

A photograph of a panel discussion at a conference. Four men are seated at a long table on a stage, facing an audience. The man on the far left is speaking. The other three are listening. There are water bottles and coffee cups on the table. A podium on the right has the conference logo. A screen in the background shows text about Vicbullet. The entire image has a green tint.

EHS Today

# Safety Leadership CONFERENCE

**September 18-20, 2023**

Orlando World Center Marriott | Orlando, FL

[safetyleadershipconference.com](https://safetyleadershipconference.com)

# A Renovation Project

*It's Time to add Mental Health  
as a Safety Training Topic*



# At the conclusion of this session you will be able to:

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Recognize the **IMPACT**  
MH challenges have  
on workplaces &  
worker safety



Effectively and  
appropriately address  
MH as a workplace  
**TRAINING TOPIC**



Access beneficial  
**RESOURCES**



Do these things as a  
**SAFETY PROFESSIONAL**,  
not a Mental Health  
Professional

# What is meant by....

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## **Mental Health**

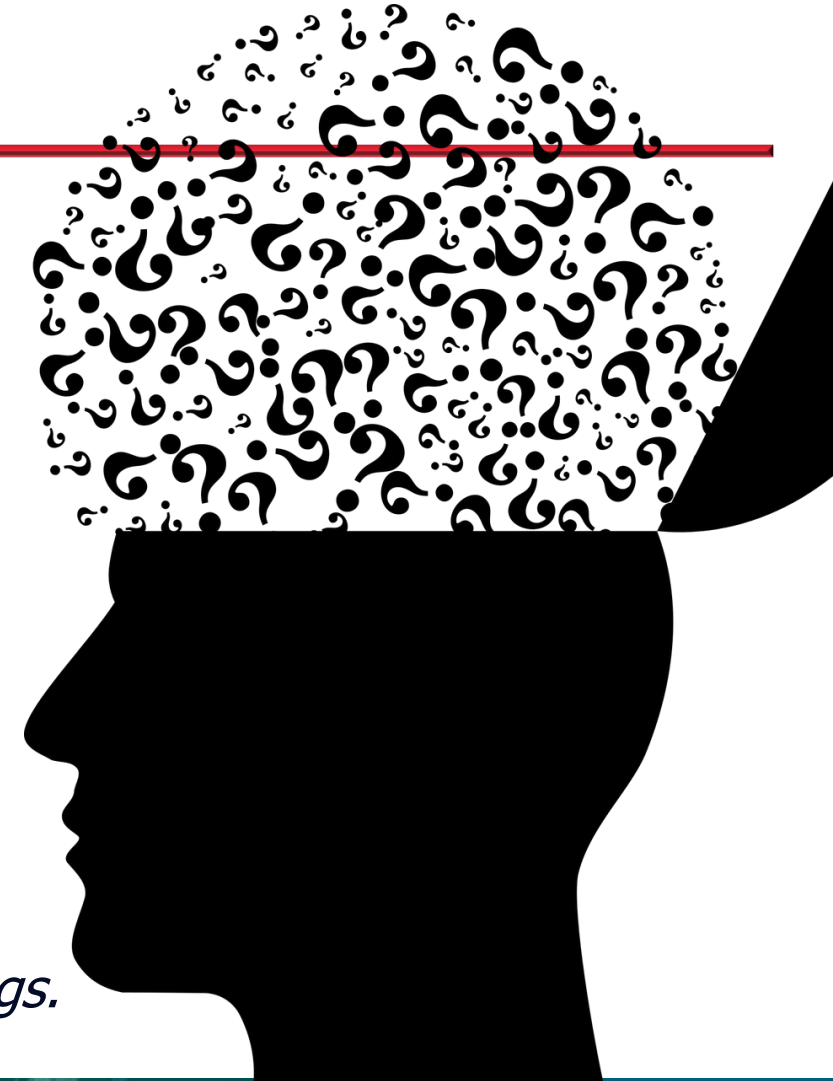
*emotional, psychological, & social well-being.*

