

Compass

Take action against addiction

An addiction can have more power over your life than you ever thought possible. Compulsive use of drugs or alcohol, or other such risky behaviors, can damage every part of an individual's family and work life.

Within a family, the impact of an individual's addiction can cause destructive levels of stress, financial and legal problems, and family instability. In the workplace, an employee's addiction can lead to problems such as absenteeism, loss of productivity, job-related accidents, thefts, equipment damage, and strain on coworkers.

By the time a person's substance use escalates into an addiction, it has likely become a chronic, relapsing illness characterized by increased usage and cravings. Fortunately, through intervention and treatment, recovery is possible.

In *Compass* this month, we take a look at:

- Common warning signs of potential drug or alcohol use.
- The damaging impact of addictions both on families and in the workplace.
- Resources to tap into that can help begin the process of recovery from an addiction.

Log on and learn! Access *Addiction* on www.FOH4YOU.com under the Library/In the Spotlight section. There you'll find extensive information about addictions that you can share with family, friends and colleagues.



Employee Assistance Program

We care, just call.

1-800-222-0364

1-888-262-7848 TTY Users

www.FOH4YOU.com



Warning signs of an addiction

Family, friends and coworkers can all play a role in identifying drug or alcohol use in others. Here are some common warning signs suggesting that an individual may be struggling with addiction.

- Problems at work including absenteeism, tardiness, and poor work performance.
- An increase in the amount and frequency of alcohol or drug use.
- Annoyance when others comment on their alcohol or drug use.
- Ignoring responsibilities such as caring for children and pets, and not paying household bills.
- Poor physical appearance or hygiene.
- Forgetting things and misplacing items.
- Difficulty with concentration.
- Legal problems related to alcohol and drug use, such as driving while intoxicated.
- Inability to sleep or being sleepy all the time.

Addictions can impact both home and work

Nowadays it seems there are more ways than ever to become addicted. From dependencies on substances such as alcohol and drugs, to compulsive involvement with gambling, shopping, eating, sex, or even video games, there are many ways to become ensnared in destructive habits. Regardless of the type of addiction, it can seriously damage people's work and home lives.

Impacts on the workplace

It is estimated that U.S. business owners lose over \$100 billion per year due to substance abuse in their workforces. Reduced productivity is a central concern; addicted employees are only two-thirds as productive as nonusers. Plus, coworkers must often compensate for the absence of impaired colleagues. Also, coworkers' safety can be put at risk if a substance user is under the influence at work.

Impacts on the family

When individuals are addicted, they devote much of their time to either obtaining or using substances. The downward spiral can cause confusion and frustration among family members. Feeding a substance habit can be extremely expensive—at the same time a user may be increasingly unable to work—so the family's finances may be impacted. Children in the household are particularly at risk, as the increasing instability damages their home environment. Spousal relationships may begin to unravel, and the entire family structure can be threatened.

Treatment works!

Fortunately, recovery from substance use is attainable. Recovery begins with an acknowledgement of the problem, followed by the individual's participation in a treatment program. Treatment programs can include individual and family counseling plus ongoing aftercare support. Contact your program for expert assistance if you or a family member need help overcoming an addiction.

Finding help for addictions

Check out these resources that can help you combat an addiction.

Find local treatment resources—the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration: www.samhsa.gov/treatment.

Get informed help and support—find treatment centers in your area, at www.recovery.org. Or, visit the National Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Information Center at www.addictioncareoptions.com.

General information about alcohol problems—the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism: www.niaaa.nih.gov.

Drug support groups for families and friends—Nar-Anon Family Groups: www.nar-anon.org.

