

# LEADERSHIP

3RD QUARTER 2024

Reduce Mental Health Stigma in the Workplace pp. 6-7

BIPOC Mental Health: What to Know & How to Help pp. 8-9



*...In this issue...*

**Time Management Tips**

**Why Plan?**

**Pregnancy at Work**

## A word from your Account Management Team...

Welcome to the 3rd Quarter 2024 issue of Leadership!

As we enter the third quarter of the year, we have some insightful articles lined up in our latest edition to support your professional and personal development!

Everything starts on page 4 with “Time Management Tips,” offering practical advice to help you better organize your day and boost productivity. Next, page 5 features “Why Plan,” highlighting the importance of strategic planning in achieving long-term goals. Page 6 dives into “Reduce Mental Health Stigma in the Workplace,” a crucial read for fostering a supportive work environment. For those focusing on inclusivity, “BIPOC Mental Health: What to Know and How to Help” on page 8 provides valuable insights into addressing the unique challenges faced by BIPOC employees. Finally, on page 10, “Pregnancy at Work” offers guidance on how to support expectant employees effectively.

As always, if you need anything this year, including resources on any of the topics discussed in these articles or anything else like reminding employees about parenting services available through the EAP, help with promoting mental health in the workplace, or BIPOC employee support, please give us a call.

Remember, with MINES, you have access to unlimited supervisor consultations for all sorts of things, including employee issues, EAP referrals, policy development and implementation, and more! We are here to help. Please call us at 1-800-873-7138 anytime or contact your account manager directly.

To your health!

– The MINES Team

## Leadership

Q3 2024

### **MINES & Associates**

10367 West Centennial Road  
Littleton, Colorado 80127

800.873.7138

[www.MINESandAssociates.com](http://www.MINESandAssociates.com)

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# Total Wellbeing

# 2024

**Total Wellbeing** is our way of connecting the 8 core dimensions of wellness: Physical, Occupational, Intellectual, Environmental, Financial, Social, Spiritual, and Emotional Wellness to everyday life through regular communications, educational opportunities, and resources designed to equip individuals with helpful and practical knowledge. These tools can be used everyday to strengthen resilience, increase wellbeing, and improve work/life balance.

MINES' **Total Wellbeing** communications not only provide helpful resources, but also serve as a way to increase engagement with the Employee Assistance Program. We encourage anyone to email us directly with questions or needs around wellness topics, comment on our blog or social media posts to let us know their thoughts and what they'd like to see more of, and of course to let us know if there are additional ways we can help in any way possible.

**Total Wellbeing** communications include:

## Monthly Newsletter

Your Monthly Guide to Wellbeing

Every month MINES sends our **Total Wellbeing** newsletter that includes informative articles and helpful tips on a rotating wellness topic. This newsletter acts as a hub for all **Total Wellbeing** communications as it always includes links to our website, online resource library, blog, and social media streams, as well as offers a way for employees and members to get in touch directly via email.

## Wellness Publications

Your Quarterly Resources

Every quarter, MINES releases two publications; **BalancedLiving** and **Leadership**. **BalancedLiving** is a wellness resource designed for anyone looking to balance work, family, and personal time to enhance their wellbeing. We tackle topics like stress, nutrition, fitness, communication, personal development, family issues, safety, and more. **Leadership** collects resources on leadership specific skills and challenges including workplace policy, team building, productivity, morale, conflict management, and more to help address issues that face leadership every day.

## Website

Your Hub for All Things MINES

Our website ([www.minesandassociates.com](http://www.minesandassociates.com)) connects all our resources and communications in one place. Access our blog, newsletter archives, current wellness publications, social channels, service overviews, and access services by completing an online digital intake today!

## MINESBlog

Updates and Resources from the MINES Team

Our blog features wellness resources, articles on current events, insightful stories, and great wellbeing ideas to help inspire one's own creative mindset around wellbeing. It also offers a way for employees and members to communicate on these topics through comments or tell us about other topics they would like to learn more about.

## Social Channels

News, Updates, and Perspective

Follow our channels to get helpful updates, links, and info, or to send us messages or feedback on what you want to see more of!

