

# Workplace Burnout & Mental Health: What Leaders Need to Know

*Olivia Lockard, Program Manager, Wellness Council of Indiana  
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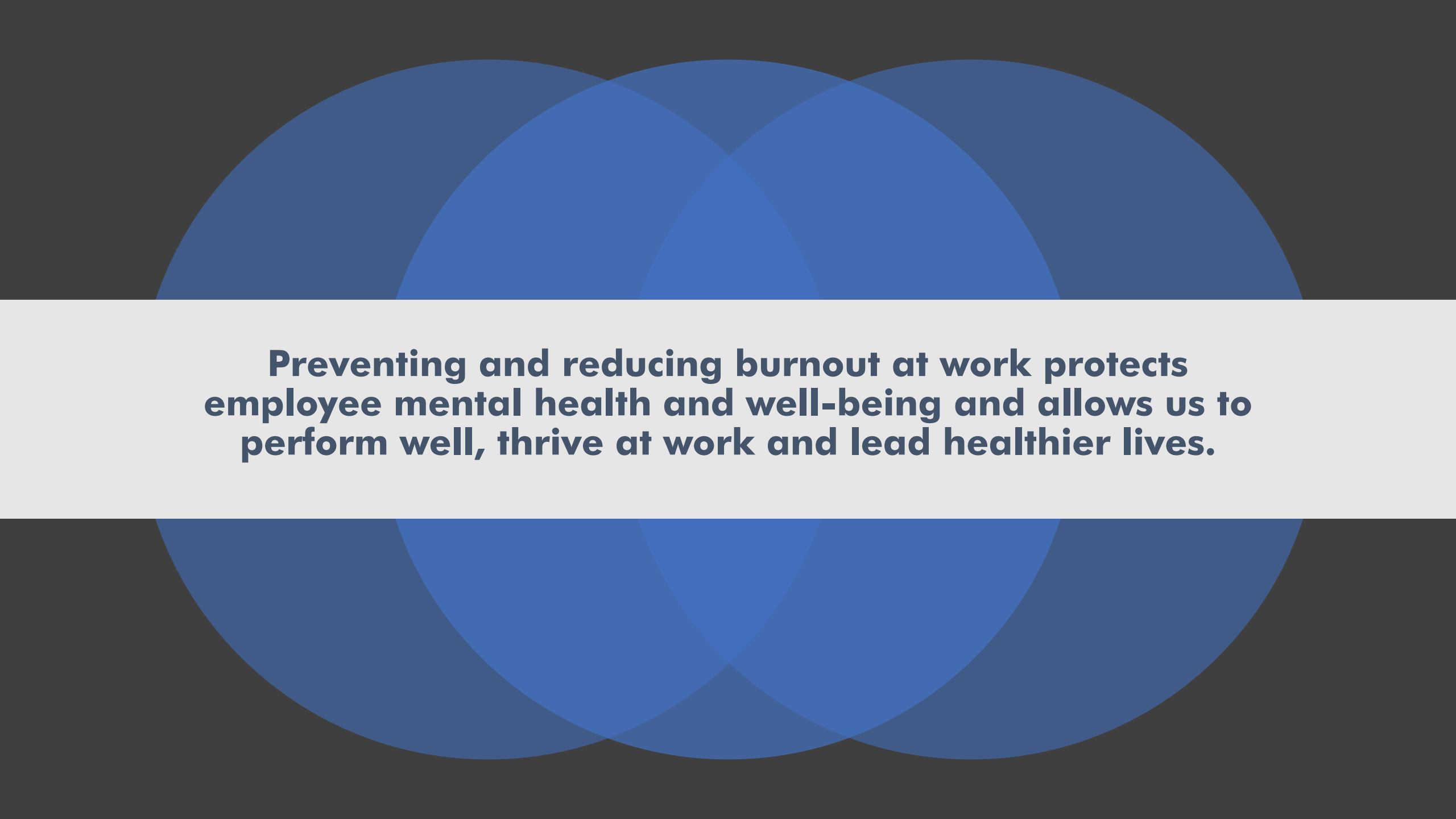
Workplace and  
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# Why This Matters

- In 2025, 66% of American employees are experiencing some sort of burnout.
- Generational rates of burnout:
  - 81% of 18- to 24-year-olds
  - 83% of 25–34-year-olds
  - 49% of 55 and older
- Top reasons for burnout:
  - Having more work to complete than time to do it.
  - Not enough resources or right tools to do their job properly.
  - Economy that's impacting their well-being at work.
  - Taking on too much work due to labor shortages in their industry.

