Managing Stress & Anxiety During Uncertain Times

This webinar begins at 2:00pm.

Speaker: Janeen Haller -Abernethy, LCSW
Director
janeen.hallerabernethy@state.co.us

Moderator: Jeremiah Dahlen, LPC, CEAP
Program Manager
Jeremiah.dahlen@state.co.us

Call 800-821-8154 . 303-866-4314 or
Send Us a Message!
Typical Stress Responses

- Fear & worry about health - self & others
- Sleep & concentration impact
- Shift in eating patterns
- Exacerbation of health concerns
- Increased use of substances

CDC, 2020
Higher Risk* Populations

*Higher risk of increased stress & anxiety during pandemic/mass crisis

- Older adults
- Children and Teens
- First responders/helpers (medical providers)
- People with mental health or substance use concerns

CDC, 2020
Typical Anxiety Disorders

- **Generalized anxiety** (constant worry)
- **Social anxiety** (extreme discomfort in social situations)
- **Phobias** (irrational fears)
- **Panic** (intense terror)

Signs & Symptoms

- Inability to function/perform well
- Lost work time; absences
- Physical complaints - sweating, upset stomach
- Cognitive/emotional complaints - panic/fear, unwanted thoughts
- Can cause sleep disturbances that may impair work performance
- Can co-occur with Major Depressive Disorder

Additional Stressors

- **Health anxiety**
  - May impact your response to pandemic
  - May make it difficult to cope well

- **Stress** associated with remote work
  - Isolation
  - Boundaries
Strategies for Coping
Maintain routines & self-care strategies!

Image credit: WSJ.com, 2020
Therapist Tips:

- It’s OK to use humor - just know your audience
- Find opportunities to laugh
- Be helpful to others
- Be productive
- Social media - only for positive interactions
- It’s OK to count your blessings; examples:
  - Less traffic
  - Reduced kid activities
  - More time?
  - We have toilet paper!
Options to Prevent & Manage Symptoms

❑ Just breathe! Reduce your respiration rate.

❑ Change your thinking; track your thoughts & conclusions - are they productive?

❑ Consider worst-case-scenario but don’t dwell on it

❑ Reduce exposure to social media & 24/7 news feeds

*Tips for Social Distancing, Quarantine, and Isolation During an Infectious Outbreak. SAMHSA, 2014.*
Resilience
A developed attitude regarding challenges, changes, trauma, critical events.

Resilience Factors
● Relationships - stay connected, care for others
● Realistic Plans and Action Steps
● Self-Efficacy; Decisions align with values
● Communication; Problem-Solving
● Effective management of emotions
● Adaptive self-care strategies

FYI: Building Your Resiliency; The Road to Resilience, American Psychological Association, 2016.
Focus on Resilience

Workplace-supported resilience:
• Routines, including work, can be healing.
• Compassion demonstrated at work can increase motivation to continue normal routines.
• Recognition that all have different responses

Self-supported resilience:
• Communicate needs; Focus on problem-solving
• Manage strong emotions; Practice self-care
• Strong informal support can decrease residual impact.

Employee Resources: Mental Health Support

- **Colorado State Employee Assistance Program** (CSEAP)
  - 6 sessions - free of charge
  - 800-821-8154

- **Colorado Crisis Services**
  - 24-hour response
  - Telephonic and text services are free-of-charge
  - 1-844-493-8255

- **Health Insurance benefits**
  - Mental health # on health insurance card

- **SAMHSA Referrals and Support**
  - Treatment referral
Resources for Kids

- NPR Covid-19 Comic for Kids

- Parent/Caregiver Guide
  - Talking with your family
  - Reducing family risk

- Stanford - Tips for talking with kids

- The Atlantic: Keeping kids busy

Image credit: Dreamstime 2000 -2020
Workplace Resource: Psychological First Aid

- Evidence-informed strategy used in the aftermath of disaster.
- Some of the core components include **non-intrusive** compassionate contact, stabilization, information on coping and **available services**.
- Online training available at [NCTSN](https://nctsn.org) and at [USDVA](https://va.gov).
- For more information, visit the [National Center for PTSD](https://ptsd.va.gov).
Workplace Resource:
Workplace Response to COVID-19

- Ensure that basic & workplace needs are met
- Ensure that informational needs are met
- Practice flexibility where possible
- Provide regular reminders of CSEAP
  - Support available via phone and video
General CSEAP Information

Counseling Services

● Free benefit of employment

● All State employees are eligible for our services

● Access to 6 counseling sessions per rolling year

● Family members may be eligible for counseling services

● Administrative leave may be granted for attendance
CSEAP Services

- Confidential Counseling
- Emergency Financial Assistance
- Crisis Response
- Supervisor/Manager Consultation
- Professional Coaching
  - EI Managerial Coaching*
- Mediation for employees in conflict
- Presentations & Workgroup Facilitation
- Psychological Fitness for Duty (PFFD)*

*Costs are associated with these particular services.
QUESTIONS?
Contact CSEAP

303-866-4314
800-821-8154

Office Locations

Visit us at www.colorado.gov/cseap