

Children's Mental Health Matters!

a Maryland public awareness campaign

Facts For Educators

Managing Educator Stress & Well-Being

The Children's Mental Health Matters! Campaign recognizes the stress our educators are under in both Maryland and across the country. We want the teachers within our schools to be safe, supported and healthy. With that in mind, we have developed this fact sheet for teachers.

In 2017, 61% of teachers reported that their work is "always" or "often" stressful.

Main Sources of Teacher Stress

- Increased school threats - schools are often thought of and have been targets for violence.
- Challenging relationships - with school leadership, colleagues, parents and students
- Job demands - high stakes testing and managing students with behavior problems
- Disempowerment - feeling lack of inclusion in school decision making
- Discussion & training of school safety

Consequences of Teacher Stress

- Mental health - High levels of stress can lead to symptoms of depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder and other diagnoses
- Physical health - psychological stress also affects physical health. Managing physical health by seeing a primary care physician regularly, eating a balanced diet, exercising and getting enough rest can decrease health complications and improve overall quality of life and well-being.
- Teacher performance - teachers with high levels of stress show more symptoms of depression, which can negatively affect teacher performance.
- Student outcomes - teachers who report high feelings of burnout or depressive symptoms have classrooms with more behavior problems

- High turnover - It is estimated that between 23-42% of teachers stop teaching within their first five years. Reasons for leaving the field include: poor working conditions, low salary, student behavior problems, lack of classroom resources, lack of input with school decision making and unsupportive leadership.

Tips for Educators

Be aware of the signs of stress, burnout or mental health problems.

- Emotional - feeling detached, overwhelmed or hopeless
- Physical - having low energy, decreased concentration, sleeping poorly
- Behavioral - feeling increasingly irritable with students, colleagues, family or friends, excessive alcohol or substance use
- Professional - performing job-related tasks poorly, feeling low job-morale
- Cognitive - experiencing confusion, trouble with decision making, or trauma imagery
- Spiritual - questioning the purpose of life, feeling hollow
- Interpersonal - withdrawing from colleagues, friends, or family, feeling extreme worry about family members

Use a team approach

Work alongside colleagues from your school district to advocate for policies that promote teacher well-being, e.g. shared decision-making, mental health breaks, and increased classroom support.

Children's
Mental
Health
Matters.org
A MARYLAND PUBLIC
AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

coordinated by

mhamd
MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION OF MARYLAND

MCF
maryland coalition of families

Reach out for help

Get support from your colleagues, school counselor/psychologist, trusted administrator, family, friends, primary care physician and/or a mental health professional. Contact your school's employee assistance program (EAP) that provides assistance, support and referrals for professional mental health services.

Practice self-care

Take care of yourself by eating well, exercising, participating in activities that bring joy, or taking a break during the work day.

Practice mindfulness

Mindfulness can improve concentration and emotional self-regulation, decrease burnout symptoms and increase social and emotional competence. Implementing mindfulness practices in the classroom can improve the overall classroom environment. There are many websites, phone/device apps, and books available with helpful suggestions on how to integrate mindfulness into your life to reduce stress.

Resources/Links

American Federation of Teachers - 2017 Educator Quality of Work Life Survey

https://www.aft.org/sites/default/files/2017_eqwl_survey_web.pdf

Teacher Stress and Health Issue Brief, Pennsylvania State University, Greenberg MT, Brown JL, and Abenavoli RM. September 1, 2016

<https://www.rwjf.org/en/library/research/2016/07/teacher-stress-and-health.html>

Kaiser Permanente Thriving Schools School Employee Well Being Website

<https://thrivingschools.kaiserpermanente.org/school-employees/>

The National Child Traumatic Stress Network Self Care Tips for Educators

http://tsaforschools.org/_static/tsa/uploads/files//self-carecnetsn.pdf

Toolkit for "I Thought About Quitting Today"

<https://www.tolerance.org/magazine/fall-2015/toolkit-for-i-thought-about-quitting-today>

Teaching in the Age of School Shootings - The New York

Times Magazine

<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2018/09/05/magazine/school-shootings-teachers-support-armed.html>

When Students Are Traumatized, Teachers Are Too

<https://www.edutopia.org/article/when-students-are-traumatized-teachers-are-too>

Cultivating Mindfulness for Educators

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/09/07/learning/lesson-plans/cultivating-mindfulness-for-educators-using-resources-from-the-new-york-times.html>

Mindful Schools Educator Course

<https://www.mindfulschools.org/training/mindful-educator-essentials/>

Apps and Tools to Help Manage Stress for Teachers, Teach for America January 28, 2019 edition

<https://www.teachforamerica.org/stories/apps-and-tools-to-help-manage-stress-for-teachers>

MHAMD ~ 443-901-1550 ~ www.mhamd.org

MCF ~ 410-730-8267 ~ www.mdcoalition.org

The Children's Mental Health Matters! Campaign is a collaboration of the Mental Health Association of Maryland (MHAMD) and the Maryland Coalition of Families (MCF) with support from the Maryland Department of Health - Behavioral Health Administration. The Campaign goal, with schools and community champions across the state, is to raise public awareness of the importance of children's mental health. For more information, please visit www.ChildrensMentalHealthMatters.org