



# KeySolutions

Employee Assistance Program

Summer 2019



## Protecting Kids: Cyber Bullying, Internet Safety and Social Media

Keeping kids safe online is certainly one of the most important concerns for parents today. Anything a child connects with in the digital world can have the potential to be harmful, seductive, scary and alarming at times. Everything from cyberbullying to sexual predators are online and easily found through the Internet, social media websites and applications (apps) for cell phone use. According to a 2016 report from Cyberbullying Research Center, over 33% of student's ages 12-17 have been victims of cyberbullying in their lifetime. For teens who use social media, 95% have witnessed cruel behavior on social networking sites, with over 50% witnessing it frequently.

There are various social media connections a youth/adolescent can make at any given time. Some examples include: Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram, Finsta (fake instagram where you can post the things you only want your friends to see), Twitter, gaming sites, YouTube and Facebook Messenger. According to Consumer Reports, approximately one million children were harassed, threatened or subjected to other forms of cyberbullying on Facebook during 2010-2011.

As a result of cyberbullying, many children/teens suffer enormous emotional hurt along with peer ridicule and feelings of embarrassment. Cyberbullying can lead to depression, withdrawing from family and friends and even suicide. Parents should watch for signs of cyberbullying that may be taking place. These might include: withdrawal and depression, being secretive about their digital world, avoiding friends and even academic struggles that show up over time. It is vital that parents are involved in their child's digital life, their academic life and family life as well.

There are also a variety of more unknown social media/apps/Internet influences. These include many new apps that are created constantly and parents need to stay informed to better understand the dangers involved. Some examples can include: Whisper (anonymous-people can share photos, messages and videos), Kik (where texts and pictures can be sent with no phone history logged), Vine (users can post up to 6 second videos), Tinder (dating site that many minors stumble across), Poof (this app will hide other apps on a phone, keeping them hidden from parents) and Yik Yak (no profiles are created, but users can post comments up to a 500 mile radius). Yik Yak is extremely dangerous as it can be a perfect app for strangers to connect with children many miles away. Many young people are drawn to communicating with strangers and this can be done many times without parental knowledge or influence. Many of the apps can easily allow for porn, nude photos and inappropriate messages to be sent to your child/teen, even without their knowledge or desire.

Parents can help navigate social media with their children/teens in a variety of ways. Have conversations with kids, know who they are associated with, be familiar with social media yourself (many parents are not and this is a cause for concern), set boundaries for children including establishing social media rules. Take the time to explain to children in age-appropriate ways, the reasons why there are concerns. Check phone settings and privacy settings. Set rules that a child must first ask permission before downloading any apps. Parents can sit with their teen and look at various apps, having open conversations about what is good and/or potentially bad about certain apps. Check out sites like [www.internetsafeeducation.com](http://www.internetsafeeducation.com) or [www.parenting.com/child/social-media-safety](http://www.parenting.com/child/social-media-safety) for more information on social media for children and teens.

*Article by Beth Hall, EAP Counselor at KeySolutions Employee Assistance Program - 2019*

**Call us at 605-334-5850 or 888-450-7844**

## When Weekend Drinking is a Problem

For some, having a few drinks with friends on a weekend doesn't become a problem. But for others, this frequent binge drinking can indicate a greater issue. There are a number of signs that mean your weekend drinking may actually be signs of high-functioning alcoholism, and it's important to spot these characteristics to make sure your drinking isn't getting out of control.

In the online article, "7 Signs Your Weekend Drinking May Actually be High-Functioning Alcoholism," *Bustle* reports these traits as:

- You lie about your drinking.
- You blackout often.
- You think about drinking even when you're not drinking.
- Your priorities are changing.
- You feel regretful when sober.
- You have to stick to your weekend ritual (of drinking behaviors).
- You underestimate how much you drink.

People with alcoholism tend to minimize and underestimate the amount that they drink, and those with high-functioning alcoholism are no different. You might think you've only had three beers, when in fact you've had six.

Anyone exhibiting these traits could be a high-functioning alcoholic. Seek help from your EAP, SAP or another professional.

For the complete *Bustle* article, check out [www.bustle.com/p/7-signs-your-weekend-drinking-may-actually-be-high-functioning-alcoholism-9879419](http://www.bustle.com/p/7-signs-your-weekend-drinking-may-actually-be-high-functioning-alcoholism-9879419).

## Eat Healthy Away from Home

We all know the importance of healthy eating, right? So what can you do to make it a little easier when you are away from home, say, at work or on the road?

First, I want to point out the importance of eating a balanced meal regularly throughout your day. Balanced meals consist of a combination of protein, carbs and fats (the good kind). This is referred to as "grazing."

Meal preparation and readiness are your keys to success. Make a list of foods you like within each macronutrient category (i.e. protein, carbs and fat). Let's look at some quick and easy examples to pick from.

**Protein** – hard-boiled eggs, cottage cheese, Greek yogurt, pre-cooked chicken breasts, canned tuna, pre-packaged meats and protein bars or drinks.

**Carbohydrates** – all kinds of fruit, pre-cooked potatoes, whole wheat bread (possibly with pre-packaged meat), bagels and a V-8-like drink.

**Fat** – this is an easy one. Choose from a wide variety of nuts, (almonds, cashews, peanuts, walnuts, etc.), peanut or nut butter. Also, try flaxseed on your yogurt.

Try to keep an assortment of these foods at your workplace or if you are on the road, put what you plan to eat that day in a small cooler. Choose a food item from each of these categories when planning your meal. If your appetite is satisfied after you've finished eating for three hours or so, then you probably chose your food appropriately. If not, you may need to make adjustments.

Source: "Eat Healthy Away from Home," by Tim Lencki.

### ATTENTION ALL EMPLOYEES:

KeySolutions EAP is available to *all employees* and family members. You *do not* need to be enrolled in your employers insurance to utilize this benefit.

## How KeySolutions Works for You...

**Counseling Services:** KeySolutions is here to **help you** and your family with any of **life's challenges**. During your appointment, you will meet with one of our experienced professionals and together decide on a **plan of action**.

**Free and Confidential:** Employee Assistance Program services are at **no charge** to you or your immediate family. All services will remain **confidential**.

**Employees and Family:** KeySolutions is available to all **employees** and **family members**.

**Anywhere You Live:** The Employee Assistance Program is available to you wherever you live. We have a network of counselors ready to serve you. Please call KeySolutions first and we will inform you of those counselors.

**Contact Us:** You can visit us at [www.keysolutionseap.com](http://www.keysolutionseap.com), or email us at [info@keysolutionseap.com](mailto:info@keysolutionseap.com). Call us at 605-334-5850 or toll-free at 888-450-7844.