

Your Employee Assistance Program is a support service that can help you take the first step toward change.

Helicopter Parenting

As members of the Millennial Generation begin to enter the workplace, employers are quickly realizing that they will be facing a new phenomenon called helicopter parenting. The term helicopter parenting is often used to describe an overly protective parenting style. Research indicates that an estimated 60% to 70% of parents are involved in some kind of helicopter behavior (Somers, 2007).

Helicopter parenting does not always stop with college graduation. In a survey of employers, 26% said parents actively promoted their child for a position, 31% said parents submitted a resume on their child's behalf, and 41% said parents obtained company materials for their young adult (Lancaster & Stillman, 2010). Employers need to recognize that helicopter parenting is part of a larger generational shift that will only increase in the decades ahead (Howe and Strauss, 2007).

This new way of parenting moving into the workplace is just one sign of a shift in the relationship between young people and their parents. Many young adults continue to live with their parents after finishing their education. The 2006 U.S. Census Bureau's Current Population Survey reported that almost 54% of males and 47% of females aged 25-34 still live at home. For many Millennials the move back home is not seen as a failure but a natural, even desirable step in their family relationships.

For these reasons, parents want to become allies in their children's hiring and employment experience. Some strategies for employers who want to foster this relationship with parents are (Howe and Strauss, 2007):

- Co-market to potential Millennial employers and their parents.

  Parents have a significant influence on the young workers of today. Employers should target recruitment efforts to engage parents and take advantage of parents' influential role.

- Engage personally with parents. Employers can give parents a personal, family-friendly touch by inviting them to visit the workplace, involving parents in community service activities, and social company events.
- Help Millenials plan to care for their elderly parents down the road. Employers should start thinking now of innovative ways to support employees who are devoted to aging parents, including flex time for elder care and financial counseling.

Your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a great support for resources on working with Millenials, parenting information, and financial counseling services. What ever might confront the workforce in decades ahead, your EAP is here to help face these challenges and provide support.

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