

# Employee Enhancement Newsletter



August 2008 *Helpful resources from your Employee Assistance Program*

## Coping with Obstacles & Failure August's On-Line Chat Topic August 20, 2008

Every month you have the opportunity to chat online with a trained counselor. These live chats are held from 6:00PM to 6:30PM CST. Please join us.

### Back to School

It's school time again! You're probably feeling excited and maybe a little sad that summer is over. Some kids feel nervous or a little scared on the first day of school because of all the new things: new teachers, new friends, and maybe even a new school. Luckily, these "new" worries only stick around for a little while. For tips and to find out more about going back to school, please visit the following link:

Kids Health  
[http://kidshealth.org/kid/feeling/school/back\\_to\\_school.html](http://kidshealth.org/kid/feeling/school/back_to_school.html)



## August 2008 At A Glance

National Immunization  
Awareness Month

[www.cdc.gov/vaccines](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines)

Children's Eye Health and  
Safety Month

[www.preventblindness.org](http://www.preventblindness.org)

Cataract Awareness  
Month

[www.aao.org/aaosite/eyemd/cataract.cfm](http://www.aao.org/aaosite/eyemd/cataract.cfm)

Psoriasis Awareness  
Month

[www.psoriasis.org](http://www.psoriasis.org)

Source: 2008 National Health Observances, National Health Information Center, Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, DC.

### All Parents Are At Greater Risk

There is no category of parent, among all those listed above, who experienced lower levels of depression than non-parents, which researchers found surprising, especially because other adult roles, like being married and employed, are linked with greater levels of emotional well-being.

### Lifelong Effects

Also surprising was the finding that these symptoms don't go away when the kids grow up and move out of the house! Researchers believe that this is because parents still worry about their children and how they're getting along in the world throughout their lives, from the time they're colicky infants and tantrum-prone toddlers to the days when they're worried about promotions at work and marital problems of their own.

### What's Behind This?

We worry about our children's well-being all throughout their lives, from the time that they're tiny and dealing with colic, teething and tantrums, to the time they're dealing with finding jobs and partners and having kids of their own. It's not that parents don't enjoy their children or their roles, but the emotional toll of parenting can be high, partially because parents in the United States are often relatively socially isolated and don't always have support from the community or even their extended family.

For the complete article and more tips please visit: <http://stress.about.com:80/od/parentsunderstress/a/depressionrents.htm?nl=1>

## Parenting Stress and Depression: Who's At Risk And Why?

While parenthood brings immense amounts of joy, pride, personal growth and other good things to those with children, it can also bring a lot of challenges, and researchers are finding that these challenges can take a toll. A parenting stress study by Florida State University professor Robin Simon and Vanderbilt University's Ranae Evenson found that parents have significantly higher levels of depression than adults who do not have children. Here are some of the highlights of the study's findings:

### Higher Risk Factors

The study found that the following parents have higher levels of depression than other parents:

- Parents of adult children living at home
- Parents of adult children not living at home
- Parents who do not have custody of their minor children

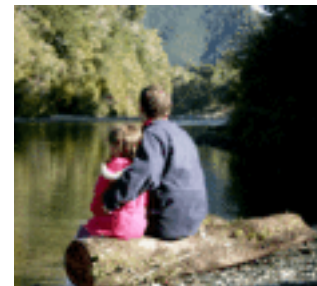
### Lower Risk Factors

Those who exhibited the least depressive symptoms included:

- Parents living with minor biological children
- Parents living with minor adopted children
- Parents living with minor stepchildren.

### The Marriage Buffer

Married parents also have fewer symptoms than those who were unmarried. Both men and women were found to be equally effected by depression, a finding that actually shocked researchers, as it was inconsistent with previous studies and contradicts the historically held assumption that parenthood affects women more.



Parenting Stress: Parenthood comes with ups and downs.  
©iStockphoto.com

Deer Oaks EAP Services, your Employee Assistance Program, is always available to you and your dependents. If you are struggling with your children, your finances, or just want some practical advice on health or the mind-body connection, call Deer Oaks at: 1-866-327-2400.

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## Save Money on Groceries - Grocery Shopping Tips

Have you been shocked by your grocery shopping bills recently? You're not alone. Across the board, we generally see an annual inflation rate of about 3%. This may not seem like much, but there are times when items such as food and groceries increase at a much faster rate. Most families find that when creating a budget, more effort is being made to save money on gas and groceries. Here are some tips that can help you keep your grocery budget under control.

### Don't Shop Hungry

You've heard this a million times before, and it's just common sense, right? Even so, people still do it. Maybe it is because the only time you have available to get your grocery shopping is at six in the evening after work, but it really does make you spend more. If you have to do your shopping at a time when you're likely to be hungry, try to have a snack or something before going. It doesn't have to be much, but just taking the edge off can help keep your impulse buying under control once inside the store.

### Plan Your Meals Ahead of Time

One of the worst things you can do is head into the store without any sort of game plan. You will walk aimlessly up and down the aisles trying to put meals together in your head and grab whatever you come across that could work. This usually results in buying items you don't need, or buying too much of something that ends up going to waste.

Take a few minutes the night before heading to the store and plan out what you'll need for the week. If you go into the shopping trip knowing what you'll be making, it will help keep you from making the extra purchases that aren't needed. When you make your list, you then have to stick to it.

### Scout Deals Before Hitting the Store

Most grocery chains will include their weekly ad in the newspaper, and some are featuring their ads right online. If you take a few minutes to find the good sales before reaching the store, you can use this information to help you create your shopping list and keep costs down.

