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Popular Article

Mental Health & Well-being of School Teachers and its Impact on Teaching-Learning Process

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Abstract

Teachers are so fogged by the daily toil of planning and preparing that they often forget to focus on their mental health. They have a tendency to ignore their stress and anxiety levels to make up for their unconditional love for teaching children. However, a teacher is an indispensable resource in our education system and so is a teacher's mental health. Neglecting their own mental health can have detrimental effects not only on themselves but also on their students. This article provides a comprehensive understanding about prioritizing mental health for teachers and discusses various challenges and solutions in this context.

Introduction

Mental health and Well-being is "a state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community." (WHO). Mental health can affect daily life and relationships. Even physical health can be influenced how one thinks, feels, and behaves. Mental health also includes one's ability to enjoy life by balancing between life activities and efforts in order to achieve psychological resilience.

Mental health and psychological well-being are one of the most neglected areas in our country. The National Mental Health Survey (2016) reports almost one hundred fifty million citizens of our country needing care and support for their mental health and well-being. Additionally, it was discovered that between seventy to ninety percent of these people failed to receive early, early, timely and quality intervention. According to World Health Organization (WHO), emotional stress and other concerns are a major contributing factor for most of the physical illness. Mental healthcare providers like psychiatrists, clinical psychologists,

counselors and allied professionals agree that early intervention can prevent many future health conditions.

Further research findings suggest that factors like physical illness, limited basic resources, inability to provide for self and family as well as unfulfilled desires in life are major factors that impact mental health and well-being.




Teacher's wellbeing

In an age, where dialogues and discussions about mental health and protection of rights of children are on the rise, it becomes necessary for us to talk about mental health of teachers. Hence, schools become an important groundwork arena for positive mental health.

The teacher's work is not just limited to stoic pedagogies but is also altruistic in its essence. Small paychecks, poor incentives, perceived stagnation and increasing demands have led to greater levels of stress in their jobs. With bags filled with notebooks to be corrected, meeting deadlines for submission of thoroughly checked assessment sheets, somewhere the teachers' wellbeing has never been a topic of discussion.

When we say that a teacher wears 'multiple hats', it is important for us to also acknowledge the weight of these hats. A teacher multiplies as a mentor, counselor, coach, nurse, motivator, an event planner and the list are endless.


"An empty lantern provides no light. Self-Care is the fuel that allows your light to shine brightly." (Unknown)

POSITIVE 
SELF-AFFIRMATIONS
FOR TEACHERS

I Matter
I Make A Difference
Teaching Is My Craft
I'm Open To Embrace The
Change
I Love What I Do
I Am Capable And
Confident

TEACHING
IS A WORK OF
HEART

SELF-CARE
TIPS FOR
TEACHERS



Remember To Start Fresh Everyday
Read A Good Book To Relax Your Mind
Connect With Uplifting Colleagues
Spend Some Time With Nature
Do Positive Self Talk



Need and Importance

Experts say that stress gets passed on from teachers to their students. Students in classrooms that have teachers experiencing burnout are said to have high levels of cortisol- a kind of stress hormone. High levels of cortisol, the stress hormone, in students can hinder their ability to focus, learn, and engage effectively in the learning process. This, in essence, creates a cycle where stressed teachers contribute to stressed students, resulting in a less conducive learning environment.

Thus, it becomes important to understand why mental health is important for teachers. Here are 4 reasons that briefly explain this issue:

1. Direct Impact on Students' Emotional State & Learning Environment

All students look up to their teachers. Children are always finding role models and people whom they want to be like when they grow up. And, believe it or not, teachers often occupy a significant place in their list of idols.

A happy teacher exudes positivity which directly impacts the learning environment, whereas the presence of a stressed one is likely to have a negative impact on the students' learning environment and lead to poor student outcomes.

2. Serious Implications on Mental Health Development of Students

According to UNICEF, half of mental illnesses begin before children reach the age of 14. Schools can play an active role in the early intervention of their students' mental health issues & create learning environments conducive to support them.

