World Mental Health Day



Supporting Employees Through Life's Moments

A GUIDE FOR WORKPLACE LEADERS

2026

A Message for World Mental Health Day

World Mental Health Day is an occasion to consider how we respond when people are struggling and how we can reach them sooner. That is proactive wellbeing, and it represents the next era of employee health.



Alan King

There is no health without mental health. The mind and body are connected, and our wellbeing is shaped through life's many moments: a new job, the birth of a child, a health diagnosis, financial pressure, caring for a family member, or the loss of someone close.

Some moments are easy to recognize. Others unfold quietly—sleep becomes difficult, responsibilities feel harder to manage, or engagement turns into withdrawal. What happens at home affects us at work, and challenges related to our health, relationships, or finances rarely remain in one part of our lives.

Mental health needs to exist across a continuum. At one point, someone may be looking for ways to protect their wellbeing and manage everyday pressure. At another point, they may need more focused support through a difficult life moment or an urgent mental health challenge.

Every point on that continuum matters. We must always be ready to respond when someone is in crisis, but support should not begin there. The sooner people feel able to reach out, the greater our opportunity to help.

Across our organization and alongside the clients and partners we serve, **our purpose is simple: we help people**. We see every day how the right support, delivered early and with care, can change the direction of a difficult moment. That may mean connecting someone with a counselor; providing practical guidance through a financial, legal, family, or health concern; or helping a manager recognize when an employee is struggling and respond with confidence and compassion.

This is proactive wellbeing in practice. We **anticipate** the life moments and pressures that may affect people, making support visible before challenges become overwhelming. We **empower** people with clear information, practical tools, and the confidence to take the first step. And we r**espond** with personal, accessible care that reflects different languages, cultures, locations, and life circumstances.

There is power in what we do now. We can communicate available resources, prepare leaders to have thoughtful conversations, and create environments where asking for help is met with dignity and empathy.

The question for every organization is simple: when someone experiences a difficult life moment, how easy have we made it for them to find support?

The answer matters. When someone reaches out, they may be sharing concerns about their health, their family, their livelihood, or their future. That trust carries responsibility.

We cannot predict every life moment people will face, but we can anticipate where support may be needed and be ready to respond.

This World Mental Health Day, let us address the needs in front of us while continuing to build what comes next, because proactive mental health support is not only our future—it is how we help people stay well, navigate life's many moments, and move forward with confidence, starting now.

Thank you,

Alan King
President and
Chief Executive Officer

Planning the Observance

World Mental Health Day is an opportunity for organizations to showcase how they support employee wellbeing. As an increasing number of workers prioritize benefits and culture above all else, such a demonstration continues to grow in importance and has become essential to attracting and retaining top talent. Forward-thinking employers have started using the day to

- Draw attention to positive **mental health practices**
- Remind employees of **available wellbeing services**
- **Reduce the stigma** associated with help-seeking



When to Observe the Day

World Mental Health Day is observed annually on **October 10**. As this year's date happens to fall on a Saturday, consider recognizing it on a different day for greater reach and engagement.

Who to Involve in Planning

Building a true culture of wellbeing is a shared responsibility; therefore, it's essential to include as many stakeholders as possible in the day's planning:

- **Organizational leadership** might send out a message announcing support of the day's goals or may be directly involved in the day's activities.
- Your **HR leadership team** can decide on a theme, key messages to communicate, and important benefits to highlight.
- Your **communications department** might plan and execute the strategy for reaching out to as many employees as possible for meaningful engagement.
- **Employee resource groups (ERGs)** may use targeted communication methods and organize special activities related to the group's interests.
- **Managers** can facilitate more direct communication and ensure focus on issues of particular relevance to their teams.
- Your **employee wellbeing program** or **EAP** can contribute communication tools, employer guides, and other elements, such as webinars.