### 5 Money Saving Tips for Summer

- 1.) Turn off the air conditioning
- 2.) Cook outside
- 3.) Let your laundry dry outside
- 4.) Replace A/C filters
- 5.) Plan ahead for future home & garden projects

Source:  
<http://financialplan.about.com/od/savingmoney/qt/summertips.htm>

### Try Different Cuts of Meat

Keep in mind that the more refined and convenient the cut of meat or poultry, typically the more it costs. Using cheaper cuts of meat can still create a tasty and healthy meal.

### Stock Up on Good Deals

When you do come across a good deal, consider stocking up. This works especially well with regular necessities such as paper towels, toilet paper, and other items you go through regularly. Stocking up works with food as well. You can either freeze what you won't eat right away so you can preserve the food for the coming weeks when it isn't on sale, or you can create a weekly meal plan that uses that product a number of different ways to stretch through the whole week.

### Don't be Afraid of Store Brands

People are hesitant to swap out their favorite name brand item for a store brand, but those products are just as good, and cost less.

### Don't Ignore Coupons

For whatever reason, the idea of cutting coupons has escaped many people today. I don't know if it is because it takes a little extra time, or if it is perceived as being cheap, but there are a ton of opportunities to save money with your weekly coupons. It doesn't take more than a few minutes to flip through your local newspaper and see if there is anything you can use, and chances are, there will be. Just a couple coupons can save you a few bucks each shopping trip.

For more information and tips on grocery shopping, visit <http://financialplan.about.com/od/savingmoney/a/GroceryTips.htm>

### RENTERS' RIGHTS: GET YOUR SECURITY DEPOSIT BACK

Most states hold landlords to strict guidelines as to when and how to return security deposits. The general rule is that you are not responsible for normal wear and tear. If you cause damage by your unreasonable carelessness or deliberate misuse, however, you must pay for it. Landlords are typically required to return your security deposit, or give you an itemized accounting of the deductions from your security deposit, within 14 to 30 days after you move out.

Source: [www.nolo.com](http://www.nolo.com)

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## Matters of the Heart

### The Total-Body Benefits of Berries

Learn about the surprising ways berries boost health

When it comes to health, berries have a fabulous reputation. Blueberries are packed with antioxidants, called anthocyanins, that may help keep memory sharp as you age, and raspberries contain ellagic acid, a compound with anti-cancer properties. All berries are great sources of fiber, a nutrient important for a healthy digestive system. But if you need more reasons to dig into summer's sun-kissed little fruits, look no further than two new studies, which suggest that berries may be good for your heart and your bones as well.



In a study of 72 middle-age people published recently in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition, eating just under a cup of mixed berries daily for eight weeks was associated with increased levels of "good" HDL cholesterol and lowered blood pressure, two positives when it comes to heart health. Included in the mix were strawberries, red raspberries and bilberries—similar to blueberries—as well as other berries more common in Finland (where the research was conducted): black currants, lingonberries and choke berries.

"At the moment we do not know which berry, or berries, could have been the most active," says Iris Erlund, Ph.D., senior researcher at the National Public Health Institute in Helsinki and lead author of the study. But, in fact, the diverse range of polyphenols—a broad class of health-promoting plant compounds that includes anthocyanins and ellagic acid—provided by the mix of berries is likely responsible for the observed benefits. Polyphenols may increase levels of nitric oxide, a molecule that produces a number of heart-healthy effects. One is helping to relax blood vessels, which subsequently results in lowered blood pressure, says Erlund.

Polyphenols may also help preserve bone density after menopause, according to new research in the Journal of Nutritional Biochemistry. Our bones are constantly "turning over"—breaking down and building back up. After menopause, when estrogen levels plummet, bone breakdown outpaces bone formation, and the result is bone loss, a risk factor for osteoporosis. In the study, rats that had their ovaries removed (to mimic an estrogen-deprived postmenopausal state) and were fed blueberries every day for three months significantly increased their bone density, scientists at Florida State University discovered. "We believe that polyphenols in the berries slowed the rate [of bone turnover], ultimately saving bone," says Bahram Arjmandi, Ph.D., R.D., the study's lead author and professor and chair of the department of nutrition, food and exercise sciences at FSU. More research is needed to know for sure whether the benefits translate to humans but, says Arjmandi, the data suggest that eating even a small amount of blueberries each day—perhaps as little as 1/4 cup—could be good for anyone's bones.

Source: <http://health.msn.com/health-topics/cholesterol/articlepage.aspx?cp-documentid=100205415&GT1=31007>

### Raising Good Cholesterol Levels

The good cholesterol, or HDLs (high-density lipoproteins), should not get too low since these particles help sweep away excess fat in the blood. This helps prevent the fat from oxidizing and building up on the walls of your blood vessels. The following healthy habits can boost your HDL numbers:

- Lose excess body fat
- Avoid trans fats
- Go for good fats and plenty of plant foods
- Exercise on most days of the week
- Burn an extra 800 to 2200 calories per week with cardio

For more information read An Action Plan for High Blood Cholesterol, by Dr. Larry Durstine and my past column "Good Cholesterol, Bad Cholesterol," at <http://health.msn.com/health-topics/cholesterol/articlepage.aspx?cp-documentid=100123957>

Source: MSN Health & Fitness  
<http://health.msn.com/health-topics/heart-and-cardiovascular/articlepage.aspx?cp-documentid=100147618>



#### The 10 Best Foods You're Not Eating

- |                     |                 |
|---------------------|-----------------|
| ✓ Beets             | ✓ Cabbage       |
| ✓ Guava             | ✓ Swiss chard   |
| ✓ Cinnamon          | ✓ Purslane      |
| ✓ Pomegranate juice | ✓ Goji berries  |
| ✓ Dried plums       | ✓ Pumpkin seeds |

Sources: MSN Health & Fitness  
<http://health.msn.com/nutrition/slideshow.aspx?cp-documentid=100168275>