



BHS A.S.S.I.S.T. *Spotlight*

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Your EAP is a free and confidential service, which provides assessment and short-term counseling for a variety of mental health, substance abuse and work/life related issues. To learn more about your available benefits, contact your BHS Care Coordinator at 800.245.1150.



Substance Abuse and Mental Health

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Getting Organized Can Improve Your State of Mind

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Healthy Recipe: Apple Nachos

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Substance Abuse and Mental Health

Substance abuse and mental health can be linked in numerous ways. People struggling with a mental health condition may turn to drugs and alcohol for immediate, short-term relief rather than pursuing treatment for the underlying mental health issue. These are short-term solutions to the symptoms and not the problem. Soon, you're on a path toward addiction.

“Although pinpointing the exact link between substance use and mental illness is difficult, we do know that substance abuse and many mental illnesses are tied to similar centers of the brain. For example, depression depletes certain neurotransmitters while alcohol energizes the same system, offering temporary relief from depression's symptoms. As symptoms re-emerge, individuals experiencing depression will often self-medicate with alcohol, leading to a vicious cycle of substance use.”

(Katie Stout, NAMI)

Common Mental Health Conditions that Can Lead to Substance Abuse

- ▶ **Depression.** Persistent sadness & loss of interest in life.
- ▶ **Post-Traumatic Stress:** A mental health condition triggered by experiencing or witnessing a terrifying event, resulting in severe anxiety, flashbacks, etc.
- ▶ **Generalized Anxiety:** Trouble with nerves, which may feel like continual worrying; or frequent physical problems related to an upcoming event, such as an upset stomach.

The Solution

Get help. Speaking with a professional about your unique situation can help put you on the path to a true and lasting recovery. Your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a free and confidential resource provided at no cost by your employer. Your BHS Care Coordinator can assist you with questions regarding your situation and help guide you on the path of recovery. Contact your BHS Care Coordinator by calling 800-245-1150.



Dealing with Adult ADHD

Adult attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is a mental health disorder that includes a combination of persistent problems, such as difficulty paying attention, hyperactivity and impulsive behavior. Adult ADHD can lead to unstable relationships, poor work or school performance, low self-esteem and other problems.

Symptoms of Adult ADHD

Many adults with ADHD aren't aware they have it—they just know that everyday tasks can be a challenge. Symptoms may include:

- ▶ Impulsiveness
- ▶ Disorganization and problems prioritizing
- ▶ Poor time management skills
- ▶ Problems focusing on a task
- ▶ Trouble multitasking
- ▶ Excessive activity or restlessness
- ▶ Poor planning
- ▶ Low frustration tolerance
- ▶ Frequent mood swings
- ▶ Problems following through and completing tasks
- ▶ Hot temper
- ▶ Trouble coping with stress

What's Normal and What's ADHD?

Almost everyone has some symptoms similar to ADHD at some point in their lives. If your difficulties are recent or occurred only occasionally in the past, you probably don't have ADHD. ADHD is diagnosed only when symptoms are severe enough to cause ongoing problems in more than one area of your life. These persistent and disruptive symptoms can be traced back to early childhood.

Psychological Counseling

Treatment for adult ADHD generally includes psychological counseling, education about the disorder and learning skills to help you be successful. Counseling can help you improve your time management and organizational skills, learn how to reduce impulsivity, develop better problem-solving skills, improve your self-esteem, develop strategies for controlling your temper and more.

If you are in need of support, your EAP can help. Call your BHS Care Coordinator at 800-245-1150.



Getting Organized Can Improve Your State of Mind

Getting organized comes with many benefits for your mental health. When everything has a place in your home or office, your mind is better able to relax and focus on the things it needs to.

Benefits of Being Organized

- ▶ **It can reduce stress and depression.** In a study by the Society for Personality and Social Psychology, women who reported their homes as being cluttered or full of unfinished projects were more depressed, fatigued, and had higher levels of the stress hormone cortisol than women who felt their homes were restful and restorative.
- ▶ **Boosted productivity.** Clutter has been proven to decrease your ability to focus on your tasks. Your visual cortex becomes overloaded and interferes with your brain's ability to process information.
- ▶ **Spend less.** Being organized aids in your ability to discern between impulse buys and necessary purchases. If an item doesn't have a place to go, you are less likely to make an impulse buy.

Get Rid of Things You Don't Need

Pick up each item and determine if it is something either you need or something you love. Being surrounded by the things that bring you joy or help your life function properly is a good way to feel warmly toward your life in general. Get rid of things that don't spark joy in you, and you will be well on your way toward a more organized space.

HEALTHY RECIPE: APPLE NACHOS

1/2 cup low-fat vanilla yogurt; 1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon; 3 medium apples, sliced; 2 tablespoons honey; 2 tablespoons finely chopped bittersweet chocolate or bittersweet chocolate chips, melted; 1/4 cup granola, divided; 1/2 cup blueberries, divided

Combine yogurt and cinnamon in a small bowl. Spread half of the apple slices on a medium platter. Drizzle with half the yogurt mixture and 1 tablespoon each honey and melted chocolate. Sprinkle with 2 tablespoons granola and 1/4 cup blueberries. Make a second layer with the remaining ingredients.