



## FINANCIAL AND PHYSICAL WELLNESS ARE STRONGLY CONNECTED

It is critical that schools provide avenues to assist their educators and supporting staff with an area that is not often discussed, financial wellness. Financial wellness is strongly connected with physical wellness. In today's current environment of financial uncertainty related to emerging out of the Covid pandemic and inflation, it is timely to provide awareness and support on this topic. We will review the connections of financial and physical wellness and provide some links to resources that may be valuable to pass along throughout your district.

### FINANCIAL AND PHYSICAL WELLNESS

Personal financial stress can be a burden mentally and emotionally, but it can also have a negative effect on your physical health. Having a clear understanding of the relationship between financial and physical wellness increases the chances of improving both areas of your life.

### Health Concerns

Financial stress may cause several health concerns; namely anxiety, depression and hopelessness. Stress can also potentially contribute to high blood pressure, heart disease, sleep disorders, and elevated risk of more

frequent colds and other minor illnesses. Unfortunately, many individuals cope with financial stress with unhealthy choices, like drinking, smoking, and overeating, which dramatically puts someone's overall health at a much greater risk.

### Preventive Care is often Impacted

As financial burdens pile up in our lives, often so does the neglect of important preventive care and staying on track with one's routine medications. While delayed or neglected care does save money in the short term with copays and deductibles, it often leads to more serious health problems down the road and more complex medical issues and higher medical bills.

### Healthy Choices

As financial stress emerges, many individuals will put off needed health related appointments and services. It is important not to neglect those health care needs due to financial trouble. Below are a few suggested ways to spend money more wisely, which in the end likely will assist in improving overall health and lower the financial stress to the budget in the long run.



- Continue with annual and recommended preventive care services like screenings and general check-ups/physicals. This can help a great deal in mitigating medical problems early and the costs related to them down the road.
- Stay engaged with chronic conditions. If treatment and care for chronic conditions is ignored, those issues will likely only get worse.
- Work with your health care plan and any advocates that may be able to assist. Cost saving options may be available.

### **Managing Financial Stress**

Although the suggestions above may help an individual's or family's medical costs and overall health, financial stress still may linger. Here are a few healthy ways to deal with that pressure and help it to be more manageable:

- Individuals should identify their unhealthy methods on how they cope with stress of any kind and make a pivot to alternatives methods such as exercising, counseling/meditation, or communicating with their employer, a close family member, or a trusted friend.
- Put self-care at the forefront. Focus on eating right, proper hydration, getting enough sleep, and

again, regular exercise. Dedicate time to just relax and unwind.

- Connect with a financial advisor/advocate to review potential financial issues. Issues will not be able to be fixed overnight, but having a plan of action can help a person feel more in control and minimize feelings of hopelessness.

### **Resource Links to Consider**

WEA Academy on Degrees Not Debt online self-pace course free to WEAC members (click link):

[WEAC Degrees Not Debt Course](#)

Forbes article authored by Certified Financial Planner Liz Frazier on financial and overall wellness (click link):

[Forbes article on financial & overall wellness](#)



***Important Disclaimer: We strongly recommend connecting with a licensed professional for an assessment and a complete understanding of your current and future employee benefits coverages and compliance requirements.***

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