Bridging Divides: Respect & Working Together

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SYSTEMS
Behavioral Healthcare Programs for Business & Industry Since 1989
State Employee Assistance Program

This presentation is part of the services provided by the State Employee Assistance Program through Behavioral Health Systems, Inc. The State EAP is administered and managed by the State Department of Finance’s Division of Risk Management (DORM).

If you have questions regarding the policy, procedures or services provided by this program, please contact the Program Coordinator, Kwatasian Hunt, at kwatasian.hunt@finance.alabama.gov. You can also find more information about the State Employee Assistance Program on the Division of Risk Management’s website at www.riskmgt.alabama.gov.
Objectives

- Recognize the value and challenges of diverse interactions
- Understand the factors involved in disrespect, harassment and bullying
- Explore positive response strategies
- Discuss effective ways to communicate with different generations
- Review State of Alabama’s EAP benefits
“A diverse mix of voices leads to better discussions, decisions, and outcomes for everyone.”

-Sundar Pichai
What is Diversity?

Understanding that each individual is unique, and recognizing our individual differences. These can be along the dimensions of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical abilities, religious beliefs, political beliefs, or ideologies.
Advantages of Workforce Diversity

- Creativity increases when people with different ways of solving difficult problems work together towards a common solution.
- Productivity increases exponentially when people of all cultures pull together towards a single inspiring goal.
- New attitudes are brought to the business table by people from diverse cultures.
Advantages of Workplace Diversity

- Language skills are needed for today’s increasing global economy and diverse workers often have this proficiency.
- By relating to people of all backgrounds, Americans will gain a greater perspective on how different cultures operate and experience greater success in global business.
- New processes can result when people with different ideas come together and collaborate. Workers must bring multiple skills to the environment, think cross-culturally, and adapt quickly to new situations.
Barriers to Workplace Diversity

- We’re afraid our own perspective won’t be good enough
- We invite the wrong people to the table
- Deep cultural problems within the organization have not been addressed
Actions to Overcome Barriers

- Host a meeting. Start by identifying an issue in need of resolution and invite key influencers to the meeting.
- Abandon “right and wrong.” Instead reframe right and wrong to what “will work” or “won’t work” for the matter at hand.
- Practice inclusion without illusion. Don’t just implement inclusion initiatives for the sake of best practices. Do so out of genuine curiosity and interest.
Workplace Bullying: Awareness, Prevention & Intervention
Workplace Bullying

- Workplace bullying occurs when one person or group of people intentionally inflict pain or harm on another person in the workplace.
- Workplace bullying can include such tactics as verbal bullying, physical bullying, internet bullying or sexual bullying.
Why Employees Bully Each Other

- A bully’s behavior is usually driven by a need to control
- These employees want to call the shots and often insist on having things their way
- Many times, these bullies relate well to others and have a lot of influence with the company. As a result, they use these behaviors to control other people
Why Employees Bully Each Other

- Sometimes workplace bullies target their co-workers out of jealousy
  - When this happens, the bullying plan is an attempt to reduce the target’s recognition by turning others against them

- Other times, workplace bullying occurs because the bully has poor impulse control
  - When this happens, the bullies are likely to use direct insults and negative comments
How Bullying Affects Organizations

Consequences for bullying can be very costly:

- Replacing staff members that leave as a result of bullying
- Work not properly or timely completed as staff cope with bullying incidents
- Costs associated with investigations of bullying and potential legal action
Keys to Workplace Professionalism
Professionalism 101

- The Combination of
  - Image – How people see you
  - Communication – How well you communicate
  - Competence – How well you perform
  - Demeanor – How you carry yourself
Professionalism is not:

- Letting your ego take over
- Blaming others
- Bringing drama to situations
- Losing your cool during stressful times
- Making excuses
- Having a bad attitude
What is a Respectful Workplace?

- In a respectful workplace:
  - Employees are valued
  - Communication is kind, open and honest
  - People are treated as they wish to be treated
  - Disagreements are addressed in a positive and respectful manner
  - Disrespectful behavior is addressed
What is NOT a Respectful Workplace?

- An environment where:
  - People yell at others or use offensive words
  - People blame others without facts or reason
  - People refuse to work with another employee or group of employees
  - People take credit for work they did not complete
  - People disrupt meetings with sarcasm or insults
Effects of “Disrespect”

Individual
- Feelings of frustration
- Anger & helplessness
- Loss of confidence
- Inability to sleep
- Panic & anxiety
- Depression
- Inability to concentrate

Workplace
- Increased absences from work
- Increased employee changes
- Increased risk of injury
- Decreased productivity
Respecting Our Differences

- Working with different types of employees is vital because it leads to a great reputation for the company, which in turn, leads to increased profits and opportunities for workers.

