

Reducing Stress and Burnout Among Educators

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Burnout

- *What is burnout?*
 - The response to prolonged exposure to stressors characterized by 3 components:
 - Lack of resources for handling emotional events (emotional exhaustion)
 - Detachment and cynical attitudes towards own job (depersonalization)
 - An intense feeling of professional inefficacy (lack of personal achievement)

Burnout

- Approximately 60-70% of all teachers repeatedly show symptoms of stress
- A minimum of 30% of all educators show distinct symptoms of burnout
- As these negative feelings intensify, many teachers decide to leave the field

Why Do Teachers Experience Burnout?

- Working with more than 30 students at once
- Making hundreds of decisions “on the fly”
- Emotional climate in classroom
- Interpersonal conflicts with pupils, parents, and colleagues
- Unbalance between teaching demands and resources
- Workload, lack of support, and difficult students

Burnout Among Educators is Associated With:

- Poor job satisfaction
- High rates of absenteeism
- Anxiety
- Depression
- High blood pressure
- Cardiovascular disease

Burnout Among Educators is Associated With:

- Reduced quality of performance and instruction
- Diminished ability to teach
- Poor classroom climate
- More unsatisfactory student behavior and achievement

Approaches for Reducing Teacher Burnout

- *Cognitive Behavioral Therapy*
 - Enhancing coping skills using workshops
 - Peer collaboration program designed to facilitate supportive, collegial interactions among teachers
 - This helps depersonalization and emotional exhaustion

Approaches for Reducing Teacher Burnout

- *Mindfulness and Relaxation Techniques*
 - Develops awareness of the antecedents to one's stress reaction
 - Develops awareness of the bodily sensations that accompany being "stressed out"
 - Generates a set of strategies for coping effectively with stress
 - Helps with emotional exhaustion and personal accomplishment components

Approaches for Reducing Teacher Burnout

- *Psychoeducational Approach*
 - Increases teacher knowledge regarding the prevalence of stress and burnout within the education field
 - Helps emotional exhaustion and personal accomplishment
- Developing Social-Emotional Skills
 - Helps with the personal accomplishment subscale

Approaches for Reducing Teacher Burnout

- *Social Support*
 - Use of group work, to increase feelings of support and encouragement
 - Helps increase identification with others
 - Helps all three major areas of burnout

Approaches for Reducing Teacher Burnout

- *Music Therapy*
 - Music often allows people to express feelings that may not be definable by words
 - Music assists in generating a more relaxed mood and reduces stress
 - Significant overall decrease in depressive symptoms
 - Music can assist in both verbal and nonverbal processing

Approaches for Reducing Teacher Burnout

- *Music Therapy*
 - Often paired with Cognitive Behavioral Therapy
 - Learned to better express their feelings and to establish a relationship with other professionals through social bonding increased coping skills, and the opportunity to express negative emotions through non-verbal behaviors or responses

Approaches for Reducing Teacher Burnout

- *Art Therapy*
 - Offers a professional relationship in which to create art for the purpose of increasing understanding of one's emotions and stress.
 - Allows professional self-understanding.
 - Manages stress, fosters collegial connections, emphasizes self care, and enables expression of emotion.

Approaches for Reducing Teacher Burnout

- *Art Therapy*
 - Has been proven to significantly reduce exhaustion, which relates to both physical and emotional energy.
 - This may be related to the enhancement of emotional awareness and reduction of anxiety.
 - Endless amounts of art experientials could be done with this population.

Conclusion

- Burnout among educators is a serious issue that may require more research in the future.
- It can be reduced using a variety of techniques:
 - CBT
 - Mindfulness
 - Education
 - Social Support
 - Music Therapy
 - Art Therapy

References