The background features three large, overlapping circles in a medium blue color, set against a dark gray background. The circles are arranged horizontally, with the middle circle slightly offset upwards and downwards from the other two, creating a central intersection point. A white horizontal band runs across the middle of the image, containing the text.

**Preventing and reducing burnout at work protects employee mental health and well-being and allows us to perform well, thrive at work and lead healthier lives.**

# What is Burnout?

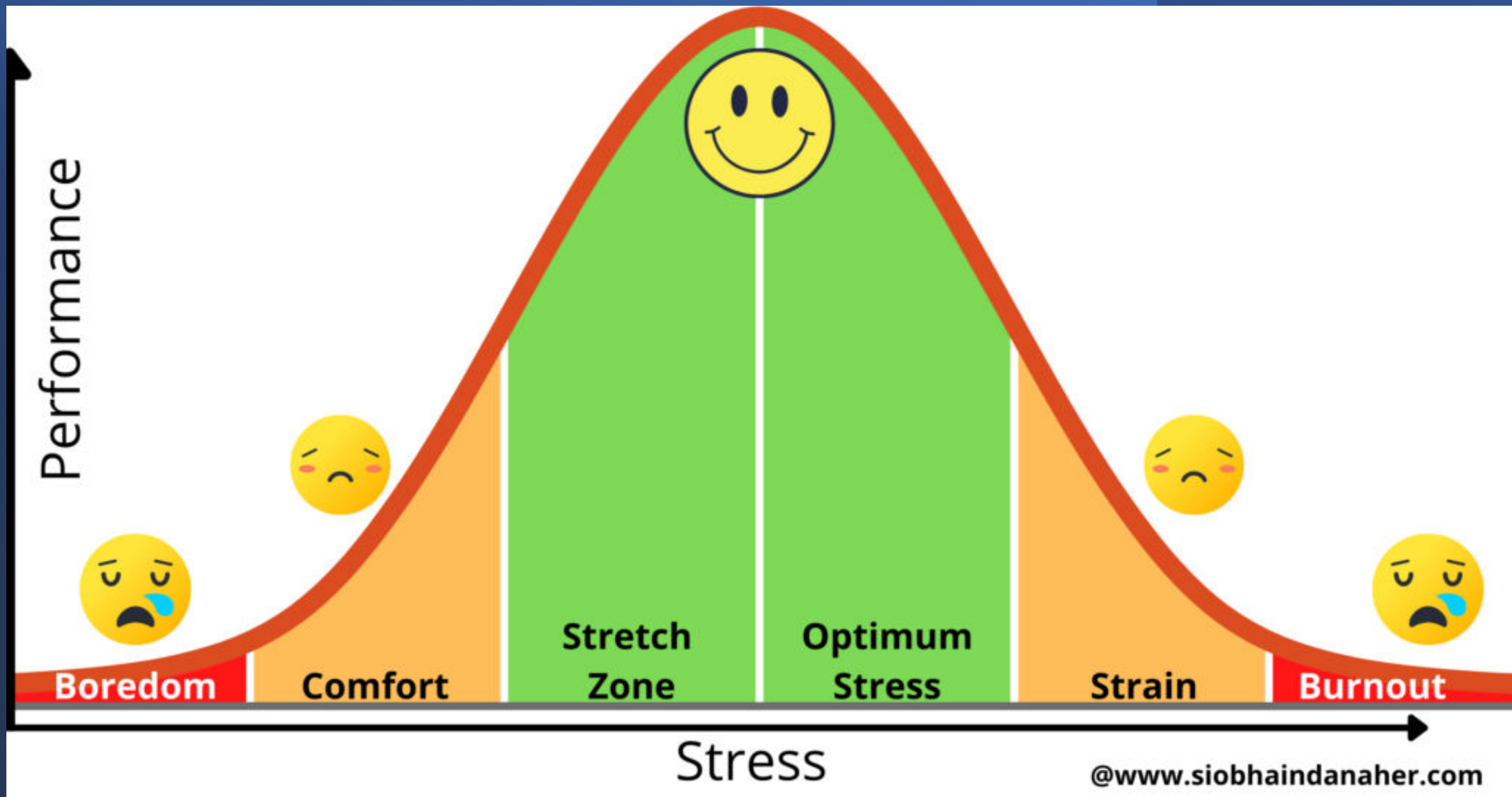
- The World Health Organization (WHO) defines burnout as-syndrome resulting from workplace stress that has not been successfully managed.
- What it isn't:
  - This isn't "burnout" used in casual conversation. True workplace burnout is specific to one's job or occupation. Is more concerning and detrimental than daily irritations everyone experiences and most can manage.
- **Three Dimensions:**
  - Feelings of energy deletion or exhaustion.
  - Increased mental distance from one's job or feelings of negativism related to one's job.
  - Reduced professional efficacy.