## **Mental Illness**

*a diagnosable health condition involving mild to severe impact on emotions, thinking and/or behavior that creates distress or functional impairment in social, work or family activities and interactions.*




## **Mental Health Challenge**

*a situation or condition that temporarily affects the way a person thinks, feels, behaves and/or relates to others and to their surroundings.*

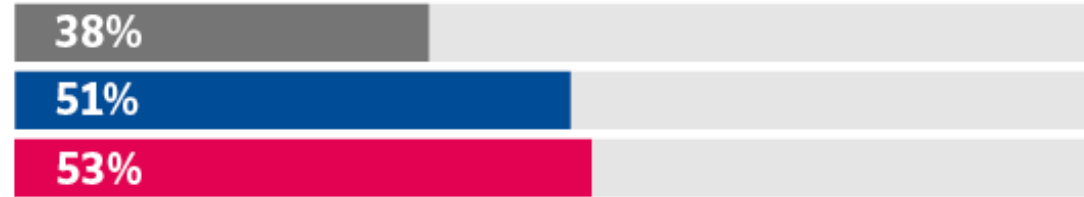


# Feelings in Previous Month

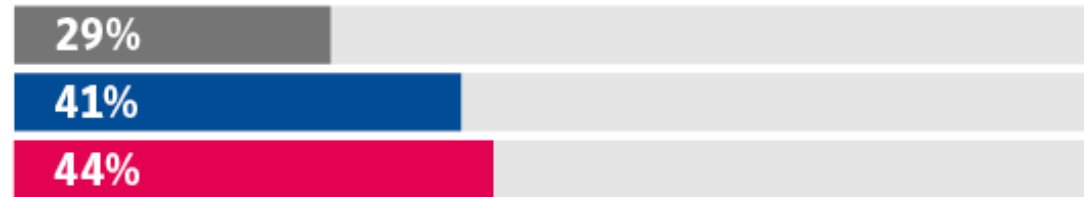
Percent who responded Always, Almost Always, Very or Quite Frequently

-  Administrative, managerial, professional or desk work
-  Work that requires manual labor
-  Work that requires customer interaction, entertainment, or other service-oriented work

