



Creating a Less Stressful Work Environment

Some stress is a normal part of daily life however; excessive stress does reduce your physical and emotional health. When people feel overwhelmed they start to lose confidence and become short-tempered, making them less productive and their work less rewarding.

It is really important when working with children and families that we find ways to manage and recognise increased stress. In today's fast paced demanding world, we hardly stop to take a breath, never mind smell the roses.

YOU CAN LEARN TO MANAGE JOB STRESS BY:

★ Taking Responsibility

By improving your physical and emotional well-being. No-one else can do this except you. (See below for some practical ideas.)

★ Flip negative thinking

If you see the downside of every interaction you will find yourself drained of energy and motivation. Think positively about your work, avoid negative thinking colleagues.

★ Learning to communicate more effectively

Ensuring good relationship with management and work colleagues.

TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF

Taking care of yourself is also important for how you behave in the workplace. Sometimes it does not require a total overhaul - even small changes can increase your energy and change your mood. Introduce changes one step at a time.

★ Exercise

Try to have at least 30 minutes of exercise on most days – easy if you are working with children, just get outside and play sport with them or some physical games.

★ Make good food choices

Eat small but frequent meals throughout the day to maintain your blood sugar level

Get enough sleep – stress and worry does cause insomnia. Lack of sleep also leaves you feeling more vulnerable to stress. When you are sleep deprived your ability to handle stress is compromised. When you have had enough sleep you are much more able to manage your emotions.

COMMON FACTORS INFLUENCING WORKPLACE STRESS:

★ Work overload

Don't over-commit yourself. Create a balanced work schedule and remember it is okay to say NO!

★ Change

This can cause an individual enormous stress if change is not explained or understood. Discuss forthcoming changes in the workplace and make sure everyone is involved in the communication loop.

★ Lack of involvement in decision making

People who have the opportunity for decision-making in the workplace have increased job satisfaction. Make sure staff have access to information and input into decisions that will impact on their day to day work.

TIME MANAGEMENT TIPS:

★ Prioritise tasks

Make a list of tasks and tackle them in order of importance. Do urgent tasks first. If you have an unpleasant task attack this first it will make the rest of your day more pleasant.

★ Delegate responsibility

You don't have to do it all yourself. If other people can take care of a task why not let them? Let go of the control and don't oversee every little step. You will be letting go of your own stress in the process.