# Risk Factors of Burnout

- Organizational and systemic risk factors:
  - Excessive workload and/or scarce resources
  - High-conflict teams and a limited sense of communities
  - Lack of clarity in their role, or conflicting direction
  - Shifting workloads or constantly changing expectation
  - Lack of recognition
  - Ineffective or poor management
- Individual factors that may make some more susceptible:
  - Unhelpful coping strategies
  - Perfectionism
  - Excessive work engagement
  - Low social support
  - Inadequate self-care

# Understand the Signs/Symptoms for Burnout

Physical symptoms	Emotional symptoms	Behavioral symptoms
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Feeling tired all the time</li><li>● Headaches</li><li>● Muscle pain</li><li>● Insomnia or oversleeping</li><li>● Weakened immune system</li><li>● High blood pressure</li><li>● Loss of appetite<sup>[5]</sup></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Hopelessness</li><li>● Anxiety</li><li>● Emotional numbness</li><li>● Increased pessimism</li><li>● Feeling unmotivated</li><li>● Lacking a sense of satisfaction and achievement related to one's job</li><li>● A diminished sense of competence in completing work-related tasks<sup>[3][6][7]</sup></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Procrastination</li><li>● Absenteeism or being late for work</li><li>● Decreased work performance</li><li>● Withdrawing from people and responsibilities</li><li>● Unhealthy coping mechanisms both in and out of the workplace</li><li>● Avoidance of social interactions</li><li>● Decreased cognitive abilities<sup>[1][3][8][9]</sup></li></ul>





# Mental Health & Burnout-The Connection

- Mental burnout symptoms include:
  - Concentration issues
  - Depressed mood
  - Feeling worthless
  - Loss of interest or pleasure
  - Suicidal ideation
- Burnout vs. Depression
  - Key differences- center on where/when you experience symptoms, and you must be diagnosed by professional with depression.
- Long-term impact:
  - Long term psychological consequences.
  - Sleep & cognitive impairments.
  - Connection to depression and suicide risk.
  - Overall decreased quality of life.
  - Prolonged burnout is precursor to chronic mental health conditions when left untreated.

