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Schools Insurance Authority
SIA for Kids
SCHOOLS IN PARTNERSHIP
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October is Cyber Safety Month

Practice password hygiene to protect against cyber crime

Cyber corner

Gustavo Mastroianni, SIA Chief Information Security Officer

The world celebrates Cybersecurity Awareness Month in October. It's an international initiative that educates everyone about online safety, and empowers individuals and businesses to protect their data from cyber crime. The campaign emphasizes the importance of developing strong passwords.

Passwords are critical gatekeepers to our digital identities, allowing us to access online shopping, dating, banking, social media, private work and life communications. Following are some tips to help you better protect your personal and organizational accounts:

- Make use of passphrases (i.e., words that relate to you)
  - e.g.: LovePrevention7Days!
- The longer (not the more complex) the passphrase, the better
  - Strive for at least 15 characters
  - e.g.: SIA&Kids4Ever2gether
- Add variety to your passphrase (or password)
  - Uppercase, lowercase, numbers and special characters
  - e.g.: Prevention@Sch00Ls!

- Don't reuse your passphrase/password
  - Create different passphrases/passwords for different websites/platforms
  - Avoid easy guessable permutations (e.g.: Spring2024!, Summer2024!, MyPassw0rd1!, MyPassw0rd2!, etc.)
- Enable multifactor authentication (MFA) whenever possible
  - It adds another layer of protection to your data
  - e.g.: DUO, Google authenticator, Microsoft authenticator
- Use a password manager
  - Helps keep different passphrases/passwords to multiple websites/platforms
  - Generates random passphrases/passwords
  - e.g.: 1Password, Keeper Security

With these recommendations, the need to periodically change passwords can be increased to between six and 12 months. Strong passwords, combined with other security controls, will help enhance your privacy and reduce the likelihood of data exposure on the internet.

Watch for more cyber safety tips in upcoming issues of SIA's *Wellness & Safety's* "Cyber Corner" and let's all work together to build a more secure digital world.

Enjoy the benefits of 'laughter yoga'

Deborah R. Camacho, M.S., SIA Prevention Services

We all strive for health and happiness in our lives, but life's challenges and stress can often get in the way. Imagine if there were an easy way to combat these negative emotions—would you be interested? The good news is that laughter, a simple and natural act, can significantly improve both your mood and your body's physiology.

Laughter has long been celebrated for its mood-boosting effects and now

science supports this. ***Laughter yoga*** is a unique practice where you laugh on purpose, even if you don't initially feel like laughing. Unlike traditional laughter, ***laughter yoga*** encourages you to laugh on command, reaping the benefits of laughter regardless of whether it's spontaneous or not.

Research shows that your body can't distinguish between genuine and fake

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SIA for Kids
SCHOOLS IN PARTNERSHIP

- New regulation targets excessive heat indoors

Benefits of 'laughter yoga'

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laughter; both offer the same health benefits. With ***laughter yoga***, there's no need for a joke or a funny scenario to trigger laughter. You can start laughing without a specific reason and begin to feel better almost immediately. The practice is straightforward and easy to incorporate into your life.

5 benefits of 'laughter yoga':

- **Boosts mood:** Increases laughter that lifts mood and enhances overall happiness.
- **Creates heart-healthy exercise:** Acts as a cardiovascular workout by raising heart rate and improving blood flow.
- **Fosters health benefits:** Reduces stress, strengthens the immune system, lowers blood pressure and alleviates pain.
- **Enhances social connections:** Fosters strong relationships by bringing people closer together.
- **Promotes a positive attitude:** Helps maintain a positive outlook during challenging times.

Laughter yoga is a delightful and simple way to infuse more joy and health into your life. Incorporating it into your routine can enhance your mood, reduce stress and build stronger connections with others. Start laughing today and discover how it can brighten your days and enrich your life.

Check out this video: https://youtu.be/zoPoH3Y4NKg?si=nFrjz85DZrH-NSR3.

Indoor heat illness prevention is now law

Lisa Konarski, CPSI, SIA Prevention Services Director

A new regulation will help prevent heat-related illnesses in indoor workplaces. The impact of heat on employee safety is a growing concern and districts are now required to enact measures that will protect staff from the risks of excessive heat in enclosed environments.

According to the Heat Illness Prevention for Indoor Places of Employment regulation (CCR, Title 8, Section 3396), employers will be required to monitor the temperature or heat index and enact controls when it equals or exceeds 87°F. If employees wear clothing that restricts heat removal or work in a high-radiant heat area, the threshold to implement measures is 82°F. In our member districts, these areas may include:

- warehouses
- kitchens
- shop and agriculture classrooms
- school buses
- storage containers

Like the current Outdoor Heat Illness Prevention regulation (CCR, Title 8, Section 3395), the indoor heat standard mandates that employers provide cool drinking water, create cool down areas, monitor employees for heat illness symptoms, establish emergency response procedures, and train all staff and supervisors on the plan and their responsibilities.

