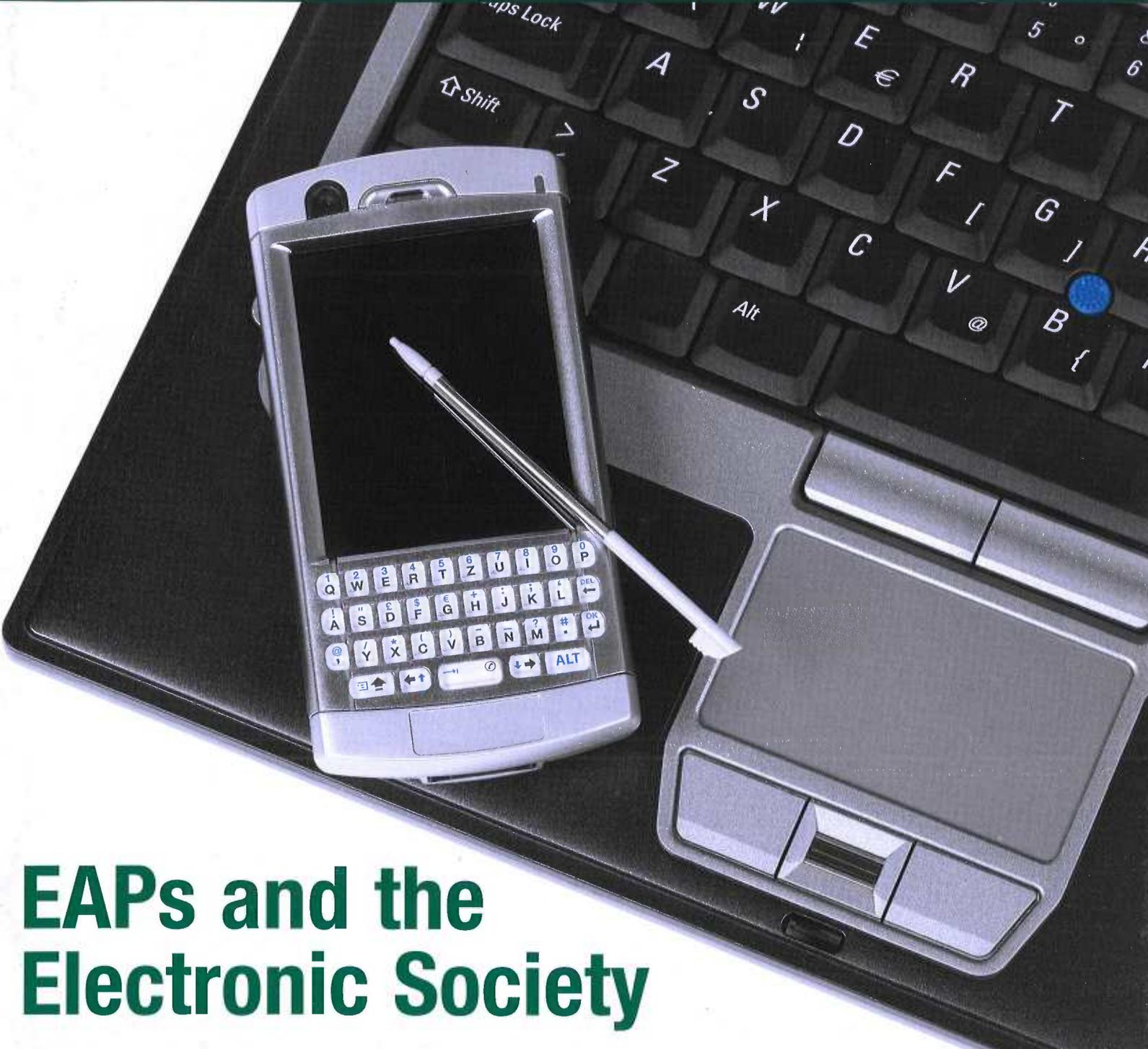


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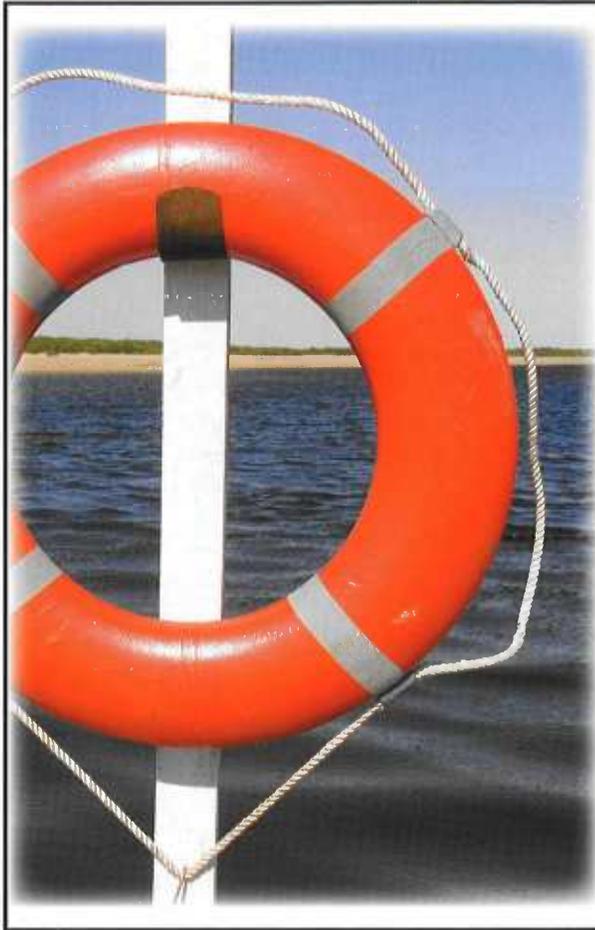


EAPs and the Electronic Society

Also Inside:
The Lessons of 'Free' and Low-Cost EAPs
Raising Alcohol Awareness with a Hands-On Exercise
Earning the Trust of Hispanic Clients



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Focus

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Technology is changing the dynamics of how we communicate with each other and live our lives. Nowhere are these changes being felt more keenly than in the workplace. How can EAPs use technology to help their employer and employee clients maximize performance?

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Using Technology in Mass Disasters 23

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Preparing for the Challenges of Research 7

By John C. Pompe, Psy.D., CEAP, SPHR, and David Sharav, Ph.D.

While nearly all employee assistance professionals agree on the need for more research, proving the business value of EAPs will pose fundamental challenges for our industry.

Do EAPs Work for Employers on Long Island? 10

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Employers on Long Island are more likely to use EAPs than employers nationwide, and they perceive that the programs offer a significant return on investment.

Providing Alcohol Education in the Workplace 13

by Suzanne Thomas, Ph.D., and Jeni Bowers Palmer, M.Ed., LPC

Replacing traditional awareness activities with a hands-on "game" helped teach employees how much alcohol they consume when they pour drinks.

Working with Hispanic Clients 15

by Paul Esquilin

Employee assistance professionals must understand cultural and racial differences when helping Hispanic workers, but the biggest challenge may be earning their trust and getting them to use the EAP in the first place.

The Lessons of 'Free' EAPs 17

by John Burke, CEAP

Free and low-cost EAPs are symptoms of predictable business changes taking place within the employee assistance profession.

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"If it is human nature to pay more for higher quality, why are free and low-cost EAPs attractive to some employers? The answer seems obvious: Some employers do not understand the value an EAP can bring to their workplace."

John Burke, CEAP
"The Lessons of 'Free' EAPs"

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Our Mission and Business Should Drive Technology

by Maria Lund, LEAP

Several articles that have appeared in the *Journal* in recent years (and many of these columns as well) have emphasized the need for employee assistance professionals to become conversant in the language of business and position themselves firmly in the “world of work.” Increasingly, that language and that world are changing to reflect the growing use and impact of information technology.