# Burnout Often Masks Mental Health Challenges

- Burnout is often a warning sign—an outward indicator of an underlying mental health challenge.
- Many employees stay silent due to stigma:
  - Fear of being seen as weak, unreliable or “not cut out” for the job
  - Worry it may affect promotions or job security.
  - Belief that they should “just push through”
- Stigma leads to underreporting, lack of support and higher turnover. Employees may:
  - Avoid use of EAPs or mental health benefits
  - Skip needed time off
  - Hide symptoms until there’s a crisis

# Business Impact

- Three main costs to a business:
  - Decreased productivity
  - Increased levels of absenteeism
  - Higher staff turnover
- In the U.S., employees who are burned out cost **\$3,400 out of every \$10,000 salary.**
- Employees who experience true workplace burnout have a:
  - 57% increased risk of workplace absence greater than two weeks due to illness
  - 180% increased risk of developing depressive disorders
  - 84% increased risk of type 2 diabetes
  - 40% increased risk of hypertension

# Building a Culture of Support

- **Organizational culture** is the collection of values, beliefs, assumptions, and norms that guide activity and mindset in an organization.
- Culture impacts every facet of a business:
  - The way employees speak to each other
  - The norms surrounding work-life balance
  - The implied expectations when challenges rise
  - How each employee feels about their work
  - The permissibility of making mistakes
  - How each team and department collaborate

# Organizational Strategies to Reduce Burnout



## Establish Clear Roles & Expectations

Ensure every employee knows what's expected—and why it matters



## Support Autonomy & Flexibility

Empower employees and offer flexible work options



## Recognize & Reward Effort (Not Just Outcomes)

Acknowledge contributions and progress



## Monitor Workload & Staffing Levels

Adjust tasks or staffing to prevent chronic overwork



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## Promote Use of Time Off & Breaks