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Ways to Observe the Day

Because mental health is a vast and complicated topic, how employers decide to celebrate will depend on their organization's size, access to resources, and specific workforce needs. Examples may include the following

- Supportive communication from your organization's leadership
- Special communications to build awareness of the support available to employees
- Special on-site or online webinars on relevant topics
- Web-based or in-person discussions about mental health topics of particular interest to your teams, such as stress, burnout, or navigating change with resilience
- Town hall meetings to discuss the findings of employee surveys related to stress and mental health, describe steps being taken to address any concerns, and answer questions from employees
- On-site events related to positive mental health, such as meditation demonstrations and presentations on mindfulness or other mental health topics

How We Help

Your employee wellbeing program is a key resource in supporting the mental health of your workforce

- Our **counseling, coaching, training,** and **consulting services**—in addition to our **member resources**—can all be helpful in supporting your employees' wellbeing and creating a culture of care.
- We also provide **communication tools, webinars, and other resources** specifically designed to streamline your World Mental Health Day planning and execution.
- Our resources for HR and organizational leaders include **consulting services and written guides** addressing issues such as managing teams during a crisis, navigating mental health in the workplace, and more

Extending the Impact

Celebrating World Mental Health Day sends a powerful message; however, it's important to remember that meaningful mental health support lasts beyond the day. Encourage your teams to plan activities or learning events regularly that are aligned with a theme relevant to the employees' evolving needs.

You may also consider company-wide mental health training sessions aimed at raising awareness and inspiring action across all levels of the organization.

Additional Resources

For more information about how to champion mental wellbeing on World Mental Health Day and every day, check out the following resources:

- World Federation for Mental Health, the originator and sponsor of World Mental Health Day: wfmh.global
- World Health Organization (WHO): www.who.int/campaigns/world-mental-health-day



Global Insights into Workplace and Wellbeing Concerns

Our global wellbeing data reveals that employees seeking support for workplace and wellbeing concerns are most likely to report **relationship concerns, stress, and anxiety**. **Between January 2025 and January 2026**, relationship concerns were the most frequently reported workplace symptom, cited by 48% of employees, followed by stress (44%), and anxiety (37%).

The data also highlights the work-related issues employees are experiencing. Workplace stress was the most frequently reported concern at 56%, followed by conflict at work (41%), and performance issues (20%). Together, the findings indicate the close relationship between employee wellbeing and the workplace environment. While stress and anxiety remain significant concerns, relationship challenges and workplace conflict are among the issues employees report when seeking support.

For employers, understanding the concerns employees are reporting can help identify areas where additional support or manager training may be beneficial. Taking a holistic approach to wellbeing, one that addresses not only individual mental health concerns, but also the workplace environment, relationships, and transitions can influence how employees experience work.

Top Concerns of Employees Worldwide

PERSONAL

- Relationships – **48**%
- Stress – **44**%
- Anxiety – **37**%

WORK-RELATED

- Workplace stress – **56**%
- Conflict at work – **41**%
- Performance issues – **20**%

AMERICAS

Canada
Relationships – **49**%
Stress – **48**%
Anxiety – **42**%

United States
Relationships – **52**%
Stress – **49**%
Anxiety – **37**%

Mexico
Relationships – **68**%
Anxiety – **38**%
Adjustment/change – **28**%



EMEA

United Kingdom
Stress – **57**%
Anxiety – **48**%
Relationships – **39**%

Italy
Relationships – **46**%
Anxiety – **32**%
Stress – 30%

France
Relationships – **38**%
Anxiety - **37**%
Stress – **36**%

Portugal
Stress – **52**%
Relationships – **46**%
Anxiety – **45**%

Germany
Relationships – **47**%
Stress – **46**%
Anxiety – **24**%

Belgium
Relationships – **50**%
Stress – **40**%
Anxiety – **27**%

Ireland
Stress – **53**%
Anxiety – **50**%
Relationships – **47**%

U.A.E
Relationships – **54**%
Stress – **48**%
Anxiety – **35**%

APAC

China
Relationships – **63**%
Stress – **42**%
Anxiety – **33**%

India
Relationships – **56**%
Stress – **42**%
Anxiety – **29**%

Indonesia
Stress – **58**%
Relationships – **45**%
Anxiety – **39**%

Japan
Stress – **61**%
Relationships – **54**%
Anxiety – **42**%

Singapore
Stress – **53**%
Relationships – **48**%
Anxiety – **32**%

Australia
Stress – **53**%
Relationships – **45**%
Anxiety – **41**%



Anticipate. Empower. Respond.

How We Deliver a Continuum of Mental Health Support



As we prepare to celebrate World Mental Health Day, let us remind ourselves that mental wellbeing is about more than managing stress; it's also about building resilience to minimize potential setbacks. Far too often, mental health is seen as something to repair, when in reality, it's something to be actively nurtured every day.

