

DLLR Celebrates Hispanic Heritage Month!

Each year, Americans observe National Hispanic Heritage Month from September 15 to October 15, by celebrating the history, cultures and contributions of American citizens whose ancestors came from Spain, Mexico, the Caribbean and Central and South America. Hispanic Heritage Month begins on September 15 because this day marks the anniversary of independence for five Hispanic countries - Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua. Other Hispanic American Countries of Origin are Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Puerto Rico and Spain. In addition, on September 16, 1810, Mexico proclaimed independence from Spain on September 16, 1810, but acquired their independence in 1821. Also, Columbus Day or Día de la Raza, which is Oct. 12, falls within this 30 day period.

Since the official inception of the term Hispanic in 1973, its uses have led to controversy. Originally applied to the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW); Office of Education, for the purpose of developing racial and ethnic categories which it could use for data-gathering purposes, the term Hispanic encompassed Mexican, Puerto Rican, Central Americans, South American, Caribbean, and Spanish people who share some common cultural values. Since Hispanics can be of any race, to help keep their data separate, HEW further clarified the White and Black categories with the definition, "not of Hispanic origin." Other Federal Agencies such as the Office of Management and Budget and the Bureau of the Census soon followed suit in using the term.

Other terms, such as "Latino," or "Chicano," have been suggested. Latino implies a background stemming from Latin America, or the world of Latin (Roman) influence in Europe. In this sense, "Latino" might include Guayanses, Brazilians, French, Romanians, or others whose culture is decidedly not of Spanish origin.



Recent census figures show that there are more than 35 million Hispanic Americans in this country. Their ranks have increased 58 percent through the last decade. Hispanic Americans will soon be the largest minority group in the United States, making up 24 percent of the population by 2050. In the State of Maryland, the number of Hispanics grew more than 82% since 1990, making up more than 4 percent of the population statewide.

We must make sure that basic services and opportunities are available to Hispanic Americans. And, as this segment of the population grows, it will be increasingly important for educators, hospitals, civil services, and financial institutions to be able to communicate effectively, provide bilingual materials where appropriate, and are aware of cultural differences when delivering services. Hispanic Americans deserve to take full part in their communities and language barriers should not prevent them from doing so.

Throughout our history, different groups have come to this country contributing their culture, values and strengths to make the United States the strong diverse country that it is. The story of immigrants searching for a better life is a story that has been replayed countless times throughout our history, sustaining the growth of America since her beginning. Hispanic Americans continue this tradition.

Director's Corner



How to Reduce, Prevent, and Cope with Stress in times of furloughs.....

It may seem that there's nothing you can do about your stress level. The bills aren't going to stop coming, there will never be more hours in the day for all your errands, and your career or family responsibilities will always be demanding and now you have to take more furlough days. But you have a lot more control than you might think. In fact, the simple realization that you're in control of your life is the foundation of stress management.

Managing stress is all about taking charge: taking charge of your thoughts, your emotions, your schedule, your environment, and the way you deal with problems. The ultimate goal is a balanced life, with time for work, relationships, relaxation, and fun – plus the resilience to hold up under pressure and meet challenges head on.

Stress management starts with identifying the sources of stress in your life. This isn't as easy as it sounds. Your true sources of stress aren't always obvious, and it's all too easy to overlook your own stress-inducing thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. Sure, you may know that you're constantly worried about work deadlines. But maybe it's your procrastination, rather than the actual job demands, that leads to deadline stress.

To identify your true sources of stress, look closely at your habits, attitude, and excuses:

- Do you explain away stress as temporary ("I just have a million things going on right now") even though you can't remember the last time you took a breather?
- Do you define stress as an integral part of your work ("Things are always crazy around here") or as a part of your personality ("I have a lot of nervous energy, that's all")?
- Do you blame your stress on other people or outside events, or view it as entirely normal and unexceptional?

Until you accept responsibility for the role you play in creating or maintaining it, your stress level will remain outside your control. A stress journal can help you identify the regular stressors in your work life and the way you deal with them. Each time you feel stressed; keep track of it in your journal. As you keep a daily log, you will begin to see patterns and common themes. Write down:

- What caused your stress (make a guess if you're unsure).
- How you felt, both physically and emotionally.
- How you acted in response.
- What you did to make yourself feel better.