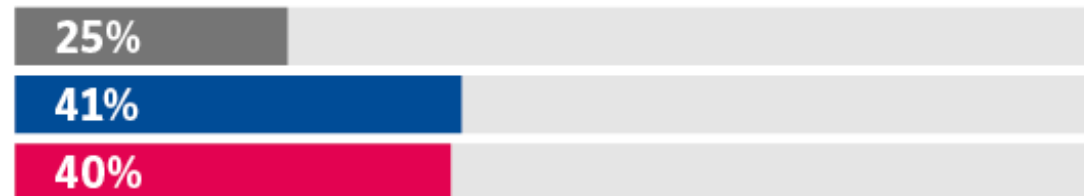
## Physical fatigue



## Cognitive weariness






## Emotional exhaustion

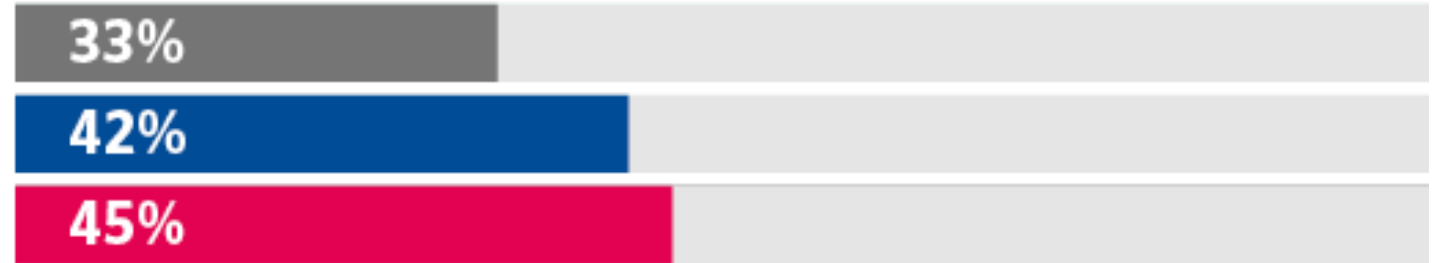


# Interference with Work

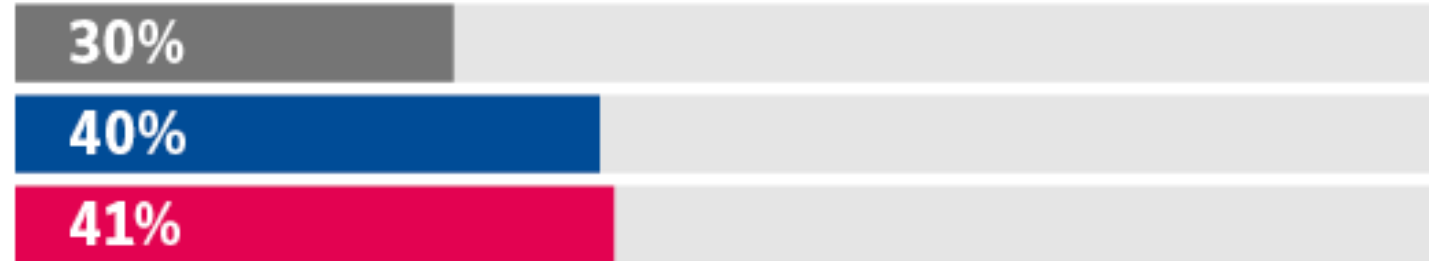
Percent responding Strongly Agree or Agree

-  Administrative, managerial, professional or desk work
-  Work that requires manual labor
-  Work that requires customer interaction, entertainment, or other service-oriented work

## Mental Health



## Physical



COMPOUNDING PRESSURE ON THE AMERICAN WORKFORCE © 2021 American Psychological Association

# The impact of MH on workplaces

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**ANXIETY**

33% of participants in a mental health study admitted to taking time off work due to stress or anxiety.

Depression leads to more than 200 million lost workdays each year.



Source: US Centers for Disease Control



# Mental Health Challenges Relationships.

*“Honestly, I never thought this would be me. I guess I was naïve to believe it would really be ‘til death do us part. How am I going to tell the kids?”*



# Mental Health Challenges

Pressure.

*“What the boss expects is just too much. It’s impossible to meet the deadlines when I can’t find skilled workers to do the job.”*

# Mental Health Challenges

Isolation.

*“I don’t know....I don’t really fit in here. Everybody else is older and has worked here a while. They laugh at what I bring for lunch and tell me it stinks up the whole break room. I dread coming to work everyday.”*



