think someone is going to hurt you, run away or scream to get attention.
- ✓ Use a buddy system. Go places with friends whenever possible.



- ✓ Always try to settle arguments with words, not fists or weapons. When someone you know tries to take advantage of you, stand up for your rights by saying no in a loud and firm voice. Report any threats or violence against you to a teacher, school administrator, or the police.

### Safety at Home

At home, encourage your children to keep doors and windows locked and to check to see who's there before opening the door. Set a good example by doing this yourself. Teach your children how and when to use 911 or your local emergency number. Practice making emergency calls with a make-believe phone.

### Listen to Your Children

Let your children know that they can

talk to you about any fears they have. If your child is being seriously bullied or threatened at school, stand up for your child's safety by talking to school authorities about it. Although many children worry that "telling" on a bully will make things worse, bullies are more likely to leave your child alone if they know you will back your child up.

### A Violence-Free Attitude

Your attitude toward violence can affect the way your child responds to potentially violent situations. Do you believe that boys who do not fight are sissies? That it's important to win at all costs?

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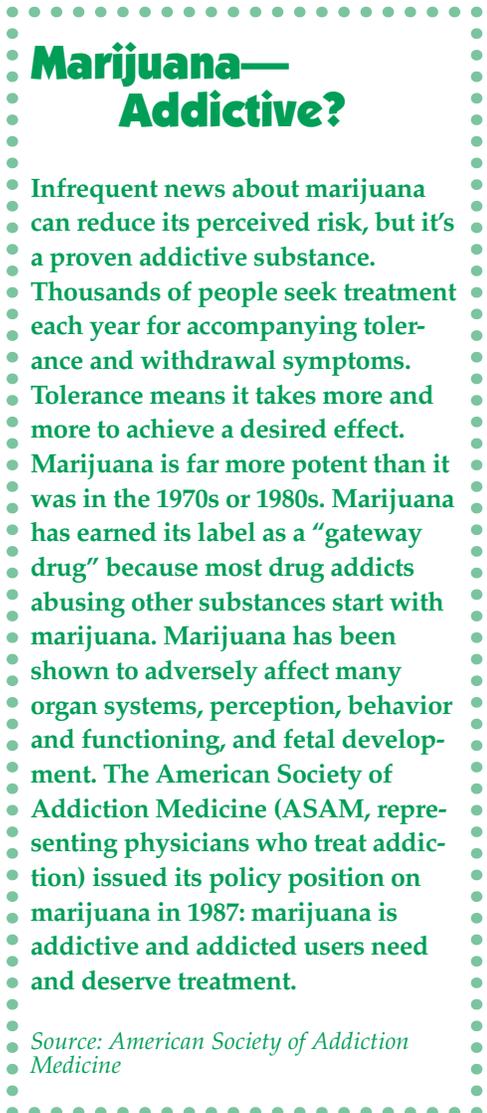
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That nice guys finish last? Or do you let your children know that it's OK to walk away from a fight and back your words up with your own actions?

Is your home a violence-free zone, where family problems are solved without using violence or threats? Do you help your child to learn nonviolent ways to deal with frustration, anger, and conflict?

Children who learn to handle conflict without using violence are much less likely to become victims of schoolyard or street violence.

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## Marijuana— Addictive?

Infrequent news about marijuana can reduce its perceived risk, but it's a proven addictive substance. Thousands of people seek treatment each year for accompanying tolerance and withdrawal symptoms. Tolerance means it takes more and more to achieve a desired effect. Marijuana is far more potent than it was in the 1970s or 1980s. Marijuana has earned its label as a "gateway drug" because most drug addicts abusing other substances start with marijuana. Marijuana has been shown to adversely affect many organ systems, perception, behavior and functioning, and fetal development. The American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM, representing physicians who treat addiction) issued its policy position on marijuana in 1987: marijuana is addictive and addicted users need and deserve treatment.

Source: American Society of Addiction Medicine

## Get Organized!

With the school year just getting started, this is the ideal time to get yourself organized. For starters, do you know the difference between decluttering, organizing, and simplifying? Decluttering is throwing out or giving away things that are no longer of use to you; organizing is ordering, shifting, and rearranging items, and simplifying is letting go of things you are currently using in order to make life less complex. If you are long overdue on any of the above, then follow these simple tips (from Helen Volk, who can be found at [www.beyondclutter.com](http://www.beyondclutter.com)) to bring more organization and balance to your office and home:

1. Clarify what is "useful" (vs. "I like it") as criteria for keeping items.
2. Throw out old magazines and papers that you are saving for a "rainy day," as they are now outdated (especially with our high-tech, rapid-paced lifestyles.)