Twitter: [@MINES\\_bh](https://twitter.com/MINES_bh)

LinkedIn: [www.linkedin.com/company/mines-and-associates](https://www.linkedin.com/company/mines-and-associates)

Facebook: [@minesBH](https://www.facebook.com/minesBH)

**Is there a topic you'd like to see us explore? We'd love to hear from you.**

Shoot us an e-mail at [communications@minesandassociates.com](mailto:communications@minesandassociates.com) and let us know what you'd like to see.





# Time Management Tips

Managing your time involves being able to handle two very distinct elements of your work day: the long-term work goals and the daily responsibilities that lead to the success of the big-picture projects.

## Big-Picture Management

- Evaluate your goals
- Develop long-term and short-term goals that will help you reach those goals
- List your objectives by yearly, monthly, and weekly needs
- Delegate responsibilities whenever possible
- Develop and maintain a support network

## Make a list of daily priorities that you plan to accomplish:

- Don't include tasks that aren't necessary to the success of your goals
- Do your most difficult tasks when your energy levels are at their peak
- Tackle big jobs by dividing them up into smaller parts
- Only take on one job at a time
- Look for ways to improve the efficiency of your daily role
- Set aside time every day to answer your communications
- Learn to say "no" when you can
- Reduce clutter around your workspace
- Use calendars to track your success
- Recognize the difference between doing the job right and perfection **M**



# Why Plan?

When moving towards a goal, planning is crucial. By creating a plan, we can predict possible roadblocks and create positive solutions that will prepare us to deal with the issue and continue to move forward. When we don't take time to plan, problems can arise that could then create a delay or completely derail achieving the original goal. Following the guidelines below will help you prepare an effective plan and ensure success:

- Time is precious. Consider this when you don't feel like planning a project: Fifteen minutes of planning can save you hours of time if the project goes awry.
- When we plan, we consider both the expected and the unexpected, and are prepared for both.
- In your plan, try to include a timetable for accomplishment. This can be a great motivating tool, and can also help you measure progress and success. The timetable creates a pathway so people can better stay on track with their time and efforts.
- A plan can help you look at the big picture so you don't get weighed down with the small stuff. Sometimes the little bumps can take us off track. A plan can help you and others see what's really important.
- Lastly, a plan can help you develop a vision of the future. By plotting out steps, you can better judge what is working and what isn't working, and what is time-consuming and what saves time. Through this, planning can help generate new ideas and ways of doing things. **M**





# Reduce Mental Health Stigma in the Workplace



Mental health is one of the most common issues affecting workers today. Over 50% of people will be diagnosed with a mental illness at some point in their lives. That makes it almost certain that at least some people at your workplace are affected by mental health issues.

But we don't hear people talking about mental health very often at work. This is because of stigma. Stigma can be very dangerous, and is often the culprit behind why people don't get the mental health treatment they need. Mental illness is just as serious as physical illness. When left untreated, it could become severe and even fatal.

Especially if you hold a leadership position in your workplace, what you do and say has a big impact. You can use this influence to make strides toward moving your workplace away from mental health stigma. Here are 6 strategies you can try.

## What is stigma?

First of all, it's important to understand what stigma is, and what it looks like in the workplace. Stigma can be broadly defined as a negative societal attitude about something, usually a group of people.

For example, leprosy, scabies, and sexually transmitted diseases are all examples of health conditions that have carried (or still carry) stigma. Other experiences and characteristics also carry stigma, like having been convicted of a felony in the past.

Although we've come a long way, mental health still carries a large stigma. This is especially true in the workplace. According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness, 8 in 10 workers say that shame and stigma prevent them from getting the help they need for a mental illness.

This is a serious conversation that we need to approach in our places of work. By doing your part to fight mental health stigma, you make it more likely that employees who need mental health support will get it.

## 6 strategies to fight mental health stigma at work

Each of us plays an important role when it comes to reducing mental health stigma in the workplace. Here are 6 strategies that people in different positions can use to help fight stigma one step at a time.

