



## OUR DRIVING CONCERN

*Texas Employer Traffic Safety Program*

# Stress and Its Impact on the Safety and Health of Employees

*What Employers Can Do To Control and Minimize  
Work-Related Stress*

[www.txdrivingconcern.org](http://www.txdrivingconcern.org)

# *Brought to you by...* Our Driving Concern



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*Making our World Safer®*

National Safety Council  
and



Texas Department of Transportation,  
Traffic Operations Division, Traffic Safety Section

# Webinar Presenter



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# Webinar Presenter



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Defensive Driving  
International Advisory Committee



# What you will learn and be able to do



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- ❑ Define stress (and differentiate it from challenge and pressure).
- ❑ Identify causes of stress/factors contributing to work stress.
- ❑ Recognize relationships between stress and employee safety and health.
- ❑ Identify strategies and actions you can:
  - Use to control (prevent or minimize) and respond to job stress.
  - Implement to help employees cope with stress.



Take a moment to complete a poll about workplace stress.



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# What is job stress? (work stress, occupational stress)



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Harmful physical and emotional responses that occur when job requirements do not match worker capabilities, resources, or needs.



National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH)

<http://www.cdc.gov/NIOSH/stresswk.html>

# Key terms



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- Challenge
- Pressure
- Positive (eustress) and negative stress





# What are causes of work stress?



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- ❑ Current economic situation
- ❑ Conditions, situations, and issues common to the workplace



# Cause of work-related stress: Current economic situation



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- ❑ Fear of lay-offs
- ❑ Staff reductions/increased overtime
- ❑ Demands to meet increased expectations (no ad'l pay or recognition)
- ❑ Need to work at constantly high levels
- ❑ Inability to control distractions
- ❑ Feeling loss of control
- ❑ Loss of colleagues (support system)



# Causes of work-related stress: Job conditions



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<b>Design of Tasks</b>	Heavy workload • Infrequent rest breaks • Long work hours • Shiftwork • Fast pace • Hectic and routine tasks that make no sense, do not utilize workers' skills, and provide little sense of control • Automation
<b>Management Style</b>	Lack of participation in decision-making • Poor communication by supervisors (harassing, yelling, sexist, racist) or in organization • Lack of family friendly policies • Mandatory OT
<b>Interpersonal Relationships</b>	Poor social environment • Lack of support/help from coworkers and supervisors • Dealing with hostile clients or customers
<b>Work Roles</b>	Conflicting or uncertain job expectations • Too much responsibility • Too many "hats" • No sense of input/control • Ordered to produce poor work
<b>Career Concerns</b>	Job insecurity and lack of opportunity for growth, advancement, or promotion • Rapid changes for which workers are unprepared • Lay-offs • Relocations • Plant closings/fear of closing
<b>Environmental Conditions</b>	Unpleasant or dangerous physical conditions such as crowding, noise, air pollution, or ergonomic (repetitive motion, bad chairs, glare) problems

Adapted from NIOSH Publication No. 99-101: *STRESS...At Work* at <http://www.cdc.gov/NIOSH/stresswk.html>

Take a moment to complete a poll about workplace stress.



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# Worker characteristics and stress



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- Nearly all agree: stress results from interaction of “worker” and “work conditions”
- Views differ on worker characteristics vs. working conditions as main cause
- What is stressful for one person may not be a problem for someone else
- Views are important because they suggest different ways to prevent stress





# More on individual and situational factors



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Based on NIOSH research/views, other research, and common thinking:

- Exposure to stressful working conditions/job stressors can have a direct influence on worker safety/health
- Individual and other situational factors can strengthen (interesting work, support system) or weaken (divorce, caretaking, holidays) this influence





# Safety, health, and work stress



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Work stress can interfere with employee health and safe work practices AND set the stage for on and off the job injuries/illnesses.

Ranging from:

- Immediate safety problems (I was really distracted when driving, couldn't sleep, didn't see the warning light)
- Long-term health problems (depression, burnout, heart disease, self-abusive behaviors)



# How does stress affect safety and health of your employees?



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## Early Warning Signs

- ❑ Headache or muscle tension
- ❑ Sleep disturbances or fatigue
- ❑ Difficulty concentrating
- ❑ Short temper/ anxious/irritable
- ❑ Stomach problems
- ❑ Job dissatisfaction
- ❑ Low morale
- ❑ Apathy
- ❑ Social withdrawal/ depression
- ❑ Other?



*Mental and Physical Health*

# Health issues and work stress



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- ❑ Cardiovascular disease
- ❑ Musculoskeletal disorders
- ❑ Psychological disorders
- ❑ Suicide, cancer, ulcers, and impaired immune function



# Safety and work stress



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In completing job tasks, an employee may be rushed, distracted, apathetic, careless, oblivious, or angry

FAR reaching effects:

- High (or rising) accident and illness rates
- Anger and aggressive driving
- Crashes and near-misses
- Increased alcohol (or drug) use
- Industry specific issues (transportation, fast food, manufacturing, farming, sales...)