# The Mind and Body Are a Team!

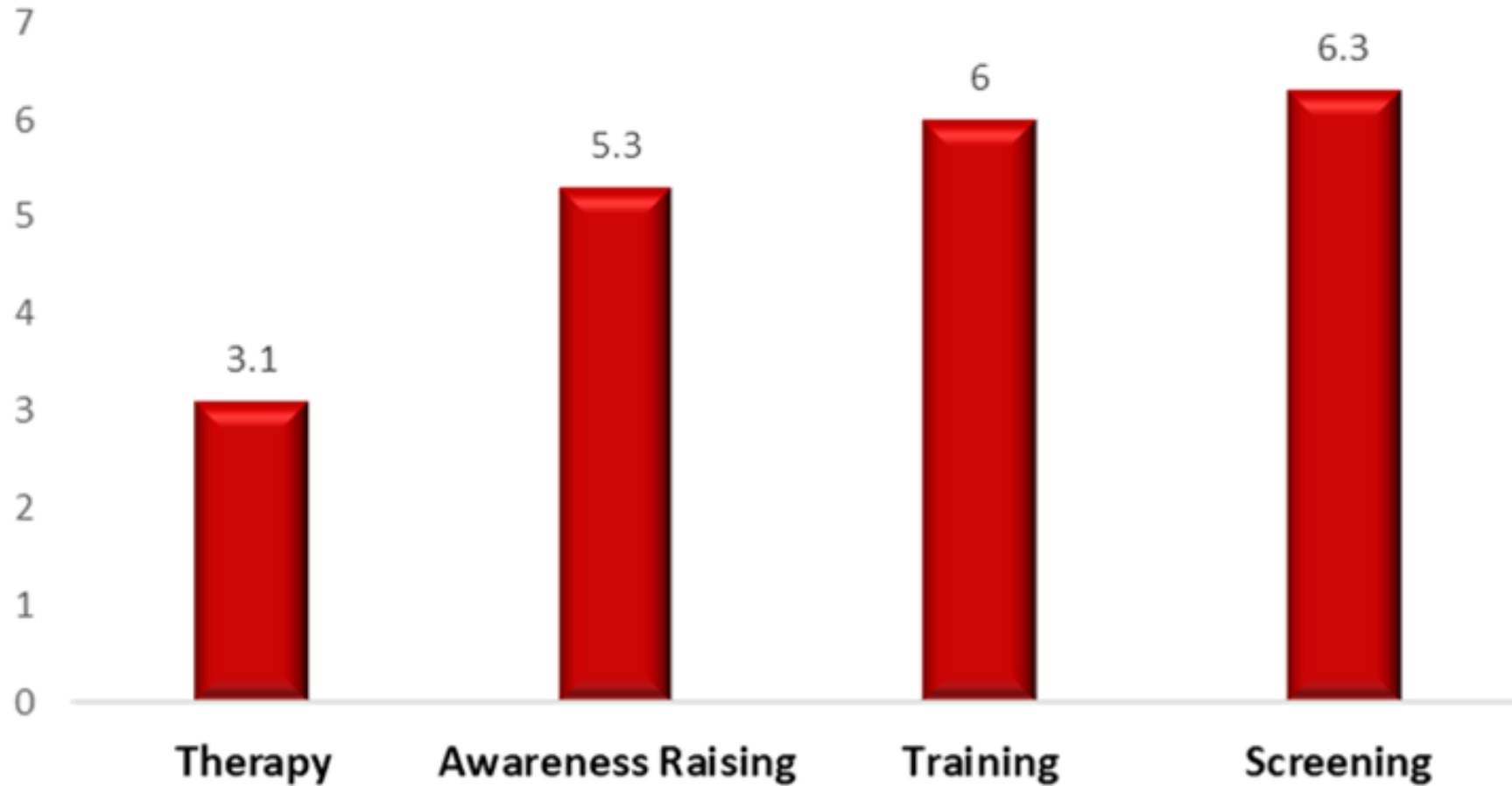
*“The mind drives the activity of the body. To work safely, people need to be mindful of what they’re doing, and that’s part of the [safety] conversation on mental health.”*

Larry Masotti  
Dir, Strategic Relationships  
Workplace Safety & Prevention Services

