



May is **Mental Health Month** Toolkit

Elevating Mental Health and Well-being for a Resilient Workplace

AMERICAN
PSYCHIATRIC
ASSOCIATION
FOUNDATION



CENTER FOR
**WORKPLACE
MENTAL HEALTH**



Mental Health Challenges in the Workplace: More Common Than You Think

Mental health issues are more common than you think and impact the workplace in many ways, including performance, productivity, retention, disability rates, healthcare costs, and more. Educating employees about mental health through internal communication campaigns, trainings, and resource sharing can help reduce stigma, create and foster a psychologically safe space for people to share and thrive, and ultimately work toward changing the conversation in workplace mental health.

Five fast facts to know about prevalence and impact of mental health in the workplace:

1. More than 1 in 5 U.S. adults live with a mental health condition.¹
2. Mental health illness is the single greatest cause of worker disability worldwide.²
3. 42% of surveyed working adults reported experiencing burnout (“a state of emotional, mental, and often physical exhaustion brought on by prolonged or repeated stress”) and 48% said that they “always” or “sometimes” struggle to get away from their work at the end of the day.³
4. 58% of recently surveyed employees have considered quitting their jobs as a result of their mental health.⁴
5. Mental health issues such as anxiety, depression, and burnout cost the global economy an estimated US \$1 trillion annually in lost productivity.⁵

The good news is that employers are uniquely positioned to positively impact employee mental health and well-being, which is not only the right thing to do, but improves productivity and performance, attracts and retains top performers, lowers overall health care costs, and creates a safe and inclusive work culture.

Show Support for Mental Health and Well-being in Your Workplace

Connecting to resources, support, and elevating the conversation around employee mental health and well-being is important to creating a culture of well-being. As an employer, you can take key steps to support employee mental health and make a positive difference in their well-being by: Planning comprehensive workplace mental health initiatives:

The Mental Health Works Guide provides employers with guidance on how to create or update and maintain a workplace mental health initiative.

[CLICK HERE](#) to access the Guide, and start building a mentally healthy culture within your organization.



Fast fact: Did you know that two-in-five employed adults worry about retaliation or being fired if they take time off for their mental health (44%) or seek mental health care (39%).

Communicating that there is no health without mental health is important, as is clearly and consistently informing employees about the mental health benefits and resources your company has to offer:

- Highlight mental health-related health plan benefits
- Share information for your Employee Assistance Program if you have one
- Connect employees to colleagues that may provide immediate peer support and conversation through Employee Resource Groups (ERGs)
- Add a “Mental Health Moment” to a Human Resources or Company newsletter
- Offer resources, education, and mental health training to employees



Fast Fact: Employed adults who are offered mental health training at work are more likely to be engaged (84% vs. 74%), passionate (77% vs. 64%), or excited (74% vs. 58%) at work compared to those who do not receive such training.

Providing training, like the Center for Workplace Mental Health’s Notice. Talk. Act.® at Work, to employees to better equip them to:

- NOTICE potential signs of mental health concerns,
- TALK with a person about these concerns, and
- ACT to connect a person with services and supports.

Notice.Talk.Act® at Work strengthens employees’ knowledge of the impact of mental health on the workplace. Notice.Talk.Act® at Work is informed by leading psychiatrists and is available in 10 languages, with versions specific to managers and people leaders, as well as all employees.

Interested in learning more about NTA® at Work? Visit workplacementalhealth.org/NTAatWork to learn more about implementing the training at your organization.

Promoting Resiliency for People and the Organization

Excessive stress strains physical and mental health. Building and promoting resilience helps employees manage stress, thrive in a competitive job market, and address workplace conflicts and other challenges on the job. Improving resilience in the workplace is also associated with greater job satisfaction, engagement, happiness at work, commitment to the organization, and better overall health.

How can you support and promote resilience in your workplace?

- Offer and promote opportunities to create professional networks of support, by scheduling or sponsoring networking events, offering diversity enrichment opportunities, and creating mentorship programs.
- Encourage and offer opportunities for mindfulness, meditation, and



other spiritual practices. You might invite a mindfulness leader to present on the value of the practice and then lead a 15-minute mindfulness break during the workday.