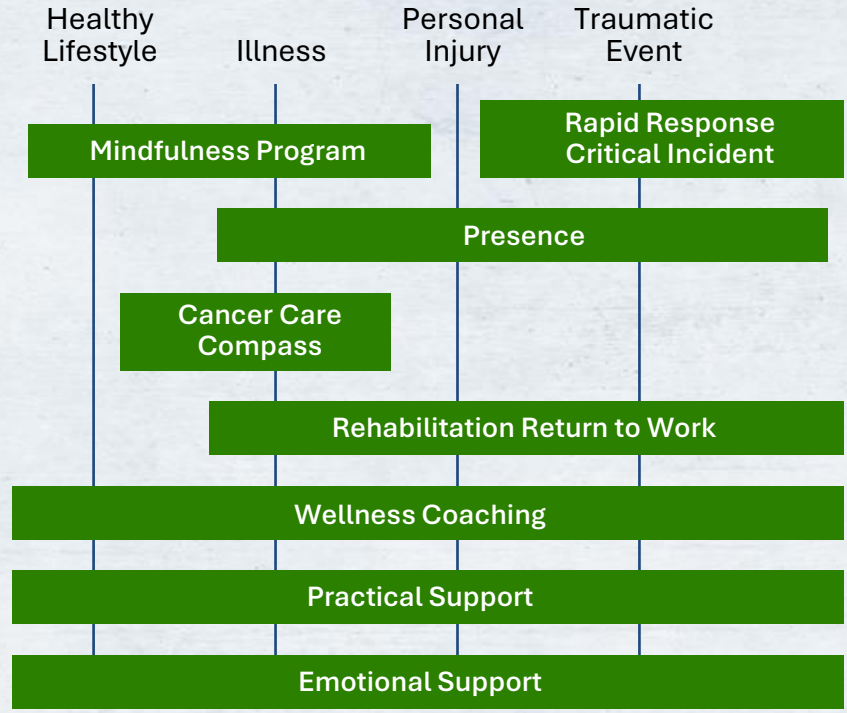
We are committed to striking that balance between crisis response and proactive intervention. That's why our services are designed to support members in moments of acute need and determination.

With comprehensive support across all of life's moments—from family transitions and career challenges to health events and emotional growth—we empower members to cultivate lasting mental resilience. Our in-the-moment and crisis support solutions allow members to promptly address concerns, while our coaching and daily living services empower individuals to lead healthier, well-balanced lives.

The result is a continuum of care that meets members where they are—guiding them toward lasting wellbeing while standing ready to catch them if they fall. The stories that follow demonstrate this support in action, illustrating how holistic care empowers growth, strengthens resilience, and facilitates recovery.

Our Support in Action:

ANTICIPATE | HEALTH MOMENTS



Enrique's Story

At just 32, Enrique had built a life most would envy. A high-performing project manager for a leading tech company, he excelled in his role, maintained close relationships, and enjoyed a healthy balance of hobbies and social time.

Yet, underneath the surface, Enrique felt something was missing. Despite his many accomplishments, he struggled to feel fulfilled. He knew what he needed—**to feel healthier, stronger, and truly passionate about something**. So, he set an ambitious goal: to run a long-distance marathon. The only problem? Enrique had never run before.

He knew from his work that he had access to **Wellness Coaching,** so when he set off on his quest, he decided to seek support.

