



## Meet Your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) Coordinators – *We Are Here for You!*

by Kenda Riggs



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**W**elcome back from your summer break! We hope you had a lovely summer with much relaxation and energy restoration. However, if summer was a more difficult time for you in body, mind, or spirit, we hope you were able to find ways to embrace some glimmers of positive moments during your summer break.

As you enter this school year, it is important to think about and plan for your own wellbeing. Teaching is very stressful, and stress can accumulate quickly, particularly when you are busy multi-tasking daily. For the start of this school year, we want to remind you that your EAP is here for you. As an active NLTA member in Newfoundland and Labrador, you have access to benefits and supports through the EAP which offers a variety of counselling services in person, virtually, or by phone. To access your EAP, just reach out to one of us as your Coordinators to start the referral process.

Many teachers may not be aware that they have EAP benefits available to them. The EAP is supported by NLSchools, Conseil Scolaire Francophone Provincial (CSFP), and the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers Association (NLTA). Although we are a partnership program with Johnson Group Insurance, if you have a different insurance plan provider, many of the therapists covered under the EAP program can be also covered by your insurance plan as well. We work to ensure you can maximize your EAP benefits, as well as your insurance plans to keep counselling affordable and accessible to you.

### Types Of Referrals

There can be many reasons that you may need to contact your EAP. Here are some examples of referrals that we talk to teachers about every day:

- Employment Concerns
- Family Issues
- Financial Stress
- Grief and Loss
- Interpersonal Conflict
- Life Transitions

- Mental Health
- Parenting
- Personal Stress
- Physical Health Concerns
- Relationships (Personal and Professional)
- Retirement Planning
- Substance Use
- Traumatic Workplace Incidents
- Workplace Stress
- Work Life Integration

### Knowing Your EAP

Through the EAP, teachers have access to a maximum of \$3,000 funding for counselling during their working career at \$40/session. Under Johnson Group Insurance, your plan provides coverage of \$1,600 per calendar year for counselling services at 80% reimbursement. The counsellor will bill your EAP directly for \$40 per session. You pay the session balance directly to the counsellor, who will give you a receipt to submit to your insurance for 80% reimbursement (or according to your individual insurance plan).

We are a highly confidential, private, voluntary program. When you contact the EAP by phone or email, you will reach one of your EAP Coordinators for an initial confidential consultation. Unless consent is provided by you, neither NL Schools, CSFP, nor NLTA have access to any of your information. Although the EAP is highly confidential, the only time we cannot maintain your confidentiality is if you disclose a situation or behavior that may cause harm to self or others; situations involving a child or youth under the age of 18 years who may be in need of protective intervention; or when subpoenaed by a court of law.

The EAP has experienced therapists (clinical psychologists, social workers, or Canadian Certified Counsellors) throughout the province who have been screened and approved by the program and provide confidential counselling. Wait times are minimal, and by contacting your EAP, we can get you started on your wellness journey as soon as

possible. If you have any questions about the EAP, or if you would like to confidentially consult about a personal or professional matter, please don't hesitate to reach out! Your EAP is committed to providing inclusive and accessible services to help facilitate your participation in our programs or services.

### Wellness Workshops

Wellness workshops are a preventative form of intervention at schools with a focus on promoting a psychologically healthy and respectful workplace. Some wellness workshop themes include managing stress and work-life integration, coping with critical incidents, grief and loss, navigating life transitions, fostering positive relationships, and understanding your EAP program. At this time, the EAP program can provide a limited number of wellness workshops per month. If you are interested in having a wellness workshop at your school, please contact EAP Coordinator Nancy Ivany at [nivany@eapNLTeachers.ca](mailto:nivany@eapNLTeachers.ca) or (709)733-3269 for an initial consultation. Wellness workshop requests must be formally submitted in writing at least 30 days in advance of the scheduled Professional Learning, and approval must be received from the Board. As workshop requests fill up quickly, there can be no guarantee that a request will be fulfilled. There is no cost to you for an EAP coordinator to facilitate a school workshop.

### Living Well Articles

In each edition of The Bulletin, published by the NLTA, there is a Living Well section which has an electronic library of articles written by your EAP on many different topics that may be of relevance to you. Here is the link to access these articles: <https://www.nlta.nl.ca/living-well-articles-from-the-employee-assistance-program/> or you can find them in print in each edition of the bulletin. Take some time to read some articles that focus on living well!

### The Importance of Self-Care

Remember, daily self care is such an important component of being well and must be a top priority each and every day. Self-care is any activity that someone engages in to try and reach optimal physical, mental, or emotional health. It does not have to be big! Here are some ideas to consider: make time to go for a walk or sit outside and breathe in the fresh outdoor air; watch the sunset or take a few moments to gaze at the sky at night; reconnect with an old friend or acquaintance; try something new that you'd love to do like a class such as pottery or photography; tune out of social media or television

and listen to some music or an uplifting podcast; try a new recipe or bake a delicious treat; or take time to read a chapter of a good book or a Living Well article while enjoying a cup of tea. Finally, it is important to try to embrace self-compassion, which is a form of self-care; how you speak and treat yourself is of utmost importance. Be kind to yourself. Remember, we interact with ourselves more than anyone else in this universe.

As you start this new school year, your EAP team would like to wish you a successful academic year! Take good care of yourselves and each other.

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