The district will be required to use control measures to minimize the risk of heat illness. Engineering controls may include the use of cooling fans, increased natural ventilation, or use of reflective shields to block radiant heat. Administrative controls are methods to limit exposure by adjusting work procedures or schedules. District staff may also utilize personal protective equipment such as cooling vests or neck wraps. The selection of the control measures is based on environmental factors and feasibility.

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Indoor heat illness prevention

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It's everyone's responsibility to learn district procedures and how to prevent heat illness, beginning with these tips:

- Be familiar with your district's heat illness prevention plan.
- Complete training when assigned.
- Practice these prevention measures:
  - Stay hydrated and avoid caffeine
  - Avoid overexertion
  - Take breaks in cool and shaded areas
  - Acclimate to the heat over a few days when starting a new position or task involving heat exposure. All employees should be prepared to acclimate in a heat wave.
- Know the symptoms of heat illness.
- Be alert for signs of heat illness in coworkers. Establish a buddy system to check on each other, especially when working alone.

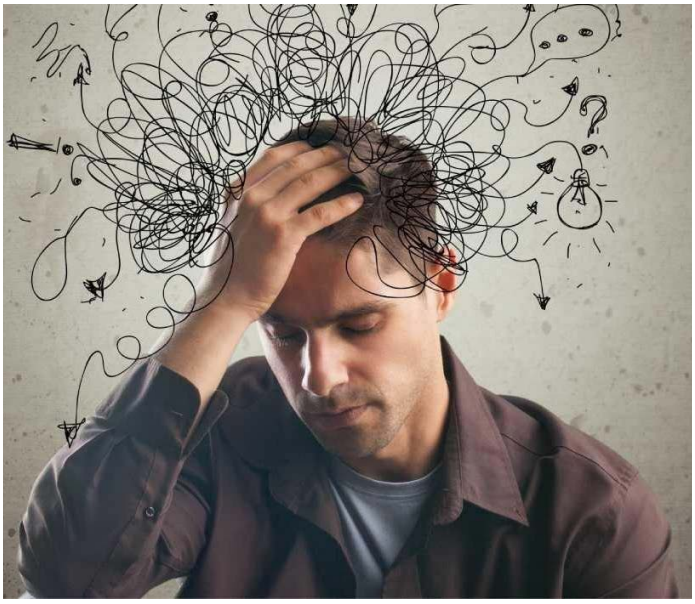
- Understand your district's emergency procedures.
- Talk with your supervisor if you have any questions or concerns.

Adhering to heat illness regulations and district procedures is crucial not only for the well-being of staff but also for maintaining a safe and productive work environment.

Break free of negative 'thinking traps'

Anthony Ricci, M.S., SIA Prevention Services

There are many ways to improve mental health. One way is to identify and minimize "thinking traps." These are cognitive distortions that turn reality into something worse than it really is. While these negative thought processes are common and natural ways of thinking, in excess they can create dangerous spirals of negative thought. Some common examples of "thinking traps" are:



- **Filtering:** Putting an emphasis on the negative details of a situation while diminishing the positive.
- **Overgeneralization:** Making broad statements based on one small situation or piece of evidence.
- **Fortunetelling:** Believing you can predict a negative outcome before it even happens.
- **Personalization:** Taking things personally when they aren't connected to you.
- **All-or-nothing thinking:** Black and white statements that focus on the extremes of a situation.
- **Mind reading:** Being convinced that you know what others are thinking without any real evidence.
- **Emotional reasoning:** Thinking that however you feel in the moment is fact.
- **Guilt statements:** Making yourself feel guilty by pointing out how you should or shouldn't act or think.

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Negative 'thinking traps'

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Breaking free of thinking traps is all about restructuring your thoughts. Looking for new ways to think about something that bothers you takes practice, but over time you can learn to think more positively and change the things you believe about yourself. Here are some ideas on how to restructure your thoughts:

- **Reframe negative thoughts.** When you're having negative thoughts, try to look at things from a new and more positive perspective. For example, if someone you cared about was having those same negative thoughts, how would you bring light to the situation to make them feel better?
- **Prove yourself wrong.** If you're having negative thoughts, do something to prove those thoughts wrong. Create steps to build confidence in yourself where you feel the most vulnerable.

- **Counter negative thoughts with positive ones.** Negative thoughts are going to happen, but making it a point to add in some positive thinking can reduce the effect of the negative. Whether it's finding the bright side of a poor situation or moving forward to a more positive topic entirely, keeping yourself from dwelling on negative thoughts for too long can stop a chain reaction of negativity.
- **Thoughts aren't reality.** Although your thoughts and feelings are legitimate, they might not be fact. Getting an alternative perspective on a situation might reduce the bias of something.
- **Set aside time for self-care.** Sometimes it's too difficult to get out of negative thinking without a little help. Taking time for something you enjoy on a regular basis can relax your state of mind and prevent your getting into those thinking traps in the first place.

Source: https://mhanational.org/getting-out-thinking-traps

What color was your day?