- Work with leaders and managers on modeling healthy behavior and responses to work challenges by refocusing reactions to the positive and what's been learned from the situation and prioritizing learning from past mistakes in moving forward.
- Create a safe work environment that allows people to set reasonable work hour limits, prioritize sleep and physical health, and encourage people to access mental health support when it's needed.
- Acknowledge and support people's strengths and be proactive about validating and celebrating employee "wins" to bolster self-confidence.
- Learn more about resiliency, read ["The Value of Resiliency" from the Center for Workplace Mental Health](#).

Supporting Caregivers in the Workplace

Fast Fact: There are more than 26 million working caregivers in the United States.

Researchers are finding that almost two-thirds (61%) of caregivers are employed to some degree, including 60% who work 40 or more hours per week. They have also discovered that 60% of working caregivers experience work disruptions due to caregiving, resulting in 3.2 missed days of work per month and one-third of caregivers quitting their job.

Approximately 53 million U.S. adults serve as caregivers for family, friends, neighbors, or other loved ones with physical or emotional health needs.¹ Despite deriving a sense of purpose from being able to help a loved one, doing so can lead to significant physical, emotional, and financial strain caregivers.



Caregiving involves providing one's time, support, and assistance to someone else. But caregivers themselves also need aid and comfort. Asking for help can be difficult, and it's not always clear where to go for support or resources. This is where employers can step in with caregiver-friendly policies and practices that support the health and well-being of caregivers. Through research and various focus groups, the Center for Workplace Mental Health has created a list of best practices for employers to follow.

- Offer flexible work arrangements and time off options.
- Create a culture that is supportive of caregiving.
 - Conduct a caregiver assessment
 - Establish a Caregiver Employee Resource Group
 - Ensure employees know about paid family leave and similar benefits
 - Shared stories of lived experience
- Take active steps to normalize and support mental health.
- Provide a comprehensive range of caregiver-specific benefits, programs, and supports.

Learn more about supporting caregivers in the workplace by downloading the APA Foundation's Center for Workplace Mental Health's [Addressing the Mental Health Needs of Working Caregivers: A Resource Guide](#).

Recruiting and Retaining Younger Professionals

As more early-to-mid-career professionals (those aged 24–45 years) continue through the U.S. workforce and step into leadership roles, businesses will need to take stock of these employees' unique challenges, needs, and wants and adapt accordingly.



Some of the best practices that speak directly to what Millennial and Gen Z workers say they want, need, and value from their employers include:^{6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12}

- Building a workplace culture that embodies a sense of trust, authenticity, and purpose for younger professionals. This means creating a workplace culture and responsibilities that give them a sense of purpose and meaning, and allows them to feel engaged in the company.
- Being open to offering nontraditional benefits that speak directly to the mental health needs and concerns of younger professionals (e.g., [volunteer time off programs](#))
- Actively involving young professionals in innovation activities and other company processes (e.g., young professional-led advisory boards).
- Helping young professionals meet their occupational goals (e.g., on-the-job training, certificate programs).
- Being transparent about your company's mission and goals and leveraging that to enhance employee engagement and motivation.
- Encouraging group work across divisions and group social activities. This also means including senior leadership in collaborative activities (e.g., reverse mentoring programs).
- Offering flexible work schedules and environments
- Offering benefits that help directly reduce stress and support good mental health (e.g., counseling referral, employee recognition programs, financial management programs, extended maternity/paternity leave).

To learn more, check out the Center for Workplace Mental Health's Playbook for Addressing the Needs of Early to Mid-Career Professionals.

Volunteerism is Good for Employee Wellness

Employers are facing workplace shortages and worker retention due to mental health challenges. With mental health as the single greatest cause of worker disability worldwide and 86% of employers listing mental health as their top concern¹³, employers are seeking effective pathways to wellbeing in the workplace.

Employee-sponsored volunteering is emerging as a powerful opportunity for boosting productivity, increasing employee engagement, and improving hiring and retention.

Why?