3. When you buy something new, throw out something old to prevent clutter.

4. Straighten up your office three times a day for five minutes (morning, after lunch and before you go home), and you will never accumulate a big mess.

5. Do little clean-up jobs at home, in the evening, during the commercials.

6. Assign chores to your children so they can help maintain an organized home.

7. Call 1-888-567-8688 to stop all catalogs and credit offers that receive your name from the major credit bureaus. This cuts down on accumulating junk mail.

8. Julie Morgenstern, author of, *Organizing from the Inside Out* suggests the following:

**S**ort—Identify what is important to you, and group together similar items.

**P**urge—Get rid of useless and outdated items.

**A**ssign a home—Decide precisely where to store items.

**C**ontainize—Enclose items in a nice organizer, shelf, drawer or container.

**E**qualize—Devise a quick system to always put things back where they belong to avoid clutter.

It is a lifelong job to declutter, but it can be done! For more time management tips, be sure to contact the EAP at 301-460-2100.

*Happiness is when what you think, what you say, and what you do are in harmony.*  
—Gandhi

## Men and Depression

Real Men, Real Depression is the name of a national campaign launched by the National Institute of Mental Health, to raise awareness that depression in men is a major public health problem. Materials include public service announcements and the following publications:

- *Men and Depression* (detailed booklet)
- *Real Men, Real Depression. It Takes Courage to Ask for Help. These Men Did.* (brochure).
- *Men and Depression* (fact sheet)
- *Depression: A Treatable Illness* (fact sheet)

The campaign's materials are free and can be ordered by telephone 866-227-6464, or accessed on the Web: <http://menanddepression.nimh.nih.gov>

Source: *The Complete Practitioner*, May 2003

**Note:** **October 7** is *Depression Screening Day*. Information on free screening for depression can be obtained by contacting Screening for Mental Health, Inc., at 781-239-0071 or at [www.mentalhealthscreening.org](http://www.mentalhealthscreening.org). For more information on depression, please contact the EAP at 301-460-2100.

## Play More, Live Longer

If you are working and postponing recreation and leisure activities until you can retire, consider fitting in some of these activities now. It might help you live longer and improve your mental health. A recent study of 107 sets of senior twins has shown that those who participated in leisure activities in early and middle adulthood have a reduced risk of Alzheimer's disease. In the study, risk was reduced regardless of education level or degree of physical exercise. Another earlier study by the Harvard School of Public Health showed that seniors who had an active social life lived longer. Overall, it appears that social and leisure activities seem to be important components of long-term physical and mental health.

Source: *Journal of Gerontology Series, Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences*

## MCPS EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM AND SHADY GROVE AND WASHINGTON ADVENTIST HOSPITALS TO OFFER STRESS MANAGEMENT PRESENTATIONS

The MCPS Employee Assistance Program is sponsoring a series of stress management seminars that will be conducted by both Greg Brannen, of Shady Grove and Washington Adventist Hospitals and the EAP Staff. The workshops, each scheduled from 4:00– 5:00 pm, will be held in the media center at North Lake Center (15101 Bauer Drive, Rockville).

**OCTOBER 6, 2004**

### STRESS AND ITS IMPACT ON YOUR HEALTH—

A practical look at the effect stress has on individuals mentally and physically, along with helpful strategies for listening to internal alarm systems and proactively implementing stress management techniques that can improve health, productivity, and life satisfaction.

**OCTOBER 27, 2004**

### MANAGING THE STRESS OF RELATIONSHIPS—

Designed to help employees better understand the causes and impact of relationship stress, as well as learn practical strategies for improving interpersonal skills that

can enhance relationships, reduce conflict, and increase teamwork.

**NOVEMBER 16, 2004**

**MANAGING YOUR TIME—**Maximizing Your Potential. Designed to help individuals recognize how their personal organization and use of time contribute to stress levels. The presentation will offer a practical approach to prioritizing our time and staying focused on the most important activities in our lives to reduce stress and increase our effectiveness.