In one sense, information technology allows us to eliminate boundaries of time and distance. We can place and receive calls from all over the world, check and send e-mail messages at any time of day or night, and browse the Internet while eating lunch at our favorite restaurant. We can meet with colleagues in other cities and countries without leaving our desks and finalize major deals from the seats of our cars.

But eliminating time and distance boundaries requires us to pay more attention to others, particularly personal and social boundaries. We also need to be more aware of ethical and personal values to ensure that technological advances do not encroach upon them or relegate them to the sidelines.

At the same time, we must keep in mind that technology is a means to an end, not an end in itself. We need to remain focused on the mission and business of our EAPs and our employer clients and let them drive our technology decisions, not vice versa.

This issue of the *Journal* looks at the electronic society from both perspectives—that of employers and that of EAPs. One article discusses approaches that employers can take to overcome the “digital divide” and encourage all work-

ers to use information technology to its fullest potential. The other describes how employee assistance professionals can utilize technology to help respond to mass disasters and crises.

In addition to these theme articles, you’ll find five features that touch on a wide variety of issues:

- Meeting the challenges posed by “free” and low-cost EAPs;
- Providing services to Hispanic workers;
- Raising alcohol awareness among employees;
- Identifying why and how employers use EAPs; and
- Developing research to bolster the business case for EAPs.

This issue also contains a letter thanking Pam Wyss, an EA professional in Washington, for sharing the lessons she learned from a critical incident (see her “First Person” article in the 1st quarter 2008 issue). Many of us have learned lessons from our professional experiences that would be of benefit to our colleagues and peers. If you’re willing to share yours, please contact me or Stuart Hales, the editor of the *Journal* (his contact information is available on page 5).

Finally, please note the information in the “Info Sources” column about the drug-free workplace kit now available through SAMHSA, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. In this era of so-called “free” EAPs, we sometimes forget that there are products and services that add value without adding cost. I encourage you to read the “Info Sources” and “News Briefs” columns regularly to find strategic information and resources that can help improve your services.



Maria Lund

As always, if you have any ideas about how to improve the *Journal* or if you’d like to contribute an article to a future issue, contact me or a member of the Communications Advisory Panel. And please join me in welcoming two new panel members who will help provide a global perspective to the *Journal*—Harry Parker, director of international development for OSA Group in Sydney, Australia, and Andrea Lardani, clinical manager of EAP LatinA Corporation in Buenos Aires.

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I did coke on my wedding day. But by then I was secretly doing it almost every day. It didn't seem the slightest bit odd to me. I had a good job, wonderful husband and two years later, a beautiful baby boy. I was taking care of everyone just like I was supposed to, living up to everyone's expectations. I could balance it all. And for a while I did. Rock bottom wouldn't come for another four years and a bad car wreck later. That memory is almost too painful to share here. Even now. Read about Meg's journey to recovery at www.hanleycenter.org/meg25.

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The Security to Share Her Mistakes

I want to applaud Pam Wyss for her "First Person" column, titled "How Not to Respond to a Critical Incident," which appeared in the 1st quarter 2008 *Journal of Employee Assistance*.

As I read her account of a high-intensity critical incident response, I had two thoughts: First, this person is a true professional in teaching her colleagues. Whereas most of us would write about how wonderfully we responded, she had the security to share her mistakes.

My second thought was that I, as an EAP coordinator, am uncomfortably

capable of making the same mistakes in a critical incident response, perhaps because I'm sometimes too smug with my own years of experience. I liked her lessons so much that I read them out loud to a meeting of our South Beach Psychiatric Center Critical Incident Response Team here in New York.

Smart people learn from their mistakes; smarter people learn from other people's mistakes. Thank you, Pam Wyss.

Gary Bisogna, M.A., CEAP, LMHC

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