

Impact Manager

Manager Supplement

April—June 2008

April is Alcohol Awareness Month

Did you know?

- Free “Simple Will” Kits are available from Claremont EAP
- A free credit report is available once per year
- Claremont EAP provides legal referrals for family law, consumer issues, traffic violations, and personal injury
- Referrals are available for child care, adult/eldercare, adoption assistance, school/college selection, and pet care

Claremont EAP
800.834.3773

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

<i>April is Alcohol Awareness Month</i>	1
<i>Reasonable Suspicion Determination - Knowing the Signs</i>	2

We're on the web

www.ClaremontEAP.com

When many people think of alcohol abusers, they picture teenagers sneaking drinks before high school football games or at unsupervised parties. However, alcohol abuse is prevalent within many demographic groups in the United States. People who abuse alcohol can be:



- College students who binge drink at local bars.
- Pregnant women who drink and put their babies at risk for fetal alcohol syndrome.
- Professionals who drink after a long day of work.
- Senior citizens who drink out of loneliness.

In 2003, almost 23 percent (54 million) of Americans participated in binge drinking within 30 days prior to taking SAMHSA's National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH). That same year, approximately 21.6 million adults abused alcohol or were alcohol dependent.

To recognize the serious problem of alcohol abuse, April is designated “Alcohol Awareness Month.” The month of April marks the annual observance of National Alcohol Screening Day (NASD). At locations across the United States, people can be screened— anonymously—to see if their drinking habits may be risky.

Participants who come into a screening site will have the opportunity to view an educational presentation and pick up educational materials, such as a questionnaire that screens for risky drinking and dependence. People can also meet one-on-one with a health professional to discuss any concerns. The screenings are free and anonymous.

Last year, more than 203,000 people participated in NASD activities at more than 5,400 screening sites nationwide—the largest NASD yet!

If you suspect that you might have a drinking problem, or you know someone who abuses alcohol, please contact SAMHSA's National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information (NCADI) at 1-800-729-6686 or find a screening site located near you.

Warning Signs of Alcohol Abuse

If you answer “yes” to any of the following questions, you may have a problem with alcohol:

- Do you drink alone when you feel angry or sad?
- Does your drinking ever make you late for work?
- Does your drinking worry your family?
- Do you ever drink after telling yourself you won't?
- Do you ever forget what you did while drinking?
- Do you get headaches or have a hang-over after drinking?

Source: How to Cut Down on Your Drinking

National Alcohol Screening Day takes place in April, visit www.nationalalcoholcreeningday.org to find a screening site near you.

Reasonable Suspicion Determination Knowing the Signs

As a supervisor, you are often the first line of defense to protect employees, the employer, and the public at large if an employee is impaired by drugs or alcohol. If you are concerned about an employee's use of drugs and/or alcohol:

- Contact your Human Resources department for assistance.
- Consult and follow your company's policy.
- Contact Claremont EAP at 800-834-3773 for a free and confidential consultation.

A supervisor must have a reasonable suspicion that an employee is currently under the influence of or impaired by alcohol, a controlled substance, or other drugs in order to address the issue. An impaired employee may demonstrate the following signs:

Moods:

- Depressed
- Anxious
- Irritable
- Suspicious
- Complains about others
- Emotional unsteadiness (e.g. outbursts of crying or anger)
- Mood changes after lunch or break

Actions:

- Withdrawn or inappropriately talkative
- Spends excessive amount of time on the telephone
- Argumentative
- Has exaggerated sense of self-importance
- Displays threatening or violent behavior
- Avoids talking with supervisor regarding work issues

Absenteeism:

- Increase in absenteeism and tardiness, especially Mondays, Fridays, before and after holidays
- Frequent unreported absences, later explained as "emergencies"
- Unusually high incidence of colds, flus, upset stomach, headaches
- Frequent use of unscheduled vacation time
- Leaving work more than necessary (e.g. frequent trips to water fountain and bathroom)
- Unexplained disappearances from the job coupled by difficulty in locating employee

Accidents:

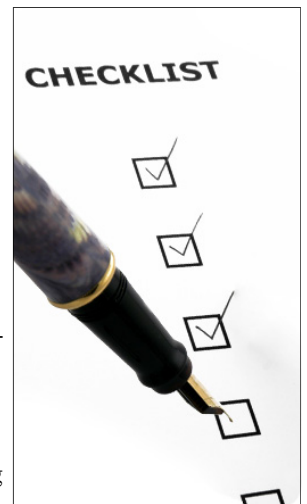
- Taking needless risks
- Disregard for safety of others
- Higher than average accident rate on the job and off the job.

Work Patterns:

- Inconsistent work quality
- High and low periods of productivity
- Poor judgment/more mistakes than usual and general carelessness
- Lapses in concentration
- Difficulty in recalling instructions or remembering own mistakes
- Using more time to complete work/missing deadlines
- Increased difficulty in handling complex situations

Relationship to Others on the Job:

- Overreaction to real or imagined criticism (paranoid)
- Avoiding and withdrawing from peers
- Complaints from co-workers
- Borrowing money from fellow employees
- Persistent job transfer requests
- Increase in complaints related to personal life



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Managers can call Claremont for consultation regarding employees who appear to be experiencing personal problems, whether or not work performance has become an issue. The purpose of this consultation is to help formulate an approach that effectively facilitates the person receiving appropriate help. The Claremont consultant will review the do's and don'ts for handling these often delicate situations and suggest things you can say and do which are most likely to be helpful.

Responding to the Human Factor in the World of Work