Not all stress can be avoided, and it's not healthy to avoid a situation that needs to be addressed. You may be surprised, however, by the number of stressors in your life that you can eliminate.

- **Learn how to say "no"** – Know your limits and stick to them. Whether in your personal or professional life, refuse to accept added responsibilities when you're close to reaching them. Taking on more than you can handle is a surefire recipe for stress.
- **Avoid people who stress you out** – If someone consistently causes stress in your life and you can't turn the relationship around, limit the amount of time you spend with that person or end the relationship entirely.
- **Avoid hot-button topics** – If you get upset over religion or politics, cross them off your conversation list. If you repeatedly argue about the same subject with the same people, stop bringing it up or excuse yourself when it's the topic of discussion.
- **Pare down your to-do list** – Analyze your schedule, responsibilities, and daily tasks. If you've got too much on your plate, distinguish between the "shoulds" and the "musts." Drop tasks that aren't truly necessary to the bottom of the list or eliminate them entirely.

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If you can't avoid a stressful situation, try to alter it. Figure out what you can do to change things so the problem doesn't present itself in the future. Often, this involves changing the way you communicate and operate in your daily life.

- **Express your feelings instead of bottling them up.** If something or someone is bothering you, communicate your concerns in an open and respectful way. If you don't voice your feelings, resentment will build and the situation will likely remain the same.
- **Be willing to compromise.** When you ask someone to change their behavior, be willing to do the same. If you both are willing to bend at least a little, you'll have a good chance of finding a happy middle ground.
- **Be more assertive.** Don't take a backseat in your own life. Deal with problems head on, doing your best to anticipate and prevent them. If you've got an exam to study for and your chatty roommate just got home, say up front that you only have five minutes to talk.
- **Manage your time better.** Poor time management can cause a lot of stress. When you're stretched too thin and running behind, it's hard to stay calm and focused. But if you plan ahead and make sure you don't overextend yourself, you can alter the amount of stress you're under.

If you can't change the stressor, change yourself. You can adapt to stressful situations and regain your sense of control by changing your expectations and attitude.

- **Reframe problems.** Try to view stressful situations from a more positive perspective. Rather than fuming about a traffic jam, look at it as an opportunity to pause and regroup, listen to your favorite radio station, or enjoy some alone time.
- **Look at the big picture.** Take perspective of the stressful situation. Ask yourself how important it will be in the long run. Will it matter in a month? A year? Is it really worth getting upset over? If the answer is no, focus your time and energy elsewhere.

- **Focus on the positive.** When stress is getting you down, take a moment to reflect on all the things you appreciate in your life, including your own positive qualities and gifts. This simple strategy can help you keep things in perspective.

Some sources of stress are unavoidable. You can't prevent or change stressors such as the death of a loved one, a serious illness, or a national recession. In such cases, the best way to cope with stress is to accept things as they are. Acceptance may be difficult, but in the long run, it's easier than railing against a situation you can't change.

- **Don't try to control the uncontrollable.** Many things in life are beyond our control— particularly the behavior of other people. Rather than stressing out over them, focus on the things you can control such as the way you choose to react to problems.
- **Look for the upside.** As the saying goes, "What doesn't kill us makes us stronger." When facing major challenges, try to look at them as opportunities for personal growth. If your own poor choices contributed to a stressful situation, reflect on them and learn from your mistakes.
- **Share your feelings.** Talk to a trusted friend or make an appointment with a therapist. Expressing what you're going through can be very cathartic, even if there's nothing you can do to alter the stressful situation.
- **Learn to forgive.** Accept the fact that we live in an imperfect world and that people make mistakes. Let go of anger and resentments. Free yourself from negative energy by forgiving and moving on.

Finally take the take charge approach and a positive attitude; you can reduce stress in your life by nurturing yourself. If you regularly make time for fun and relaxation, you'll be in a better place to handle life's stressors when they inevitably come. Furlough Days are here to stay.



The 2009 Maryland Charity Campaign is upon us. During a time of an uncertain economy, we all have concerns when so many essentials are needed. We are facing challenging times, state employees are linked by their commitment to caring.

