



The SIA Staff wishes you and your family health, kindness and peace this holiday season.



The gift of gratitude in the season of giving

In this season of gift-giving, would you like a gift that will support the health and wellness of your family, friends, community – and yourself – throughout the year? You can do it by practicing gratitude! Robert A. Emmons, a UC Davis psychology professor and leading scientific expert on the science of gratitude, believes that “gratitude works because it allows individuals to celebrate the present and be an active participant in their own lives.” Here’s what the research shows:

Practicing gratitude can:

- reduce anxiety and depression;
- strengthen the immune system;
- nurture healthier habits;
- promote better sleep;
- build resilience to better face trauma and provide for shorter recovery from illness;
- enhance empathy and reduce aggression;
- encourage achievement; and
- build stronger relationships and reduce feelings of loneliness and isolation.

To build the habit of practicing gratitude, commit to one or more of the following suggestions:

- Wake up and acknowledge to yourself what you’re grateful for every day.

- Write down two or three things you’re grateful for each day. If daily seems overwhelming, then set a day and time each week. Use a special notebook or journal, or write on slips of paper and keep them in a jar or box.
- Have a gratitude gathering of friends and family. Surround yourself with people who support and care for each other.
- Take pride in what you have. Be cautious about what you view on social media and avoid comparing your life to the lives of others.
- When sitting down for a meal, have each person at the table say one thing they’re grateful for.
- Attach a thought of gratefulness to an object (such as small stone or a photo) to cue you during the day.
- Avoid negativity.
- Write a thank-you letter to someone who’s contributed to your life and be specific about the effect they’ve had on you.
- Be present. Take pleasure in the mundane and appreciate the good around you.





- Unsecured parking lot gates are hazards
- Understanding Alzheimer's

Secure parking lot gates to avoid vehicle damage and injury

Unsecured parking lot gates can result in serious damage to vehicles and injury to vehicle passengers. When gates are loose, they can easily swing open, either from the wind or passing students. The solution to this potentially dangerous problem is simple: Secure the gates with chains, clamps or

latches to prevent movement. All such gates should be secured after being opened and closed. If you're unable to keep a gate from swinging and doing potential damage, contact your site administrator or custodial staff and let them know that a gate needs securing.



Alzheimer's awareness is key to planning for the future

Dementia is a general term for a decline in mental ability that gets worse over time and is severe enough to interfere with daily life. Symptoms are associated with a deterioration in memory, reasoning or other thinking skills. There are different types of dementia and many conditions that cause it. Alzheimer's disease is the most common cause of dementia, accounting for up to 80 percent of dementia cases.

Alzheimer's is a degenerative brain disease caused by complex brain changes that result from cell damage. Because the brain's 100 billion nerve cells (neurons) interconnect to form intricate communication networks, it's believed that Alzheimer's disease prevents parts of this network from functioning efficiently. Cell damage that takes hold in one area of the brain eventually moves to other areas of the brain, rendering the neurons unable to do their jobs and causing irreversible changes. Ironically, while scientists believe that age is a key factor in the manifestation of dementia, most also agree that it's not a normal part of aging.

Memory loss that disrupts daily life may be a symptom of Alzheimer's or other dementias, but other early signs and symptoms vary from person to person and may include:

- Struggling with familiar vocabulary, trouble following or joining a conversation, or stopping in the middle of a conversation and being unable to continue;



- Vision and spatial issues, like awareness of the space around them;
- Impaired reasoning or judgment, which can impact decisions;
- Difficulty completing familiar tasks;
- Trouble handling money and paying bills;
- Confusion with time or place;
- Repeating questions;
- Wandering and getting lost;
- Mood and personality changes; increased anxiety and/or aggression.

If you suspect Alzheimer's disease, speak with your healthcare provider to determine if the symptoms are related to Alzheimer's or some other medical condition. Early and accurate diagnosis provides opportunities for you and your family to consider financial planning, develop advance directives and anticipate care needs. Medical management can improve quality of life for individuals living with the disease and their caregivers.

For additional information:

CDC - What is Alzheimer's Disease? | [CDC](https://www.cdc.gov/alz/)

U.S. Department of Health & Human Services - [Alzheimers.gov](https://www.alzheimers.gov/)

Alzheimer's Association - www.alz.org

Protect your pucker power year-round •
Mental health also needs care •



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Head off dry, chapped lips with a little year-round t-l-c

Lyn M. Poll, M.S., SIA Prevention Services

The skin on the lips is much thinner and more sensitive than the skin on your arms and legs. Lips don't contain oil glands like other parts of the body, which in turn can make the skin on the lips particularly susceptible to environmental stresses. Wind, cold weather and sun damage can leave lips dry, cracked and chapped.