Use creative questioning for thoughtful conversations with your kids

Lyn Poll, M.S., SIA Prevention Services

How often have you asked your kids, "How was your day?" or "What did you do today?" only to get one-word answers such as "Good." Or a whole sentence like, "I can't remember." As parents, it can be challenging to find ways to lead our children into engaging conversations about all the amazing discoveries, activities and interactions they experience throughout their days. What strategies can we use to prompt our children to use as many words as possible to express themselves?

One approach to encourage expressive, thoughtful conversations is to use creative questioning. This method requires kids to "go deeper" as they express ideas and move beyond the traditional "good" or "yes/no" responses. It's an approach that can create better, more "colorful" conversations. For example, you may try asking, "Why do you think that happened?" "What will happen next?" "How do you know?" Or, perhaps, you can come up with a series of playful questions such as:

- "What was the nicest thing you did for somebody?" or "How did that make you feel?"
- "What surprised you today?"
- "What were the top three things you did today that made you laugh/smile?"
- "If you were made the teacher for a day, what would you have taught the class?"
- "If you could design your own playground for recess, what would you put in it?"
- "What are you looking forward to tomorrow?"
- "What superhero did you wish you had met today?"

Your questions will depend on the age of your children, of course, but this is an easy, fun way to connect and learn about the world through their eyes. Try asking (and answering) your creative questions with your family at the dinner table, at bedtime, in the car, waiting in line, or just when you want to reconnect in a lighthearted way.

As parents we often concentrate on what we can teach our children, but there's so much we can learn from listening to them. For example, I recall asking my daughter when she was 4, "What makes you happy?" and she answered matter-of-factly, "Nothing. I just be happy."

Just be happy. Now those are words to live by.

Free virtual trainings to enhance your life

SIA provides the staff of our member districts with virtual training on a variety of topics that apply to both personal and professional life. To learn more or register for any of the training courses, click on the link below or contact tfranco@sia-jpa.org. You also can join our email list to learn of future events at SIA – Schools Insurance Authority (sia-jpa.org).

September

9/4/2024	Bias and What We Can Do About It	5:30-6:30 p.m.
9/6/2024	Business Etiquette	noon-1p.m.
9/11/2024	Understanding Depression	5:30-6:30 p.m.
9/12/2024	Autism and ADHD in the Workplace	5:30-6:30 p.m.
9/16/2024	Building Resilience in Traumatic Times	5:30-6:30 p.m.
9/18/2024	Aging Healthfully	noon-1p.m.
9/20/2024	Boosting Energy Naturally	5:30-6:30 p.m.
9/23/2024	Creating a Respectful Workplace	5:30-7 p.m.
9/25/2024	How to Address Performance Concerns	5:30-6:30 p.m.
9/26/2024	How to Create a Healthy Workplace	5:30-7:30 p.m.

October

10/1/2024	Best Practices for Hybrid Working	noon-1 p.m.
10/3/2024	Supporting Yourself and Others Through Perinatal Infertility/Loss	5:30-6:30 p.m.
10/7/2024	Creating Harmony Between Generations at Work	5:30-6:30 p.m.
10/9/2024	Build Your Resilience	5:30-7 p.m.
10/15/2024	How to be an Effective Workplace Leader	5:30-6:30 p.m.
10/17/2024	How to Create Passion and Motivation in the Workplace	5:30-6:30 p.m.
10/22/2024	Critical Incident Stress in the Workplace for Managers	5:30-6:30 p.m.
10/23/2024	I am too Busy to Eat Healthily	noon-1p.m.
10/28/2024	Maintaining Wellbeing Through Times of Uncertainty	5:30-6:30 p.m.
10/30/2024	Managing and Motivating Your Remote Workers	5:30-6:30 p.m.

QUOTE TO NOTE

"Passwords are like underwear: change them regularly, don't let people see them and don't loan them to anyone."

— Chris Pirillo

Wellness & Safety is published by the Schools Insurance Authority, P.O. Box 276710, Sacramento, CA 95827-6710, (916) 364-1281, 1-877-SIA-KIDS. The SIA is a joint powers authority, composed of 37 members, that collectively provides workers' compensation, liability, property, and health benefit insurance coverage on behalf of its member districts. The SIA school districts are: Arcohe, Atwater, Buckeye, Camino, Center, Central Sierra ROP, El Dorado Co. Off. Ed., El Dorado High, Elk Grove, Elverta, Folsom-Cordova, Galt Elem., Galt High, Gold Oak, Gold Trail, Hayward, Indian Diggings, Latrobe, Merced City, Mother Lode, Natomas, North Bay SIA, Pioneer, Placerville, Pollock Pines, Rescue, River Delta, Robla, Sac. City, Sac. Co. Off. Ed., San Juan, Shasta-Trinity SIG, Silver Fork, Twin Rivers, Visions in Education Charter, and Woodland. SIA Officers: Executive Director — Brooks Rice; President — Chris Gilbert, Sacramento COE; Vice President — Wendy Frederickson, El Dorado COE; Secretary — Kristen Coates, Elk Grove USD; Newsletter: Lyn Poll, Prevention Services; CG Communications

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