### 1. Create supportive mental health policies

It's one thing to say that you support mental health awareness, and it's another to show it through action. Creating and advocating for supportive policies around mental health is one of the most effective ways to make it clear to employees that you stand against mental health stigma.

Some policies to consider include:

- Allowing people to take time off for mental health, no questions asked
- Anti-discrimination policies for people with mental illness
- Offering accommodations for mental health challenges
- Allowing flexible working hours so people can take care of mental health needs
- Ensuring that employees have healthcare benefits that include affordable mental health services



## **2. Share openly about mental health**

Many people feel they can't share their mental health struggles at work because no one else does. If mental health is never discussed, it may be perceived as inappropriate to talk about.

Challenge this by openly discussing mental health. If you're stressed or burnt out, talk about it. This shows employees it's okay to do the same. While it's important not to "dump" all emotional struggles on colleagues, no one should have to hide their struggles either.

## **3. Speak up when you hear stigmatizing language**

The words we use when talking about mental health matter. Often, we misuse mental health terms without thinking, like saying you're "so OCD" for needing an organized desk or calling a finicky printer "bipolar." These might seem harmless but they perpetuate mental health stigma.

Use mental health terms correctly and never as jokes. You may not know who in your workplace lives with these conditions. Learn the correct terminology and use person-centered language. Don't hesitate to make gentle corrections when you hear others making unintentional but hurtful mistakes.

## **4. Create a mentorship program**

As open as you try to be about mental health issues in the workplace, it's important to understand that some people may just not feel comfortable talking about mental health with their manager or human resources staff. Creating a mentorship program can connect employees with more experienced mentors who can guide them both professionally and personally.

Mentorship is usually designed to help newer employees succeed in the workplace. A mentor can guide their mentee in terms of career and work-life balance. But they could also serve as a trusted person to who the mentee feels comfortable talking about mental health issues. The mentor could help the mentee navigate their mental health in the workplace.

## **5. Bring in a mental health professional**

Lastly, consider bringing a mental health professional once a month to talk to your employees about mental health concerns. Even if you offer mental health benefits, like an Employee Assistance Program (EAP), people may feel too ashamed to access them. By bringing in a professional who is easily accessible, it might make it more likely that people will actually seek the help that they need.

You could work with community organizations or your EAP to find an appropriate mental health expert. A mental health expert can also assess your company culture and give you more tips on what you could do to reduce stigma.

## **6. Deliver training**

People have different levels of exposure to mental health topics. Providing mental health awareness and stigma training in the workplace ensures all employees have access to accurate information. Managers especially need this training to navigate employee concerns. Such training can cover recognizing signs of common conditions and supporting struggling colleagues, opening conversations around mental health and fighting stigma. **M**



# BIPOC Mental Health: What to Know & How to Help



While mental health awareness is crucial year-round, BIPOC communities face additional hurdles in terms of their mental health, from racial trauma to limited access to culturally competent treatment. By openly discussing BIPOC mental health, we can foster a more inclusive and supportive work environment where everyone feels comfortable bringing their whole selves to work. In today's important blog, we explore BIPOC mental health and offer actionable steps your organization can take to support BIPOC employees.

## Why is it important to talk about BIPOC mental health?

We celebrate Mental Health Awareness Month in May, but BIPOC — an acronym that includes Black people, Indigenous people, and other people of color — Mental Health Month is also crucial because BIPOC individuals face unique challenges. Highlighting these experiences ensures their mental health needs are addressed and access to treatment is improved.

In the workplace, discussing BIPOC mental health fosters a psychologically safe environment where employees can bring their whole selves to work without fear of judgment. This inclusivity shows BIPOC employees that they are valued and supported year-round.

## Issues and challenges that affect BIPOC mental health

Mental illness doesn't discriminate, but unfortunately, we've seen that the mental health system — just like every system — does. BIPOC face unique challenges in their daily lives that affect their mental health. In addition, BIPOC experience barriers to mental health treatment that make it more difficult for them to get the help they need and deserve. Here are some of the unique barriers and challenges that many BIPOC face in terms of mental health.

