

February 2009

SAFETY TIP OF THE MONTH

ALCOHOL AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE INDICATORS

(PART 2)

TIPS FOR CSW'S IN THE OFFICE

Drug and alcohol addiction are serious problems affecting many people in workplaces around the globe. DSS recognizes drug and alcohol use and dependency as potential health problems for employees and as safety and security risks for the department as an employer. Therefore, employees are encouraged to seek assistance if they need help with drug or alcohol addiction and to help colleagues who may be struggling with addiction issues. Help is available through the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) or other counseling and rehabilitation services.

Working under the influence of drugs or alcohol places others at risk—including co-workers and children in the division's custody, who may be being transported by an impaired driver. The Division has strict policy regarding employees using alcohol or other drugs during work hours even if consumed off state premises or when off duty.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services reported in 2006 that 11% of workers had a problem with

alcohol and that most drug users are employed. Of the 17.9 million illicit drug users aged 18 or older, 13.4 million (74.9%) were employed.

Co-workers who use alcohol or drugs at work, or drink heavily away from work, are more likely than other employees to exhibit job withdrawal behaviors, such as spending work time on non-work related activities, sleeping on the job, taking long lunch breaks, or leaving early. These workers are also 3 ½ times more likely to be involved in a workplace accident.

In the same way families suffer from the substance

If you know a co-worker who is struggling with an addiction, please help!



abuse problems of a loved one, co-workers can find themselves affected. They may have to "pick up the slack" for an addicted co-worker who is not producing or find the office in discord from his/her addiction.

Therefore, it is recommended that if you know a co-worker has a problem with alcohol or drugs, speak to him/her first. Let them know you are concerned and try to get them to address the problem themselves. If they fail to take action speak to your supervisor before something happens to your co-worker or someone around him/her. Even properly administered and dosed prescription medications can cause adverse reactions, sometimes resulting in impaired functioning. If you are taking prescription medications advise your supervisor as necessary if you have reactions.

Additional Helpful EAP Information

EAP # (800) 808-2261

Website: http://www.mchcp.org/se/member/se_eap.htm

<https://www.maggellanassist.com/default.asp> select "new or unregistered user" to set up username and password. Enter "800-808-2261" follow directions

More information on this topic may be found through the U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration Center for Mental Health Services @ www.samhsa.gov