There are many reasons volunteerism is emerging as one of the most effective tools to address and improve well-being in the workplace:¹⁴

- Employees who volunteer feel more motivated at work (68%) and report higher satisfaction with their job, company culture, and leadership.¹⁵
- Survey's report 79% of employees who volunteered through work were satisfied with their jobs, compared to 55% of those who didn't.¹⁶
- A 2024 [survey of 1,000 U.S. professionals by Deloitte](#) tells us that 49% of respondents who participated in workplace volunteer programs indicated it helped them build connection with their colleagues.^{17, 18}
- Volunteering reduces stress, lowers blood pressure, improves self-esteem and mood, a feeling of physical wellness, and enhances overall well-being.

For best practices for volunteerism in the workplace visit the [Points of Lights](#) organization and start the pathway to wellness and service today!



References

1. NAMI, Mental Health by the Numbers, retrieved <https://www.nami.org/about-mental-illness/mental-health-by-the-numbers/> on April 2, 2025.
2. One Mind at Work, The Business Case for Investing in Workforce Health, retrieved from <https://onemindatwork.org/the-business-case-for-investing-in-workforce-health/> on March 28, 2025.
3. APA “New Polling Data Shows Most Employers Offer Some Form of Mental Health Benefits, But Burnout Impacts Over 40% of Employees,” retrieved from <https://www.psychiatry.org/News-room/News-Releases/New-Polling-Data-on-Workplace-Mental-Health> on March 26, 2025.
4. Headspace, “The Workforce State of Mind in 2025” retrieved from <https://get.headspace.com/2025-workforce-state-of-mind> on March 28, 2025.
5. World Health Organization, “Guidelines on Mental Health at Work” retrieved from <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240053052> on March 27, 2025.
6. XM Institute. (2015). Engaging Millennials in the Workplace. https://www.qualtrics.com/m/www.xminstitute.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/XMI_EngagingMillennialsInTheWorkplace.pdf?ty=mktocd-thank-you
7. Johns Hopkins University. (2023, April 18). Gen Z in the Workplace: How Should Companies Adapt? <https://imagine.jhu.edu/blog/2023/04/18/gen-z-in-the-workplace-how-should-companies-adapt/>
8. Deloitte Global. (2024). 2024 Gen Z and Millennial Survey. <https://www.deloitte.com/content/dam/assets-shared/docs/campaigns/2024/deloitte-2024-genz-millennial-survey.pdf?dlva=1>
9. Sullivan Benefits. (2016). Retaining Millennials HR Toolkit. <https://www.sullivan-benefits.com/wp-content/uploads/HR-Toolkit-Retaining-Millennials.pdf>
10. Wellmark. (2020). Millennials in Your Workplace. <https://www.wellmark.com/marketing/-/media/sites/public/files/campaigns/millennial-health-ebook.pdf>
11. Reseco Group. (2020). Recruiting and Retaining Generation Z HR Toolkit. <https://www.resecoadvisors.com/wp-content/uploads/HR-Toolkit-Recruiting-and-Retaining-Generation-Z.pdf>
12. Gallup. (2016). How Millennials Want to Work and Live. <https://www.gallup.com/workplace/238073/millennials-work-live.aspx?thank-you-report-form=1>
13. One Mind at Work <https://onemindatwork.org/the-business-case-for-investing-in-workforce-health/>
14. Points of Light Resources, retrieved from <https://www.pointsoflight.org/resources/> April 9, 2025.
15. Ares, “Philanthropy, Purpose and Professional Development: Why Workplace Volunteer Programs Matter”, retrieved from https://www.aresmgmt.com/sites/default/files/2023-09/Ares_Philanthropy_Purpose_and_Professional_Development_Why-Workplace-Volunteer-Programs-Matter.pdf April 9, 2025.
16. SHRM, “Volunteer Programs Can Build Morale and Improve Retention,” 2024 retrieved from <https://www.shrm.org/topics-tools/news/hr-magazine/employee-volunteer-programs> on April 9, 2025.
17. Nichol B, Wilson R, Rodrigues A, Haighton C. Exploring the Effects of Volunteering on the Social, Mental, and Physical Health and Well-being of Volunteers: An Umbrella Review. *Voluntas*. 2023 May 4:1-32. doi: 10.1007/s11266-023-00573-z. Epub ahead of print. PMID: 37360509; PMCID: PMC10159229.
18. United Health Care Group, “Doing Good is Good for You,” retrieved April 9, 2025.