### Racial trauma

BIPOC continues to experience the effects of racial trauma, historical and current. Not only do many BIPOC, including Native/Indigenous Americans and descendants of enslaved people, experience the far-reaching effects of generational trauma — but they also continue to be the target of racial harassment, microaggressions, and institutional racism.

Research shows that this racial trauma has led to symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in many affected BIPOC. PTSD can heighten the risk of other mental health problems, including depression and anxiety.

### Cultural mistrust and lack of culturally appropriate providers

As of 2019, 70% of U.S. social workers and nearly 90% of mental health counselors were white. This contributes to BIPOC mistrust of the medical system, particularly white practitioners, due to a history of systemic biases.

Language barriers also hinder BIPOC access to mental health services, as providers fluent in languages other than English are scarce. While therapists strive for better cultural competence, true trust and engagement will improve as the psychological workforce becomes more diverse.

### Lack of insurance

In the United States, a lack of health insurance is also a significant barrier to mental health treatment access for BIPOC. Nearly 20% of Hispanic people, and over 10% of Black people, are uninsured, compared with around 6% of whites. This is





likely due to multiple complex factors, including economic disparities. Without health insurance, BIPOC individuals often don't have a way of covering the cost of mental health treatment services.

### **How your organization can support BIPOC mental health & employees**

Your organization can take significant actions to help support BIPOC mental health and improve treatment access. Reports show that most individuals access mental health treatment through their jobs. In addition, satisfaction and happiness at work can significantly affect mental health for all employees. Here's how to support BIPOC mental health in your organization, not only during July but throughout the year.

**Raise awareness** - Having open and honest conversations about mental health is one of the cornerstones of creating a supportive and psychologically safe workplace. BIPOC Mental Health Month can serve as a starting point for ongoing discussions throughout the year.

Organize workshops or invite guest speakers to address the specific challenges faced by BIPOC communities. By integrating mental health awareness campaigns and resources into your company culture, you can normalize seeking help and reduce mental health stigma.


**Review DEI policies** - Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) policies are crucial for building a workplace that embraces BIPOC employees. Review your existing DEI policies with a focus on mental health. Do they include provisions for reasonable accommodations for mental health needs?

Good DEI policies and practices are also important to ensure that BIPOC employees feel emotionally safe at your company. Consider trainings, including unconscious bias training and anti-racism trainings, to ensure managers understand how microaggressions can impact BIPOC's mental well-being.

**Build and encourage employee resource groups** - Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) provide a valuable support system for BIPOC employees. These groups can offer a space for shared experiences, fostering a sense of belonging and community.

Encourage the creation of BIPOC-focused ERGs, or support existing ones through funding and resources. Having a strong support system at work can help BIPOC employees feel safer and mentally well.

**Ensure good mental health benefits** - Helpful and accessible mental health benefits are essential for supporting BIPOC mental health as well as the mental health of all employees.

Review your current health insurance plan to ensure it provides adequate coverage for mental health services. Consider offering options with lower deductibles or copays for mental health treatment. Including Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) is also important. EAPs offer confidential counseling and resources, and can play a key role in helping BIPOC employees find culturally competent care and navigate the complexities of the healthcare system. 

# Pregnancy and Work



The decision to work outside the home during pregnancy is best made with advice from your health care provider. Most women with healthy pregnancies are able to continue to work until delivery. When discussing your options, your provider will talk with you about your responsibilities at work, your health history and your workplace environment.

## **If you do heavy lifting**

If your job requires heavy lifting, prolonged periods of standing and frequent stair climbing, your provider may suggest talking with your employer about temporary changes that are better for you and your baby. If you work long hours and experience excessive stress, you may consider reducing your work schedule or sharing work duties with another employee.

The biggest concern of heavy physical demands or undue stress is the risk of premature birth. When a baby is born before 34 weeks and weighs less than five pounds, chances increase for permanent problems, such as respiratory difficulties, blindness, learning disabilities and even death. Some research has shown that these babies are more likely to be obese and develop diabetes or heart disease as adults.

Unless you are already at risk for premature labor, work and stress are not likely to be a problem. There is still medical uncertainty about this, however, so discuss the issue with your health care provider.