Encourage employees to take regular breaks and vacations



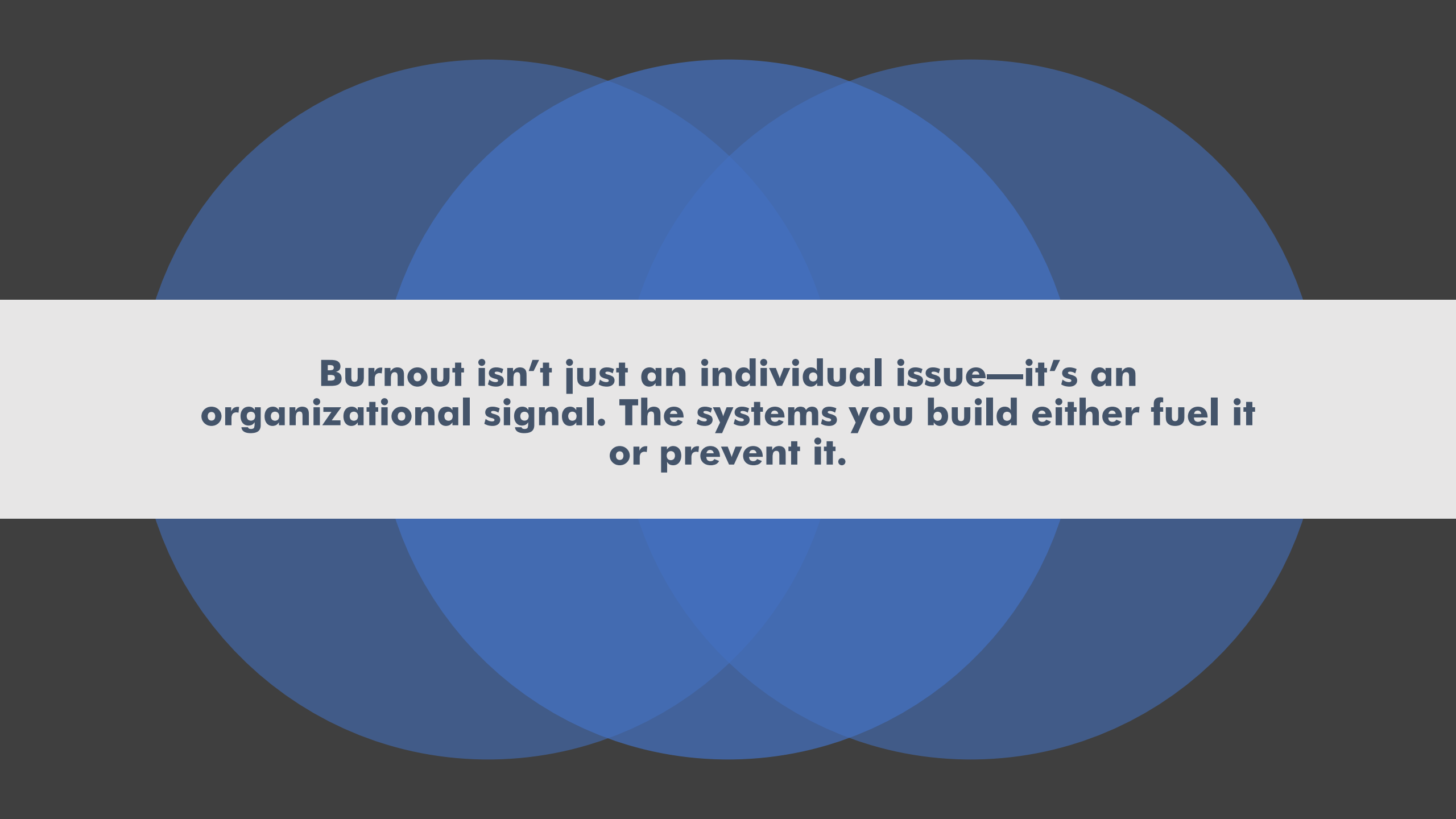
## Invest in Manager Training

Equip managers to identify and address burnout



## Integrate Well-Being into Business Strategy

Make employee well-being a core value



**Burnout isn't just an individual issue—it's an organizational signal. The systems you build either fuel it or prevent it.**

# Manager Actions That Make a Difference

Key ways you can help:



**Demonstrate  
empathy**



**Lead by  
example**



**Promote casual  
wellness  
check-ins**



**Remind employees  
of available mental  
health resources**

# Building Resilience & Supporting Healthy Coping

Resilience is the ability to adapt and recover from stress, adversity or change.

Resilient employees are more engaged, less likely to burnout, and better equipped to navigate workplace demands.



# Building Resilience: Individual Strategies



## Practice Self-Awareness

Recognize your emotional and physical responses to stress



## Develop a Growth Mindset

View challenges as opportunities to learn—not signs of failure



## Prioritize Connection

Strong relationships are one of the biggest buffers against stress



## Build a Toolbox of Healthy Coping-Skills

Have go-to strategies that reduce stress and increase calm



## Fuel Your Body & Brain

Get enough sleep, stay hydrated, and eat for energy



## Ask for Help Early

Seeking support is a strength—not a weakness

# Resources for How to Help



# Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

01

EAPs generally offer confidential mental health support and counseling, enhancing employees' emotional psychological health.

02

EAPs can provide tools and coping strategies for employees to manage work and personal stress more effectively.

03

Organizations that support mental health through EAPs demonstrate care for their workforce, boosting employee satisfaction and retention rates.

# HELP IS AVAILABLE 24/7/365

**211** maintains a comprehensive database of community resources and provides information and referrals for essential needs like:

- Food, clothing and shelter
- Financial assistance for rent and utilities
- Legal resources
- Domestic violence resources

## 211

**Contact for information and community resources: call, text or online**

**Whole person care**

**Warm handoff**

## 988

**Contact for suicide intervention and crisis support: call, text or chat**

**988** offers a direct connection to compassionate, accessible care and support from trained crisis specialist for anyone experiencing:

- Thoughts of suicide
- Mental health crisis
- Substance use crisis
- Emotional distress

**Indiana 2-1-1**





## Other Resources

- [Mental Health America Workplace Toolkit  
National Alliance on Mental Illness \(NAMI\)](#)
- [Online Mental Health Screenings](#)
- [Burnout Questionnaire](#)

# Thank You!

## Contact Information:

- Olivia Lockard, Program Manager: [olockard@indianachamber.com](mailto:olockard@indianachamber.com)
- The Wellness Council of Indiana: [info@wellnessindiana.org](mailto:info@wellnessindiana.org)