# Comprehensive & Coordinated Approach



# Why Training? Average ROI by Method



Source: Deloitte Mental Health Report 2022



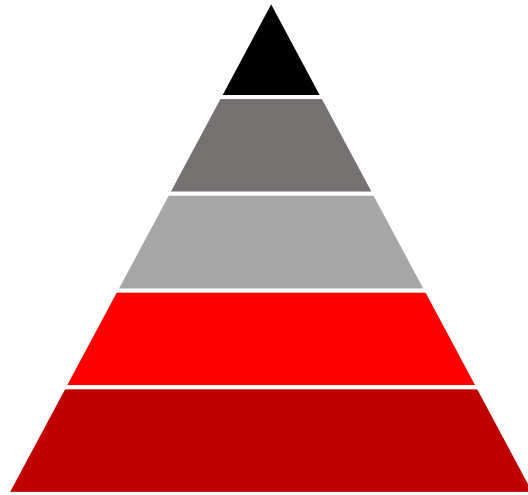
Let's  
rethink

# Safety training in its simplest form addresses:

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**Hazards**



**Controls**



**Resources**



**Concerns**



# Example Training Topic: Welding

1. Hazards?

2. Controls?

3. Resources?

4. Concerns?



# Training Topic: Mental Health

**1. Hazards?**

**2. Controls?**

**3. Resources?**

**4. Concerns?**



## **Topic:** *Heat Exposure*

**Objectives:** *At the conclusion of this training, participants will:*

- *Describe 3 conditions that might lead to over exposure to heat.*
- *Define 3 ways you could be impacted by working in hot environments.*
- *List 3 ways to take care of yourself when working hot environments.*
- *Describe how to respond if you or a co-worker displays symptoms of heat illness.*

## **Topic:** *Mental Health*

**Objectives:** *At the conclusion of this training, participants will:*

- *Describe 3 common MH challenges that anyone may experience.*
- *Define 3 ways MH challenges could impact safety at work.*
- *List 3 ways to help take care of your mental health.*
- *Describe how to respond if you or a co-worker displays symptoms MH distress.*

# Connections, Belonging, and Empowerment



Image by Drazen Zigic on Freepik

Small group activities

Friendly competition

Engagement and sharing

Empowerment

# Resources

**National Institute of Mental Health**  
*Great handout or information source for developing content.*

**I'M SO STRESSED OUT!**

*From the* **NATIONAL INSTITUTE of MENTAL HEALTH**

**Feeling overwhelmed? Read this fact sheet to learn whether it's stress or anxiety, and what you can do to cope.**

**Is it stress or anxiety?**

Life can be stressful—you may feel stressed about performance at school, traumatic events (such as a pandemic, a natural disaster, or an act of violence), or a life change. Everyone feels stress from time to time.

What is stress? Stress is the physical or mental response to an external cause, such as having a lot of homework or having an illness. A stressor may be a one-time or short-term occurrence, or it can happen repeatedly over a long time.

What is anxiety? Anxiety is your body's reaction to stress and can occur even if there is no current threat.

If that anxiety doesn't go away and begins to interfere with your life, it could affect your health. You could experience problems with sleeping, or with your immune, digestive, cardiovascular, and reproductive systems. You also may be at higher risk for developing a mental illness such as an anxiety disorder or depression. More information about anxiety disorders is available at [www.nimh.nih.gov/anxietydisorders](http://www.nimh.nih.gov/anxietydisorders).

**So, how do you know when to seek help?**

**Stress vs. Anxiety**

Stress      Both Stress and Anxiety      Anxiety

# Resources

**Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**  
*Great handout or information source for developing content.*

*Includes crisis lines and guidance on how to help someone who is considering suicide.*

## Mental Health

[Mental Health Home](#)

### Coping with Stress

Many of us are facing challenges that can be stressful and overwhelming. Learning to cope with stress in a healthy way will help you, the people you care about, and those around you become more resilient.

Stress can cause the following:

- Feelings of fear, anger, sadness, worry, numbness, or frustration.
- Changes in appetite, energy, desires, and interests.
- Trouble concentrating and making decisions.
- Nightmares or problems sleeping.
- Physical reactions, such as headaches, body pains, stomach problems, or skin rashes.
- Worsening of chronic health problems and mental health conditions.
- Increased use of alcohol, illegal drugs (like heroin, cocaine, or methamphetamine), and misuse of prescription drugs (like opioids).

### Healthy Ways to Cope with Stress

Here are some ways you can manage stress, anxiety, grief, or worry:

- **Take breaks from news stories**, including those on social media. It's good to be informed, but constant information about negative events can be upsetting. Consider limiting news to just a couple times a day and disconnecting from phone, TV, and computer screens for a while.
- **Take care of your body:** Staying

### For immediate help

- Call 911
- [988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline](#) (formerly known as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline): 988 for English or Spanish, or [Lifeline Chat](#). TTY users can use their preferred relay service or dial 711 then 988.