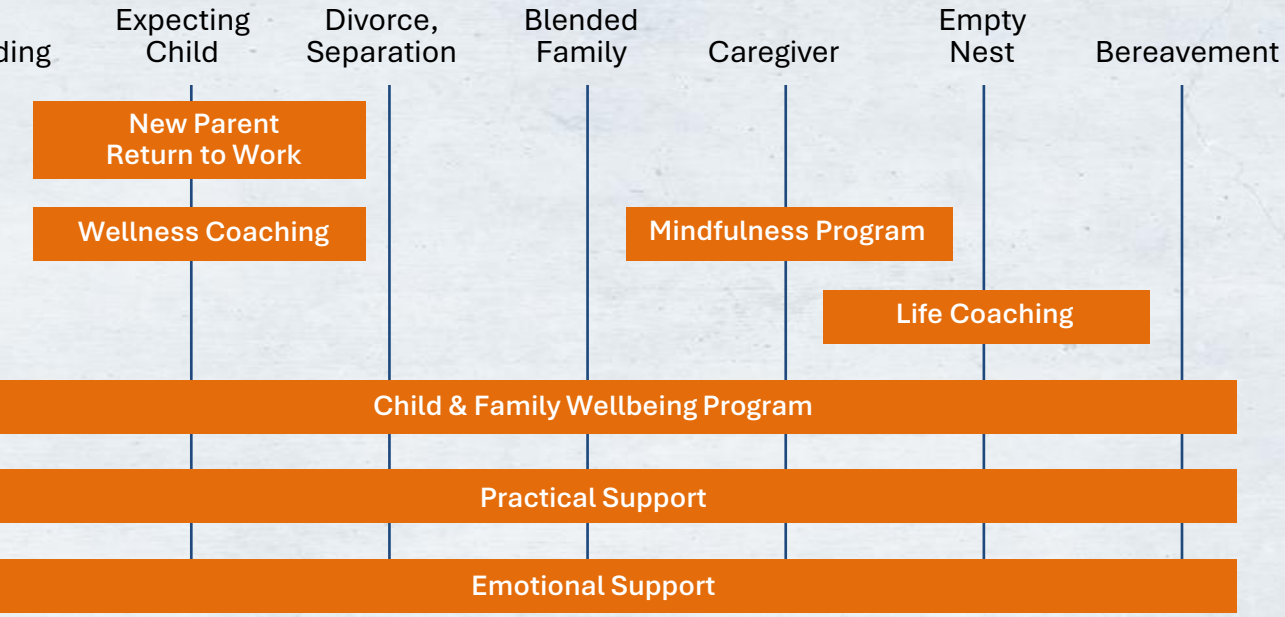
A dedicated coach collaborated with him on a customized training plan—one that not only covered race-day logistics, but the habits that would drive success. The coach helped Enrique understand how his diet, sleep, and exercise were all intertwined—and how they shaped and were shaped by his emotional health.

By outlining smaller, actionable goals that would put him on the path to success, Enrique's coach helped him achieve something greater than running a race: he taught him how to stay disciplined, listen to his body and mind, and recognize that fulfillment comes from pursuing growth in all areas of life.

By the final session, Enrique felt ready to conquer his goal and confident in his ability to continue reaching new heights.

Our Support in Action:

EMPOWER | FAMILY MOMENTS



Sofia's Story

Right away, Sofia knew she was in trouble. Her first week back at work was spent hiding in the bathroom, answering calls from home, avoiding messages from colleagues, and crying over the stress of it all.

As a **first-time mom**, she wasn't prepared for how rocky the return to work would be. She had expected grace and flexibility. What she got instead was a backlog of overdue assignments, frantic requests from teammates, and a manager who didn't know how to support her. Sofia took her concerns to HR.

In response, an HR specialist connected Sofia with support through the **New Parent Return to Work** solution. Although the program is designed to support employees before, during, and after parental leave, in Sofia's case, support was requested to ensure a smooth re-entry. Within days, a dedicated consultant met with Sofia and her manager to lay the groundwork for a successful transition.