**DECEMBER 1, 2004**

**MANAGING THE STRESS OF THE HOLIDAYS—** This seasonal presentation explores the reasons why the holidays can be so stressful for already busy people, outlines the potential health problems that stress can cause, and recommends several practical techniques to better manage the pressures that come our way at the holidays.

To register for one or more of these sessions, please call the EAP at 301-460-2100 or e-mail Cindy Thompson at [Cynthia\\_Thompson@mcpsmd.org](mailto:Cynthia_Thompson@mcpsmd.org). Space is limited, so register early!

## Organizations Can Demoralize

According to Daniel Goleman in *Working With Emotional Intelligence* there are six primary ways organizations can demoralize and demotivate employees:

**Work overload**—too much to do with too little time and support.

**Lack of autonomy**—being accountable for work with little input into how to go about it.

**Skimpy rewards**—too little pay for more work.

**Loss of connection**—increasing isolation on the job, lowered commitment to the work group.

**Unfairness**—inequities in how people are treated, which can breed resentment.

**Value conflicts**—a mismatch between a person's principles and job demands.



## Upcoming Events

### September:

#### National Sickle Cell Month

Sickle Cell Disease Association of America, Inc., 200 Corporate Pointe, Suite 495, Culver City, CA 90230-8727, 800-421-8453, scdaa@sicklecelldisease.org, www.SickleCellDisease.org

#### Prostate Cancer Awareness Month

National Prostate Cancer Coalition, 1154 15th Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20005, 888-245-9455, 202-463-9455, info@pcacoalition.org, www.pcacoalition.org

#### September 5-11– Suicide Prevention Week

American Association of Suicidology, 4201 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Suite 310, Washington, D.C. 20008, 202-237-2280, info@suicidology.org, www.suicidology.org

### October:

#### National Down Syndrome Awareness Month

National Down Syndrome Society, 666 Broadway, New York, NY 10012, 800-221-4602, info@ndss.org, www.ndss.org

#### Domestic Violence Awareness Month

National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, P.O. Box 18749, Denver, CO 80218-0749, 303-839-1852, mainoffice@ncadv.org, www.ncadv.org

#### National Breast Cancer Awareness Month

National Breast Cancer Awareness Month Board of Sponsors, 233 North Michigan Avenue, Suite 1400, Chicago, IL 60601, 312-596-3557, susan\_nathanson@chi.bm.com

#### October 7; National Depression Screening Day

Screening for Mental Health, Inc., 1 Washington Street, Suite 304, Wellesly Hills, MA 02481, 781-239-0071, info@mentalhealthscreening.org, www.mentalhealthscreening.org

### November:

#### National Adoption Month

National Council for Adoption, 225 North Washington Street, Alexandria, VA 22314, 703-299-6633, www.ncfa-usa.org

#### American Diabetes Month

American Diabetes Association, 1701 North Beauregard Street, Alexandria, VA 22314, 800-232-3472, www.diabetes.org

#### November 18: Great American Smokeout

American Cancer Society, 1599 Clifton Road, NE, Atlanta, GA 30329, 800-ACS-2345, www.cancer.org

## Ask the EAP

**Q** If a supervisor calls the EAP for advice on supervising an employee who is having performance problems, will the EAP disclose to the supervisor whether or not the employee has been to the EAP?

**A** Without a signed release of information, the EAP staff will not disclose an employee's participation in the EAP. If a supervisor inquires about whether an employee has come to the EAP, EAP staff will let the supervisor know that information cannot be disclosed without a signed release.

*Do you have a question for the EAP? Send your questions via FirstClass, Outlook, or the Pony to Jeff Becker.*



### *A Healthy Outlook!*

*To help employees with troubling issues before they become overwhelming.*



#### EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE

SPECIALISTS: Debbie Tipton  
Robyn Rosenbauer  
Jeff Becker

EAP at North Lake Center  
15101 Bauer Drive  
Rockville, Maryland 20853  
phone: 301-460-2100  
www.mcps.k12.md.us/departments/EAP

Important Notice: Information in *A Healthy Outlook!* is for general information purposes only and is not intended to replace the counsel or advice of a qualified health professional.

For further questions or help with specific problems or personal concerns contact your employee assistance professional.

You may contact us or send your questions and comments to Debra\_Tipton@fc.mcps.k12.md.us.

Please note that e-mail is not necessarily confidential.