The same situation is putting a strain on charities' budgets at the very time so many are in need of their services. Giving to the Maryland Charity Campaign has never been more important. Your contributions show you care.

This year's theme is "We Care", it is a simple phrase and when it is put to action, has the powerful effect of enhancing the lives of those who are less fortunate.

Please watch for further information from your agency coordinator. You may contact Melissa Schappell, DLLR's 2009 loan executive with any questions. She can be reached at 410-230-6099 or mschappell@dllr.state.md.us.

Spotlight On Health



Myositis is the general term for swelling of the muscles. Injury, infection, certain medicines and even exercise can cause muscle swelling. Some of the signs and symptoms of Myositis are:

- Muscle weakness, sometimes with pain
- General tiredness and fatigue
- Trouble climbing stairs, standing from a seated position or reaching up
- Difficulty swallowing

For specific signs and symptoms and for more information visit The Myositis Association website at www.myositis.org.

I REMEMBER. I SERVE.

9/11 National Day of Service and Remembrance

This year we will commemorate the first September 11 National Day of Service and Remembrance. The tragic events of September 11, 2001 inspired Americans to come together in a remarkable spirit of unity and compassion. It was a stark reminder that our fate as individuals is inherently tied to the fate of our nation. Eight years later, September 11 continues to evoke strong emotion and is an homage to sacrifice and a call to action.

In April, President Obama signed the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act which, for the first time, officially recognizes September 11 as a National Day of Service and Remembrance. This year, on September 11, the President, the Corporation for National and Community Service, MyGoodDeed and the 9/11 families will ask all Americans to remember that Tuesday eight years ago and recommit to service in their communities throughout the year. We encourage you to continue to promote service by commemorating this milestone through the United We Serve initiative.

September Events & Observances

- Labor Day (September 7)
- Patriot Day (September 11)
- Grandparents Day (September 13)
- Rosh Hashanah (September 19)
- Autumn Begins (September 22)
- Update Your Resume Month
- National Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month
- National Chicken Month

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Labor Day – Monday September 7, 2009



The History of Labor Day

Labor Day is a legal holiday on the first Monday in September in the United States. The celebration of Labor Day, in honor of the working class, began in the U.S. in 1882 when the Knights of Labor held a large parade in New York City. In 1884 the group held a parade on the first Monday of September and passed a resolution to hold all future parades on that day and to name the day Labor Day.

"Labor Day is devoted to no man, living or dead, to no sect, race or nation" said Samuel Gompers, founder and longtime president of the American Federation of Labor.

Labor Day, the first Monday in September, is a creation of the labor movement and is dedicated to the social and economic achievements of American workers. It is a yearly national tribute to the workers who have made the USA the wealthy and secure nation it is today.

Founder of Labor Day

More than 100 years after the first Labor Day observance, there is still some doubt as to who first proposed the holiday for workers.

Some records show that Peter J. McGuire, general secretary of the Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners and a co-founder of the American Federation of Labor, was first in suggesting a day to honor workers. Many believe that Matthew Maguire, a machinist, not Peter McGuire, founded the holiday. Recent research seems to support the contention that Matthew Maguire, later the secretary of Local 344 of the International Association of Machinists in Paterson, N.J., proposed the holiday in 1882 while serving as secretary of the Central Labor Union in New York. What is clear is that the Central Labor Union adopted a Labor Day proposal and appointed a committee to plan a demonstration and picnic.

The First Labor Day

The first Labor Day holiday was celebrated on Tuesday, September 5, 1882, in New York City, in accordance with the plans of the Central Labor Union. The Central Labor Union held its second Labor Day holiday just a year later, on September 5, 1883.

In 1884 the first Monday in September was selected as the holiday and the Central Labor Union urged other organizations in other cities to follow the example of New York and celebrate a "workingmen's holiday" on that date. The idea spread with the growth of labor organizations, and in 1885 Labor Day was celebrated in many industrial centers of the country.

Labor Day Legislation

On June 28, 1894, Congress passed an act making the first Monday in September of each year a legal holiday in the District of Columbia and the territories.