Falls can be a problem for some pregnant women who do heavy work. Dizziness, fatigue and nausea in the first trimester can increase your risk of falling. Later in pregnancy, your balance can be thrown off by the extra weight of pregnancy as well as by your changing body shape.

## **Medical reasons for not working**

If your body is showing signs of early labor, such as early dilating, your doctor may require you to stop work. Other medical reasons for stopping work are high blood pressure, diabetes and previous pre-term delivery.

## **If you work with chemicals**

If you work in an environment where you are exposed to toxic chemicals or radiation during your pregnancy, you can harm the developing baby. Exposure can happen when you inhale, swallow or have skin contact with a toxic substance. Some chemicals can circulate through your blood and pass into the placenta. If a chemical is in a sealed container, there is no exposure. Radiation can pass directly through your body to your baby.

Your employer should have information on the toxicity of these substances. You can also call your local poison control center with the names of the chemicals to check for any risks to pregnant women. Every hazardous substance should have a Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) from the manufacturer available at the worksite. An MSDS is a document that contains information on the potential health effects of exposure and how to work safely with the chemical product. Users should know they have the right to get this information in order to learn if they are working with hazardous substances. State public health departments have environmental health personnel who can also advise users; unions also should have this information.

Birth defects from harmful solvents can occur early in pregnancy -- sometimes as little as two weeks after your missed period. If you are planning a pregnancy, think ahead and learn about any harmful effects of substances in your work area.





## About the Medical Leave Act

If your doctor ultimately requires you to stop work during your pregnancy, you may, under the U.S. Family Medical Leave Act, be eligible for 12 weeks of unpaid leave with a guarantee that you will not lose your job. To be eligible, you and your employer must meet certain requirements. If you are planning a 12-week leave after your baby is born under the U.S. Family Medical Leave Act, time off before delivery will count as part of your 12 weeks unless your employer offers another maternity leave program.

If you continue to work while you are pregnant, talk with your doctor about any difficulties you have at work that affect your pregnancy.



*“Reduce stresses if you can. Research has shown that excessive stress has negative effects on pregnancy, including premature delivery and an increased risk for childhood asthma.”*



## Talk with your doctor

When you discover you are pregnant, talk with your doctor about your health history to determine your risk for complications from working. Learn whether any harmful substances in your workplace could pose a danger to you or your unborn child. Determine your needs and talk with your employer about options for working at home or creating a flexible schedule. Know your rights under the U.S. Family Medical Leave Act. Most women work throughout their pregnancy with no complications.

## Self-care Steps for Pregnancy and Work

Avoid heavy lifting and prolonged standing. If you must stand, ask for a stool to sit on while you work. Remind your employer that your request to sit is temporary and a healthy alternative for you and your baby.

Eat throughout the day, if you are nauseated. Keep healthy snacks near your workstation. Don't forget to drink water. If you skip a meal because you are too busy, your baby skips that meal, too.

Rest, if possible. Take short breaks during the day. Go for a walk, or find a quiet place to sit.

Reduce stresses if you can. Research has shown that excessive stress has negative effects on pregnancy, including premature delivery and an increased risk for childhood asthma. **M**



## *A note to Supervisors...*

From time to time, situations arise when a supervisor is not sure how to respond to a particular behavior. The Employee Assistance Program is available on a 24/7 basis for consultation on issues such as: referring an employee to the EAP, how best to respond to and manage difficult behavior in the workplace, and whether training or some other form of group intervention (such as an organizational intervention or a conflict resolution) may be helpful for a particular situation. The EAP can serve as an ally to anyone who is working with a troubled employee.

- *24/7 supervisor consultation regarding problems in the workplace*
- *Assessment of behavioral risk on the job*
- *Return-to-Duty conferences*
- *Advisory services in writing, revising, and implementing policies*
- *Supervisor and Manager training*
- *Unlimited formal Work Performance Referrals*
- *Coaching for management and leadership skills*
- *Conflict resolution for supervisor-employee problems*

MINES believes that employees are an organization's most valuable resource. Your EAP is always available to provide you and your employees with support.

### *The MINES Team*