# Resources

## OSHA

*Great handout or information source for developing content related to how MH impacts workers and employers.*

## Long-Term Stress Harms Everyone in the Workplace



Stress is not always bad. In fact, in the workplace, stress can prompt workers to stay focused on a task or meet a deadline. Extensive and prolonged stress in the workplace, however, can harm workers' physical and mental health, negatively affecting an organization's success. Employers can help alleviate workplace stress by supporting their workers. Unions and worker organizations can also support workplace mental health and well-being through their member services, outreach, and community engagement work.

### How Does Long-Term Stress Harm Workers?

#### Physical harm:

- Heart disease
- High blood pressure
- Muscle tension and pain (e.g., back pain)
- Headaches
- Poor sleep
- Stomach discomfort
- Excessive weight gain or loss



#### Mental health challenges or behavioral changes:

- Depression
- Anxiety
- Burnout
- Emotional outbursts
- Social withdrawal
- Drug or alcohol use
- Restlessness
- Fatigue



### How Does Long-Term Stress Harm Employers?

- **Increases potential for workplace incidents.** Stressed and fatigued workers are less attentive in recognizing and avoiding hazards.



- **Reduces productivity.** Stressful working conditions can cause workers to lose motivation, become easily distracted, lose focus, make mistakes, experience a decline in performance, and develop mental health challenges. The [World Health Organization](#) estimates that for every dollar U.S. employers spend treating common mental health issues, they receive a return of \$4 in improved health and productivity.



- **Increases absenteeism.** Exposure to long-term stress undercuts workers' physical and mental health, causing them to miss more days of work.

- **Undermines morale and leads to high turnover.** Stressed workers are less likely to be energized to perform well or to



# Resources

**Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**  
*Lots of information on the impact of MH on workplaces and ideas for employers who want to promote MH awareness.*

## Mental Health in the Workplace

Mental Health Disorders and Stress Affect Working-Age Americans

This issue brief is [available for download](#) [PDF - 2 MB]

Mental health disorders are among the most burdensome health concerns in the United States. Nearly 1 in 5 US adults aged 18 or older (18.3% or 44.7 million people) reported any mental illness in 2016.<sup>2</sup> In addition, 71% of adults reported at least one symptom of stress, such as a headache or feeling overwhelmed or anxious.<sup>4</sup>

Many people with mental health disorders also need care for other physical health conditions, including heart disease, diabetes, respiratory illness, and disorders that affect muscles, bones, and joints.<sup>5-8</sup> The costs for treating people with both mental health disorders and other physical conditions are 2 to 3 times higher than for those without co-occurring illnesses.<sup>9</sup> By combining medical and behavioral health care services, the United States could save \$37.6 billion to \$67.8 billion a year.<sup>9</sup>

About 63% of Americans are part of the US labor force.<sup>10</sup> The workplace can be a key location for activities designed to improve well-being among adults. Workplace wellness programs can identify those at risk and connect them to treatment and put in place supports to help people reduce and manage stress. By addressing mental health issues in the workplace, employers can reduce health care costs for their businesses and employees.

### Problem

Mental Health Issues Affect Businesses and Their Employees

Poor mental health and stress can negatively affect employee:

- Job performance and productivity.
- Engagement with one's work.





# The Role of Safety Professionals

*“As safety professionals, we don’t diagnose or treat physical conditions in the workplace (first aid situations aside), but we do talk about physical health, teach physical health and listen to concerns affecting workers’ physical health.”*

Larry Masotti  
Dir, Strategic Relationships  
Workplace Safety & Prevention Services



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Everyone's at risk

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There's relationship between MH status and worker safety

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Your role and contributions as a safety professional are important

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