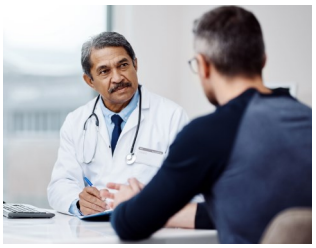
BHS A.S.S.I.S.T. Spotlight

October 2020

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.



What is a Mental Health Screening?

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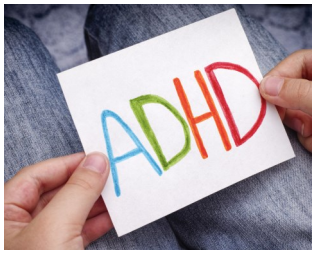

ADHD in the Workplace

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Halloween Fun at Home

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Recipe: White Bean and Pumpkin Hummus with Pita Chips

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What is a Mental Health Screening?

Mental disorders are common and affect more than half of all Americans at some point in their lives. There are many types of mental disorders. A mental health screening is an exam of your emotional health and helps find out if you have a mental disorder.

Your primary care provider may use a mental health screening to see if you need to visit a mental health provider. If you are already seeing a mental health provider, you may get a mental health screening to help guide your treatment.

What happens during a mental health screening? Your primary care provider may give you a physical exam and ask you about your feelings, behavior patterns and other symptoms. Your provider may also order a blood test to find out if a physical disorder may be causing your symptoms. If you are being tested by a mental health provider, he or she may ask more detailed questions about your feelings and behaviors.

You may need a mental health screening if you have symptoms of a mental disorder. Symptoms vary depending on the type of disorder, but common signs may include:

- Excessive worrying or fear
- Extreme sadness
- Major changes in personality, eating habits and sleeping patterns
- Dramatic mood swings
- Anger, frustration or irritability
- Fatigue or lack of energy
- Confused thinking or trouble concentrating
- Feelings of guilt or worthlessness
- Avoidance of social activities

One of the most serious signs of a mental disorder is thinking about or attempting suicide. ***If you are thinking about hurting yourself or about suicide, seek help right away.*** There are many ways to get help, including the following options:

- Call 911 or your local emergency room
- Call your mental health provider or other health care provider
- Contact your employee assistance program (EAP)
- Reach out to a loved one or close friend
- Call a suicide hotline. In the United States you can call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 800-273-TALK (800-273-8255).
- If you are a veteran, call the Veterans Crisis Line at 800-273-8255 or send a text to 838255.

The effects of mental disorders range from mild to severe to life-threatening. Fortunately, many people with mental disorders can be successfully treated with medicine and/or talk therapy once diagnosed.

If you are concerned about your mental health, don't hesitate to seek advice. BHS is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by calling 800-245-1150.

ADHD in the Workplace

Contrary to popular belief, attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) does not just occur in children. ADHD can affect adults as well. While some children seem to outgrow the disorder or learn to compensate for the symptoms, others do not. Many adults with ADHD do not realize they have the disorder.

Adult ADHD 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

ADHD can affect workplace performance. The good news is that effective treatment is available. Adults with ADHD are treated with medication, psychotherapy or a combination of both. Behavior management strategies, such as ways to minimize distractions and improve organization can also be helpful.

Following are tips for employers on workplace awareness and assistance for those who may have ADHD:

Educate employees and managers about mental health disorders, including ADHD. Encourage employees to seek care when they need it by educating the workforce that mental illnesses are real and can be effectively treated. Teach supervisors how to (and how not to) intervene appropriately by focusing on job performance.

Promote the use of employee assistance and health programs. Early intervention is key. Remind employees of the availability of resources for staying healthy and productive. Ensure that employees know how to access care confidentially and quickly by providing information on how to do so in multiple places and throughout the year. Heavily push these messages during times of stress, at the holidays and so forth.

Integrate mental health educational messages in health communication strategies. Include content about ADHD in company newsletters, on the internet and in other regular employee communication platforms.

If you are concerned about an employee's mental health, don't hesitate to seek advice. BHS is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by calling 800-245-1150.

Halloween Fun at Home

Children and adults alike look forward to Halloween festivities. While the COVID-19 restrictions may curtail door to door trick or treating, there are many fun activities for those who choose to stay home.

Make this Halloween a memorable occasion with the following suggestions:

Costumes can still be fun. Talk to your children about what they want to be for Halloween. Costumes do not have to be store-bought. Use your imagination to create outfits for your kids and yourself. Take pictures to share with family and friends.

Decorate your house. This can be a fun activity for the entire family**.** You may choose to decorate the exterior to entertain your neighbors. You can also decorate the interior, which can be the backdrop to your Halloween party.

Pumpkin carving/decorating. No Halloween is complete without the jack-o'-lanterns. Get a pumpkin for each family member for this project. The adults can carve their scariest creations. Children can decorate their pumpkins with paint, craft items and glue.

Halloween treasure hunt. Instead of roaming the streets for treats, hold a treasure hunt in your own back yard. In addition to candy treats, treasures can include inexpensive trinkets bought at the dollar store.

Share scary ghost stories. Creepy ghost stories are fun to share in the dark. If allowed, build a campfire in your backyard. Otherwise, stories told by candlelight or flashlight are equally spooky.

Enjoy your activities; this year may be the start of a new set of Halloween family traditions.

White Bean and Pumpkin Hummus with Pita Chips

Ingredients: 3 (6-inch) whole wheat pitas, each split in half horizontally to form two rounds · 2 teaspoons olive oil · 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt · 1 can pumpkin purée · 2 tablespoons tahini (sesame seed paste) · 2-1/2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice · 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil · 1 teaspoon ground cumin · 1/2 teaspoon smoked paprika · 1/8 teaspoon salt · 1 (15-ounce) can cannellini or other white beans, rinsed and drained · 2 garlic cloves, chopped

Directions: Preheat oven to 400°. Lightly brush rough sides of pitas with olive oil, sprinkle with kosher salt. Cut each pita half into 8 wedges; arrange wedges in a single layer on baking sheets. Bake at 400° for five minutes; rotate pans and bake 5 additional minutes or until crisp and golden. While chips bake, place pumpkin puree and remaining ingredients in a food processor; process until smooth (about 30 seconds). Serve pumpkin spread with pita chips.