



S2 Blueprint for Action

November 7, 2008

Engage the CEO/Make the Business Case

- Make the business case to the CEO/upper management, including the cost to business, liability issues, legal mandates, and corporate social responsibility.
- Provide “Business Case Live Answer” so that employers can get the information they need quickly to be able to present to the CEO/upper management regarding why this issue is important to address at the workplace.
- Work with national groups such as SHRM, EAPA, EASNA, National Business Group on Health and others to further make the business case.
- Contact *Working Mother* magazine to make the issue of how a company addresses domestic violence a “benchmark” for the Best Companies for Working Women.
- Work “peer to peer” with other businesses and organizations to build momentum on the issue – and include the EAP as a partner.
- Recognition (awards, or designation as a Safe, Smart Workplace by CAEPV).

CASE STUDY: For information on the business case regarding domestic violence as a workplace issue, visit http://www.caepv.org/getinfo/facts_stats.php

Manage the Workplace Environment

- Encouraging employers and brokers to ask about an EAPs’ capabilities for identifying and addressing domestic violence issues for the workforce when soliciting proposals, and encouraging EAPs to proactively share their domestic violence programs as value-added strategies for employers when bidding for their business.
- Develop and implementing a comprehensive domestic violence policy, tailored to the specific workplace. A well-prepared “value-added” EAP can be a valuable resource in helping to craft this policy.
- Positioning the EAP as a valued and effective resource in dealing with domestic violence as a workplace issue.
- Craft workplace communications to include domestic violence prevention in the promotion of health and well-being of employees.

- Has the employer considered asking employees about domestic violence in self-assessment questionnaires?
- Can an employer health risk assessment be further utilized or modified to include domestic violence?

CASE STUDY: When Johnson & Johnson started asking employees if they were or had been victims of domestic violence on self-screenings for a variety of topics, employees said “yes.” If they had not asked, they would not have known. (2008)

Utilize the EAP as a Resource

- Encourage employers and insurance brokers to ask about an EAP’s capabilities for identifying and addressing domestic violence issues for the workforce when soliciting proposals, and encouraging EAPs to proactively share their domestic violence programs as value-added strategies for employers when bidding for their business.
- Employer benefits when considering the EAP as a strategic business partner in addressing domestic violence as a workplace issue.
- The employer must ensure that the EAP is adept at dealing with domestic violence. The employer should not be afraid to ask tough questions of the EAP about experience and expertise in dealing with domestic violence.
- For EAPs, experience and expertise in domestic violence as a workplace issue is a way to distinguish themselves from the rest in a difficult economy.
- EAPs offer many resources for families – not only intervention but prevention. Resources for non-bullying, etc. EAPs can be a proactive part of helping to stop the violence before it starts.
- EAPs are encouraged to provide “live answer” whenever possible – victims of domestic violence are not likely to call back or wait through telephone menus.
- Establish “best in class” EAP practices regarding domestic violence and the workplace and place these on the S2 site.

CASE STUDY: When Harris conducted a poll for Johns Hopkins research, they found that 46% of women who were victims of domestic violence contacted their EAP for help, and 89% used the help they received. 71% said their workplace performance was improved. 20% said it was their supervisor who suggested they contact the EAP concerning their domestic violence situation.

However, among women who did not contact their EAP about their domestic violence experiences, the most common reasons given were they did not think of it (32%) and were not comfortable talking about it (24%). Among those who did use the EAP

Among those who did contact the EAP, confidentiality was the most common concern reported with two-thirds (67%) saying they were worried that their employer would find out. (2008)

Address Batterers/Perpetrators/Abusers

- This difficult issue requires more discussion and collaboration among employers, EAPs and DV experts. It is important that EAPs understand issues behind battering – appropriate and non-appropriate referrals and interventions.
- Important that managers know how to deal appropriately in the workplace environment.
- Additional issues include post-traumatic stress disorder (return from war, for example) and how this potentially affects treatment of batterers).
- Issues for an employer dealing with an abuser are more difficult than with victims if the abuser has not violated a workplace policy.
- How can employers and EAPs partner on this issue and work with domestic violence experts for best outcomes?

Education – What is Abuse/Domestic Violence?

- Educate around what abuse is – by defining it as “domestic violence” people may not consider that as “what is happening to me.”
- Both victims and perpetrators may not recognize what is happening as unhealthy unless it is defined for them that way – the EAP has a valuable role in providing materials and presentations to help employees understand this – perhaps in concert with local service providers.
- Include domestic violence in the personal health care package for overall wellness.
- The employer, the EAP and local domestic violence resources can work hand-in hand in these efforts.

Provide Training

- Without providing training to the EAP or to managers, domestic violence information is dangerous.
- A policy is meaningless unless an employer has trained managers on what to do if they suspect they have an employee who may be a victim.
- EAPs currently do not have any standardized training for staff on domestic violence so employers must check how EAPs ensure quality control in this area.
- Training for employees on the issue must keep in mind that a workplace most likely has both victims and batterers employed there.
- Training at the employee level is best framed as part of a healthy work environment .
- Local domestic violence experts are key partners to assist employers and EAPs in these trainings.

Collaborate with Community & Resources

- Integrate the expertise of the domestic violence service providers into the referral network offered by the EAP to the employer and providing those resources on brochures, posters, etc. in addition to the EAP.
- Collaborations also include unions, law enforcement, criminal justice system, etc.

Additional Research Needed

- What workplace training programs are effective?
- What is the cost to the workplace of perpetrators? Maine Department of Labor Study was small.
- What is the “return on investment” for a workplace program? Research shows the costs for not doing something, but what about the impact of having a program?

Assessment Tool

- Consider a standardized assessment tool that all EAPs can use in screening for domestic violence.
- Consider a standardized code that all EAPs can use in working with domestic violence cases.
- Consider standardized content for EAPs in addressing domestic violence – tools can vary from EAP to EAP but core content would remain the same.

Additional Resources

- Corporate Alliance to End Partner Violence - <http://www.caepv.org/>
- Society for Human Resource Management – <http://www.shrm.org/>
- ValueOptions – <http://www.valueoptions.com/>
- National Business Group on Health – <http://www.businessgrouphealth.org/>

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