- Working with different personalities, at different stages of their career, can help with creativity by bringing a variety of ideas to the table.
When Employees Disagree

- Employees will not get along from time to time because of differences in their personalities, lifestyles, opinions or any number of reasons.
- When there is unresolved disagreement in the workplace, it affects everybody.
When Employees Disagree

- The unpleasant atmosphere not only makes the office environment uncomfortable – it can also negatively impact business productivity.
- When handled correctly, employee disagreements can lead to healthy competition and better ways of getting things done.
Employees’ Role in Creating a Respectful Workplace

- All employees are encouraged to address disrespectful behavior when it happens, tell the person to stop
- Refuse to participate in disrespectful behavior
- Support colleagues who are the target of that behavior
- Be aware of your role in allowing disrespectful behavior
- Report to supervisor when necessary
Leaders’ Role in Creating a Respectful Workplace

- If you observe someone being treated in a humiliating, degrading or disrespectful manner, address the issue
- Discipline where appropriate
- Provide consistent discipline to employees
Creating a Workplace of Positive Communication
What is Good Communication?

Good Communication can:
- Help us work together
- Help us get the job done right
- Prevent arguments
What is Good Communication?

- Thinking before speaking
  - Taking the time to think about what you want to say
- Having confidence
  - Practicing before time so you feel comfortable with the information
  - Being aware of how you stand or move your hands while speaking
What is Good Communication?

- Being clear
  - Avoid using big words if you don’t know what they mean
  - Pronounce words so that people can understand what you are saying
- Changing how loud or how soft you speak
  - This makes listening to you more interesting
  - Make certain parts more important by speaking softer or louder for emphasis
Good Communication

- Good communication includes:
  - Listening
  - Being aware of body language
  - Managing stress
  - Learning from your emotions
  - Respecting others
Listening

Tips for being a good listener:

• Pay attention to the person speaking
• Do not interrupt the speaker
• Show your interest
Being Aware of Body Language

- Understanding your body language can help you:
  - Connect with others
  - Say what you really mean
  - Work through problems
  - Build better relationships at work and at home
Positive body language includes:
  • Maintaining eye contact
  • Standing still with back straight
  • Using positive body movements
Managing Stress

- Managing your stress can improve your communication by:
  - Being in control of your feelings
  - Being able to control your behavior during a time of stress or during a disagreement
Managing Stress

To manage stress while communicating:

• Know what upsets you
• Take a moment to calm down, slow down
• Look for humor in the situation
• Agree to disagree
In Summary: Learning From Your Emotions

- Being able to recognize your emotions helps you:
  - Understand from others point of view
  - Stay motivated
  - Communicate clearly and effectively
  - Build strong, trusting and rewarding relationships
  - Think creatively, solve problems and manage disagreements
In Summary:
Learning From Your Emotions

Not being aware of your emotions will affect your ability to:

- Fully understand others
- Problem solve
- Resolve disagreements
- Build connections with others
In Summary: Respecting Others

- Each team member is equally important
- Each team member’s work is equally important
- Each team member has the right to be heard
In Summary:
Small Changes Can Have a Big Impact

- Respect one another
- Filter your communication
- Choose your words wisely
- Avoid inappropriate comments
- Be positive & remain calm
- Recognize that the world is made of individuals with various viewpoints and life experiences
- Seek to be better every day
State of Alabama
Review of Your BHS Benefits
About BHS: At a Glance

- 30+ Years in Business
- 750,000+ Covered Lives Nationally
- 87% Client Retention
- Employee-Owned
- Birmingham, AL Headquarters; Midwest Regional Office (Chicago)
- 96% Patient Satisfaction Rate
- “Open” Preferred Provider Network of 25,000+ Providers
- 3% Staff Turnover Rate

Our mission
To provide comprehensive behavioral health services to employers and their beneficiaries which are high quality, cost effective, uniformly accessible, and managed within a least restrictive treatment approach.
State of Alabama: EAP Benefits

All employees and dependents may receive up to three (3) visits/consults at no charge each year.

**Behavioral**
Speak with Counselors
Referrals for mental/behavioral health & substance abuse issues

**Financial**
Speak with Advisors
Assistance with budgeting, estate planning, college, debt restructuring, etc.

**Eldercare**
Speak with Professionals
Help with nursing home & assisted living placement, caregiver issues, etc.

**Well-Being**
Speak with Work/Life Specialists
Help with stress, emotional health work/life balance, etc.
Accessing the EAP

Begins with a call to BHS: 800-245-1150
BHS Care Coordinator is available Monday-Friday from 7:00-5:30 CT

Your BHS Care Coordinator will:
- Verify personal information to confirm benefit eligibility
- Ask a few questions about needs and preferences
- Assist in referring to the appropriate counselor or provider

After hour, weekend and holiday calls answered by licensed mental health professionals – never an automated response system
Accessing the EAP

Dedicated BHS Care Coordinator
When you call BHS, you will speak with the BHS Care Coordinator assigned specifically to the State of Alabama

Marie Wilbanks
Care Coordinator
mwilbanks@behavioralhealthsystems.com

BHS Care Coordinators
Caring, knowledgeable, credentialed counseling professionals who have been selected for their commitment to treat everyone with sensitivity, respect and concern
BHS Website:
www.behavioralhealthsystems.com

Access to:
- Enhanced Member Section detailing your unique benefits and services (Member Access)
- Member Tips & Resources
- Self-Assessment Tools
- Appointment Requests

Online Work/Life (password: DORM):
- Lifestyle tools to support a healthy work/life balance
- Extensive library providing access to relevant articles, seminars, self-help information, news items and more
Bridging Divides: Respect & Working Together

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