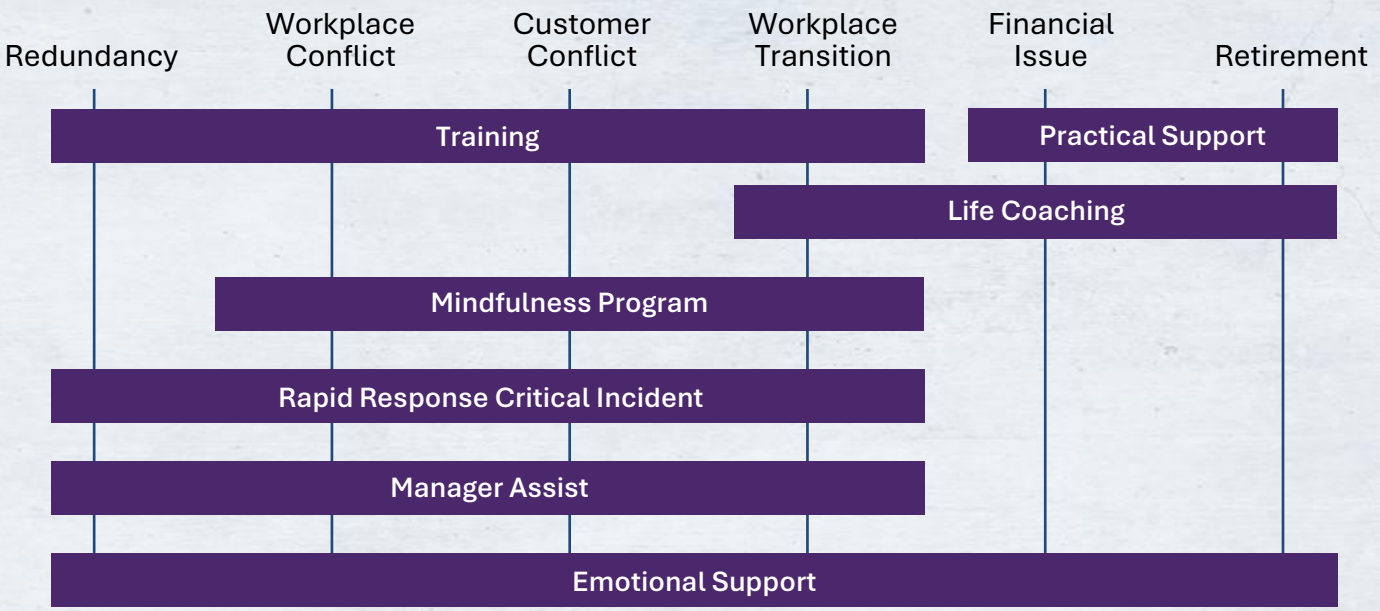
The manager received guidance on facilitating a sustainable return by setting realistic expectations, promoting work-life balance, and supporting a phased return to duties. Sofia, in turn, received personalized guidance on locating dependable child care, practicing successful time management skills, and overcoming feelings of guilt and shame that so often haunt new parents.

With the consultant's support, Sofia and her manager were able to develop a robust reintegration plan that balanced team priorities with Sofia's evolving needs as a parent. Within weeks, Sofia reported a noticeable improvement in her confidence and ability to manage the competing demands of work and family.

By the time the case was closed, Sofia had returned to her previous level of performance, while her manager was commended for his ability to lead with compassion.

Our Support in Action:

RESPOND | WORK MOMENTS



Ravi's Story

As ER nurses, Ravi's team was prepared to encounter trauma. Every day, they were exposed to serious injuries, life-threatening situations, and unimaginable loss. But when **a gunman opened fire in the emergency department**—critically injuring several staff members—the incident caught the team completely by surprise.

In the days that followed, many members of the team began showing signs of post-traumatic stress. They were easily startled, quick to anger, and reluctant to talk about what happened. Some, like Ravi, even started arriving late to work, complaining of insomnia, chronic fatigue, and persistent, recurring headaches.

Ravi's supervisor connected with the **Rapid Response Critical Incident (RRCI)** service. Within hours, a dedicated team was mobilized to provide on-site support.

Individual counseling was made available to those most affected, while a series of facilitated group sessions gave colleagues the opportunity to process the incident together in a safe and supportive environment. Over the following weeks, the group counseling sessions proved especially impactful. The sessions created a space where they could speak openly about their experiences and draw strength from one another.

In time, Ravi and several of his teammates reported improved wellbeing, equipped with practical strategies for coping with stress, alleviating somatic symptoms, and protecting their emotional health. Team members who continued to struggle were referred to individualized counseling, where they continued to unpack the event and cultivate strategies for long-term recovery.

By the end of the intervention, the department had not only begun to heal but had also developed a stronger foundation for supporting one another in the wake of future incidents.

There When it Matters Most



As these stories show, our support is there to guide people through every stage of the wellbeing journey—whether they're pursuing excellence, navigating adversity, or recovering from the unexpected.

Crisis response is only part of the picture; by cultivating resilience, we help prevent crises where possible and accelerate meaningful recovery when they occur.

Benefit From Our Deep Experience and Global Scale

We provide comprehensive wellbeing solutions that support people through all of life's moments, both the everyday and the unexpected. Our services are available 24/7, 365 days a year, helping individuals and their families access the right support when and where they need it. We partner closely with organizations around the world to create customized wellbeing solutions that reflect their unique needs and deliver meaningful value for their employees and business.

Contact us to learn how we can help your organization and members thrive.