# Stress, morale, and productivity



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When people experience stress, they can lose confidence and become irritable or withdrawn –

*making them less productive and effective... and their work less rewarding.*





# Organizational strategies and actions: A planning model



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## Process and strategies for addressing stress in any organization:

- Step 1: Identify Problem(s)
- Step 2: Design/Implement Interventions
- Step 3: Evaluate Interventions

*Apply continuous improvement strategies that use evaluation data to refine/redirect strategies.*



Adapted from National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health  
(NIOSH)

<http://www.cdc.gov/NIOSH/stresswk.html>



# Organizational strategies and actions: Characteristics



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NIOSH research identified organizational characteristics linked to healthy, low-stress work and high productivity

## *Examples:*

- ❑ Recognition of employees for good work
- ❑ Opportunities for career development
- ❑ Organizational culture that values the worker
- ❑ Management actions consistent with organizational values



# Organizational strategies and actions: EAPs



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## Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

- Worksite resource sponsored by organization or union
- Enhance employee health and productivity: prevention, identification, and resolution of personal/family health, economic, social issues
- Improve employee ability to cope
- Provide individual counseling for employees (work and personal problems)



# Organizational strategies and actions: Stress management



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## Stress management programs:

- Teach about health effects, personal skills to reduce stress (ex. time management or relaxation exercises)
- May rapidly reduce stress symptoms such as anxiety and sleep disturbances
- Inexpensive, easy to implement



# Organizational strategies and actions: Organizational change



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- Seeks to change policies/procedures to reduce organizational sources of stress
- Identifies stressful aspects of work and designs strategies to control stressors
- Strategies include:
  - Match workload to worker capabilities/resources
  - Design jobs to provide meaning, stimulation, and opportunities for workers to use skills
  - Clearly define workers' roles/responsibilities
  - Give workers opportunities for decision-making and actions affecting their jobs.



# National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices (NREPP)



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Coping with Work and Family Stress: 16-session weekly group intervention teaching coping strategies for dealing with stressors at work and home.

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Team Awareness: 6-module workplace-training program on substance abuse behavioral risks among employees, coworkers, and their families.

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Healthy Workplace Program: Prevention interventions that reduce unsafe drinking, illegal drug use, and prescription-drug abuse while improving health practices of adult workers.

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Wellness Outreach at Work Program: Comprehensive health risk-reduction services, health screening, follow-up, health promotion programs.

[http://www.workplace.samhsa.gov/wpworkit/pdf/samhsas\\_nrepp\\_model\\_programs\\_for\\_the\\_workplace\\_br.pdf](http://www.workplace.samhsa.gov/wpworkit/pdf/samhsas_nrepp_model_programs_for_the_workplace_br.pdf)



# Individual strategies/actions: What YOU can do in your role



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1. Plan.
2. Understand employee needs (stress and/or survivors”).
3. Use/apply best communication skills.
4. Realize similarities of layoffs to grieving a death.
5. Model optimism.





# Individual strategies/actions: What YOU can do in your role



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6. Leverage support/positive attitudes from employees.
7. Promote teamwork/encourage group discussions and input.
8. Invite/engage staff in regular conversations
9. Act with integrity/honesty and maintain trust.
10. Demonstrate concern at all times.



# Managing your own stress: Tips for you and your employees



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1. Focus on what you can control, not on what you can't.
2. Maintain an awareness of your situation.
3. Use positive coping skills.
4. Balance your schedule and workload.
5. Set limits with work hours.
6. Take regular breaks, including lunch.
7. Prioritize tasks. Break larger projects into smaller tasks.
8. Delegate or share responsibility.
9. Use your support network/team.
10. Celebrate successes!



# Practice an overall healthy lifestyle



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## Take care of yourself!

- Exercise.
- Make smart food choices/eat sensibly.
- Get plenty of rest.
- Drink alcohol in moderation.  
Never drink and drive.
- Don't smoke/use nicotine products.



# Write or call in



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- ❑ Comments
- ❑ Additional strategies and actions
- ❑ Questions for presenters and/or audience



# Where can I find more about stress and/or employee safety and health?



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- Our Driving Concern
- National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH)
- National Safety Council (NSC)
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)
- Other organizations and web sites, search: Employee stress, workplace stress, job stress, stress, occupational stress





Go to Our Driving Concern at  
<http://www.txdrivingconcern.org>



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Goal: Bring resources to Texas employers and reduce the impact of traffic crashes, on and off the job.

