

Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

Employee Assistance Programs (EAP) are employee benefit programs offered by many employers intended to help employees deal with personal problems that might adversely impact their work performance, health, and well-being. The program is a voluntary, work-based program that offers free and confidential assessments, short-term counseling, referrals, and follow-up services to employees who have personal and/or work-related problems. EAPs address a broad and complex body of issues affecting mental and emotional well-being, such as alcohol and other substance abuse, stress, grief, family problems, and psychological disorders. EAP counselors also work in a consultative role with managers and supervisors to address employee and organizational challenges and needs. Many EAPs are active in helping organizations prevent and cope with workplace violence, incivility, trauma, and other emergency response situations.

Exhibiting bullying behavior or being the victim of bullies are not necessarily restricted to or caused solely in the workplace. In one study, (Katrinli, Atabay, Gunay, & Cangarli, 2010) authors attributed bullying behavior to many factors including private life problems. In another study, researchers concluded that nurses who actively work towards developing and strengthening their own personal resilience, reduce their vulnerability to workplace incivility while improving the overall healthcare environment (Jackson, Firtko, & Edenborough, 2007). Using EAP services to help employees address private life problems or strengthen their resiliency are measures that can improve the workplace while being core activities of any EAP.

References

- Jackson, D., Firtko, A., & Edencorough, M. (2007). Personal resilience as a strategy for surviving and thriving in the face of workplace adversity: a literature review. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 60(1), 1-9. Retrieved from <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1365-2648.2007.04412.x/abstract?deniedAccessCustomisedMessage=&userIsAuthenticated=false> Accessed March 16, 2014.
- Katrinli, A., Atabay, G., Gunay, G., & Cangarli, B. (2010). Nurses' perceptions of individual and organizational political reasons for horizontal peer bullying. *Nursing Ethics*, 17(5), 614-627. Retrieved from <http://nej.sagepub.com/content/17/5/614.short> Accessed March 16, 2014

