

The "C-Change" Initiative:

1. Change behaviors.
2. Challenge ourselves to re-think how we work.
3. Certify the results on a daily basis.



Toolbox Talk

Week of March 29th, 2010

Drug and Alcohol Awareness

March is being recognized and Drug and Alcohol Awareness Month at JJ White. Following the same philosophy as we did in February, with Home Safety Month, we will take the next few weeks to educate our workforce on the common issues and consequences that are a result of Drug and Alcohol Abuse. This is great information to take home and share with your families.

There are many different addictions, but similar symptoms span them all.

Some of the symptoms common to addictions are:

- Tolerance - the need to engage in the addictive behavior more and more to get the desired effect
- Withdrawal happens when the person does not take the substance or engage in the activity, and they experience unpleasant symptoms, which are often the opposite of the effects of the addictive behavior
- Difficulty cutting down or controlling the addictive behavior
- Social, occupational or recreational activities becoming more focused around the addiction, and important social and occupational roles being jeopardized
- The person becoming preoccupied with the addiction, spending a lot of time on planning, engaging in, and recovering from the addictive behavior

Signs of Addiction

Symptoms can only be experienced by the person with the addiction, whereas signs can be observed by other people. You can never know what someone else is experiencing unless they tell you, so if you are concerned that someone else may have an addiction, look for signs as well as for symptoms.

You might see some signs in an addicted person but not others. These are signs which occur across many (but not necessarily all) addictions:

- Extreme mood changes – happy, sad, excited, anxious, etc
- Sleeping a lot more or less than usual, or at different times of day or night

- Changes in energy – unexpectedly and extremely tired or energetic
- Weight loss or weight gain
- Unexpected and persistent coughs or sniffles
- Seeming unwell at certain times, and better at other times
- Pupils of the eyes seeming smaller or larger than usual
- Secretiveness
- Lying
- Stealing
- Financially unpredictable, perhaps having large amounts of cash at times but no money at all at other times
- Changes in social groups, new and unusual friends, odd cell-phone conversations
- Repeated unexplained outings, often with a sense of urgency
- Drug paraphernalia such as unusual pipes, cigarette papers, small weighing scales, etc
- Hiding drugs, often in small plastic, paper or foil packages

Caution

Most of the signs of addiction have other explanations. For example, someone can be secretive because they are planning a birthday surprise for a friend. People can have changes of energy for numerous reasons, health related and otherwise. They can make new friendships and end old ones for many reasons other than addictions.

Most of the signs of addiction are similar to normal teenage behavior. Unfortunately, teenagers are one of the groups most vulnerable to addiction. Parents who are concerned about their teenage child should be very careful when discussing addiction with a teenager.

Be cautious about jumping to conclusions. Unless you have found drugs or drug paraphernalia, or have some other obvious evidence of an addiction, it is likely there is another explanation. However, do not be naïve if you have found drugs or drug paraphernalia, as you may end up with legal problems if you do not address the situation.

The most important factor in finding out whether someone has an addiction or not is trust. Trust needs to be earned, so try to be supportive. A confrontation with someone with an addiction is likely to just lead to denial and rejection from the addicted person.