Emphasis on:

- Impaired driving, commercial motor vehicle safety, and driver distractions.
- Working with Texas business owners, executive managers, safety & health, human resource, and public affairs professionals to introduce best practice for traffic safety strategies.



 **Save a Life™**  
Texas Department of Transportation



Go to Our Driving Concern at <http://www.txdrivingconcern.org>



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## Examples of no cost materials:

- ❑ Website at [www.txdrivingconcern.org](http://www.txdrivingconcern.org)
- ❑ Payroll stuffers, posters, and information cards/brochures that employers can bulk order
- ❑ Click It or Ticket and Impaired Driving Mobilization campaign materials
- ❑ Monthly e-newsletter
- ❑ Fact sheets for Impaired Driving, Safety Belt Usage, Effects of Crashes on Business, Distracted Driving
- ❑ Quarterly Webinars



Go to NIOSH at  
<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh>



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## *Examples of NIOSH Pages on Stress*

- ❑ Work Organization and Stress-related Disorders Program Portfolio
- ❑ NIOSH Occupational Health Psychology
- ❑ NIOSH Quality of Worklife Questionnaire
- ❑ Organization of Work: Measurement Tools for Research and Practice
- ❑ Work Schedules: Shift Work and Long Work Hours
- ❑ Traumatic Incident Stress
- ❑ Occupational Heart Disease

Go to NIOSH at  
<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh>



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## Books, Reports, and Videos about Stress

- ❑ Working with Stress Video (17 mins)
- ❑ Stress... At Work Booklet
- ❑ The Changing Organization of Work... NORA Report
- ❑ Worker Health Chartbook 2004: Anxiety, Stress, and Neurotic Disorders

Go to NSC at  
<http://www.nsc.org>



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NSC has all types of resources available to assist you with a wide array of safety and health issues.

*Member and non-member products/services include:*

- ❑ Fact sheets on a number of safety and health topics
- ❑ Training and opportunities for Professional Development
- ❑ Industry-specific newsletters
- ❑ Safety & Health Magazine
- ❑ Family Safety & Health Magazine – especially beneficial because of it's focus on insurance claims, production downtime, and off-the-job issues related to absenteeism
- ❑ Publications such as OSHA Up-To-Date and Traffic Safety



# Go to SAMHSA at <http://workplace.samhsa.gov/>



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United States Department of Health and Human Services

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

## Division of Workplace Programs

[Drug Testing](#) | [Federal Programs](#) | [Non-Federal Programs](#) | [Prevention Research](#) | [Substance Abuse](#) | [Español](#)

[DWP Home](#) | [Search](#)

### Drug Testing

- For Federal Agencies and Employees
- For Labs
- For Specimen Collectors
- For Medical Review Officers (MROs)
- Drug Testing Advisory Board (DTAB)

### General Drug-Free Workplace Programs

- Drug-Free Workplace Kit
- Health-Wellness Workplace Programs
- Personal Assistance in Developing a DFWP
- Federal Links in Developing a DFWP

### Young Adults in the Workplace (YIW)

- Overview
- Interventions and Programs
- Evaluation ToolKit
- Resources and FAQs

### Federal Drug-Free Workplace Programs

- Federal Drug-Free Workplace Programs
- Mandatory Guidelines for Federal Workplace Drug Testing Programs
- Guidance for Selection of Testing Designated Positions (TDPs)
- Specific Federal Programs (NRC, DOT, DoD)

### Prevention Research and Interventions

- Overview and Synopsis
- NREPP Programs
- Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs)

### Workplace Health, Wellness, and Safety

- Overview
- General Health
- Injury
- Life skills
- National Health Observances
- Stress
- Team Skills

### Resources

- Certified Labs
- Factsheets
- Get Fit
- National Data
- Publications
- Resources and Tools
- Treatment Advisory - Alcohol Biomarkers
- Workplace Glossary

### Workplace

- About workplace
- Staff Addresses
- Start Your Own Drug-Free Workplace Program!

Call **1-800-Workplace** for additional information.

[Home](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Staff Directory](#) | [Accessibility](#) | [Privacy](#) | [Disclaimer](#) | [FOIA](#) | [Site Map](#)

The White House | Department of Health & Human Services | [USA.gov](#) | [Grants.gov](#)

# Contact information for Our Driving Concern [www.txdrivingconcern.org](http://www.txdrivingconcern.org)



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# Conclusion: What we accomplished



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- ✓ Defined stress.
- ✓ Identified causes of stress/factors contributing to work stress.
- ✓ Recognized relationships between stress and employee safety and health.
- ✓ Identified strategies and actions you can use to control and respond to work stress.



# Evaluation



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Please complete a short evaluation  
of this webinar.

*Thank You*

*for your participation!!!*