While it may seem that dry, cracked lips are something we all need to tolerate until spring arrives, dermatologists from the American Academy of Dermatology say it's possible to have soft, supple lips year-round by following a few simple steps:

- **Use non-irritating lip products.** Look for lip products that contain ingredients such as castor seed oil, ceramides, dimethicone or mineral oil. Make sure the lip product is labeled "fragrance free" or "hypoallergenic." Lip products that contain camphor, menthol or eucalyptus, or that burn, sting or tingle after application, should be avoided as they can further irritate lips.

- **Apply lip moisturizer/balm throughout the day and before going to bed.** If your lips are very dry and cracked, try a thick ointment, such as white petroleum jelly. Ointment seals in water longer than waxes or oils.
- **Protect your lips outdoors.** Apply a lip balm/ointment with an SPF of 30 or higher before going outdoors. Look for a lip balm that contains titanium dioxide and/or zinc oxide and be sure to reapply every two hours when outdoors.
- **Stay hydrated.** Drink plenty of water and use a humidifier at home, particularly in your bedroom while you sleep.
- **Don't pick, lick or bite at your lips.** It may feel natural to lick your lips when they're dry, but this can worsen the problem. Break the habit by applying a non-irritating lip balm or ointment.
- **Refrain from holding metal objects with your lips.** Paper clips, jewelry and metal straws can irritate your lips.

Dry, chapped lips are usually harmless. By following the self-care steps above, you should see noticeable improvements in two to three weeks. Continuing to apply lip products whenever it's dry indoors or outside will help keep your lips in tip-top (kissable) shape.

If your chapped lips don't improve after following these tips for two to three weeks, it could be a sign of a medical condition. Speaking to a dermatologist may help determine the cause.

Resource:

[7 dermatologists' tips for healing dry, chapped lips \(aad.org\)](https://www.aad.org/skin-care/skin-problems/skin-conditions/dry-lips)

Take care of your mental health

Taking care of your mental health is as important as taking care of your physical health. Here are some key ways to foster resilience, adapt to change, maintain healthy relationships, and prepare for life's ups and downs:

Take care of your physical health

The human mind and body are connected. When you take care of your body – your physical health – you also take care of your mental health.

- Be physically active. Exercise can lift your mood and your energy level, reduce stress, and help with symptoms of depression and anxiety. When you engage in regular physical activity, you sleep better, think more clearly and regulate your emotions more effectively. Find ways to be active that you enjoy and build them into your daily and weekly routine.
- Eat a variety of healthy foods. What you eat can have a direct effect on your mood and energy level. Eat plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables, plus lean protein and whole



- grains. Avoid processed foods, as well as foods with added sugar and salt, and limit your consumption of alcohol. Find a mix of foods you enjoy that sustain your energy while giving you the nutrients and vitamins you need to thrive.
- Sleep well. You need adequate sleep to think clearly, stay focused and regulate your emotions. Adopt healthy sleep habits by going to bed and getting up at the same time every day; winding down in the hour before bedtime in low light without electronic devices; and avoiding large meals, caffeine and alcohol late in the day.

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Mental health

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Accept yourself

Every person is different and no one is perfect. Accept yourself for who you are and take pride in your unique strengths and quirks. When you find yourself being self-critical, pause and reflect on what is good about you. If negative self-talk (the critical voice inside your head) is holding you back and making you unhappy, consider talking with a professional counselor to learn new ways to weaken the negative voice and strengthen your positive image.

Strengthen social connections

Social connections – your friends and family, the people you spend time with and talk to – are key elements of your mental health. Make time for the people you care about, especially the people with whom you're able to discuss your emotions. Pay attention to those in your social network who lift your mood when you're feeling down and who are open and honest with you when you're seeing things in an unrealistic way. Cultivate and strengthen these connections by providing the same emotional support in return.

Calm yourself

When you're dealing with a stressful situation or feel your body growing tense, take time out to calm yourself. Learn stress-reducing techniques like deep breathing, progressive muscle relaxation and mindfulness, and use the ones that work for you to relax your body and mind.



Practice healthy thinking

Build your emotional resilience by adopting positive habits of thought. When you have a negative reaction to something, step back and reconsider things in a positive light, looking for the opportunity in the situation or the good in the other person and yourself.

Do something that absorbs your mind

If there's an activity you enjoy or a skill you'd like to learn, make time for it. Focus on something that absorbs your full attention. That might be making something, playing music, singing, writing, cooking or gardening. It might be restoring an old car, making an improvement to your home or playing a sport. The best activity is one you can get lost in, that brings you into a state called "flow", where you're fully engaged and can forget about worries and negative thoughts.

