



BTAC BULLETIN

EMERGING ISSUES, TRENDS, CAPABILITIES, AND BEST PRACTICES IN INSIDER THREAT ANALYSIS

HOLIDAY STRESS

Impacts of Stress on InT

Holiday stress can come from multiple factors including travel, entertaining guests, coping with loneliness, visiting family, pre-holiday work deadlines, reacclimating to work demands post-holidays, and financial strains/perceived financial obligations. In addition, uncertainty regarding global affairs (*overseas conflicts, economic concerns, etc.*) will likely be an additional stressor this year for many. In times of heightened pressure, it is important for leaders and co-workers across organizations to remain vigilant for signs of increased stress or concerning behaviors and respond in a way that facilitates healthy coping associated with a positive workplace culture.



Winter is often associated with joyful festivities, but it can also be a stressful time. A recent survey asked people to describe their emotions toward the upcoming holiday season and most expressed positive emotions; however, about *one in five wrote stress, anxiety, sadness, or depression.* (*American Psychiatric Association 2021*)

LEADERSHIP STARTS WITH

SELF CARE

- 1 Set boundaries to maintain mental health (leaving work at work, prioritizing tasks, etc.)
- 2 Stay connected to support networks.
- 3 Promote and engage in healthy coping strategies.

INCREASED AWARENESS IS KEY!

- InT Hubs should emphasize that a primary goal of InT programs is to mitigate risk by **supporting** employees who display concerning behaviors related to stress by referring them to appropriate resources. Leaders should continue to check in regularly to monitor overall well-being and offer supportive services when warranted.
- Generally, the more stressors that exist in a person of concern's life, the more difficult it will be for them to cope. Ascertaining a person's **reaction** to stressors is as important as identifying the stressors themselves.
- Watch for changes in baseline behaviors that suggest the stressors may have become overwhelming. These changes could include **Disruptive** behaviors such as low tolerance for frustration, unusually argumentative or **Distressed** behaviors such as changes in performance or appearance, or signs of hopelessness or despair, and finally **Dangerous** behaviors such as harassment, intimidation, preoccupation with an identified grievance and or expressing a willingness to use violence as an acceptable means of conflict resolution.
- During the holidays people can become distracted which might lead to unintentional insider threats. Remind employees to stay vigilant on the job.
- The [National Alliance on Mental Illness](#) noted that **64%** of individuals living with a mental illness felt that their conditions worsened around the holidays. If you are aware of employees living with a mental health condition, encourage them to stay connected to support services this holiday season.