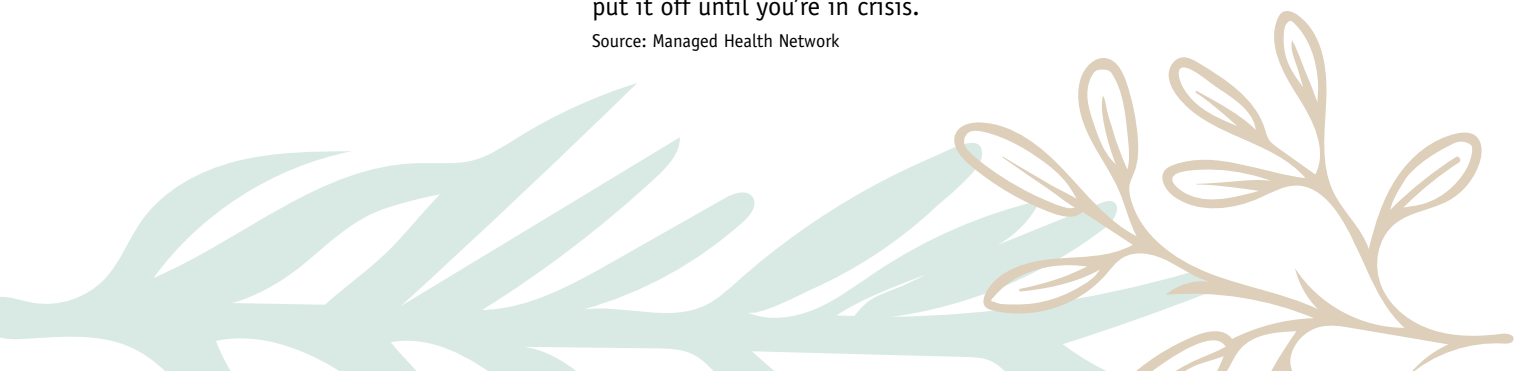
Talk about how you feel

When you're sad, worried or upset, talk about what you're going through with someone you trust. When you hold those feelings inside, they can build, becoming more intense and uncomfortable. When you talk about them, you begin to process your emotions, understand what lies behind them, and find ways to solve the problems you're facing.

Ask for help when you need it

When you're suffering emotionally and nothing seems to help, reach out for support. Your doctor or your employee assistance program (EAP) can direct you to a professional counselor who can help you cope with the challenges you're facing. Don't put it off until you're in crisis.

Source: Managed Health Network



EAPs have valuable resources •
Don't ignore sleep apnea •



wellness
& safety



SIA's Employee Assistance Program offers an array of services

Personal and work-related matters can preoccupy our thoughts, destroy our ability to concentrate on the simplest tasks, and prevent us from functioning the way we want to in everyday situations. Employee Assistance Program (EAP) services offer strategies for overcoming such issues and can help you identify problems, develop plans and gain referrals to appropriate resources.

SIA's EAP provides counseling services, helps with child and elder care concerns, and offers resources for financial/legal consultations, identity theft assistance and wellness coaching. There's also a multitude of articles on their website to educate and assist.

Districts currently in the SIA EAP are:
Arcohe Union SD
El Dorado COE

Folsom-Cordova USD
Galt Joint Union ESD
Galt Joint Union HSD
Hayward USD
Latrobe SD
Natomas USD
Natomas Charter SD
Placerville Union SD
Rescue Union SD
River Delta USD
Robla New Hope Charter
Robla SD
Sacramento City USD
Sacramento COE

For information on accessing your services, contact your district's human resources department. For additional information, contact SIA's Teresa Franco at tfranco@sia-jpa.org.

Unchecked sleep apnea can be hazardous to your health

National Drowsy Driving Prevention Week is November 7-13



Sleep apnea is a sleep disorder that disrupts breathing during sleep. It's serious and can be life-threatening if not treated. Symptoms can include loud snoring, gasping or choking during sleep; excessive sleepiness during the day; morning headaches, irritability and difficulty concentrating. Untreated, it can make it difficult to stay awake, focus and react quickly, affecting your safety and potentially the safety of others. If you have any of the above symptoms, don't be afraid to reach out to your medical provider.

Source: personalbest.com

QUOTE TO NOTE

Anything that's human is mentionable and anything that's mentionable can be more manageable. When we can talk about our feelings, they become less overwhelming, less upsetting and less scary.

— Fred Rogers

Use WeTip

For more information

contact Teresa Franco at tfranco@sia-jpa.org or 916-364-1281, ext. 1256.



1-800-78-CRIME

The material in this newsletter should be part of your Injury and Illness Prevention Plan (IIPP).

Keep a copy of this newsletter in your IIPP binder and be sure all employees receive a copy.

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