This doesn't require a teacher to become a therapist. Rather, it requires them to cultivate the skills and knowledge that help them identify risk factors and symptoms. They can provide a helping hand to respond to students before the situation escalates to depression, anxiety, or acts of self-harm. But this is only possible when they themselves are relieved of stress, mental pressures, and strain.

3. Negative Impact on the Effectiveness of Teaching

Living in the era of the internet, students can always use tones of digital resources to find and seek information. However, it is the responsibility of teachers to deliver lessons in a manner so that students can easily process the information that has been taught. Only mentally relaxed and blissful teachers can bring the much-required positive energy to their classrooms which results in increased effectiveness and learning.

4. Effect on Personal & Professional Life

For teachers, the toll on their mental health can result in anger displacement, attention diversion, stress, & periodic anxiety. These issues can trickle down to their



personal lives as well. Enhanced mental well-being ensures that educators not only give their best to the school but also to life at home. Thus, it is quite clear why mental health is important for teachers. Neglecting it not only affects the quality of education provided to students but also their personal lives.

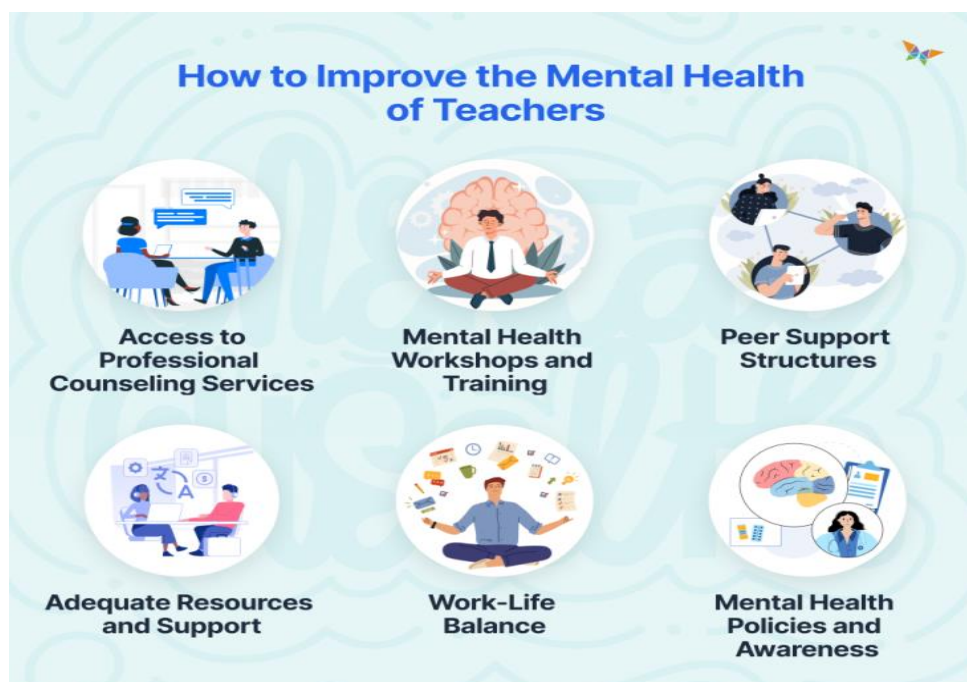
Factors Affecting the Mental Health of Teachers

A teacher's mental health is profoundly influenced by various factors. Understanding these factors is crucial for addressing the challenges that educators face in maintaining their mental health. In this section, we will delve into 4 key factors that impact the mental health of educators.

1. Workload: Balancing Multiple Responsibilities
2. Student Behavior Challenges: Navigating Diverse Classroom Dynamics
3. Pressure to Perform: Striving for Excellence
4. Lack of Resources: Coping with Limitations

How to Improve the Mental Health of Teachers: A Responsibility of Educational Institutions

Educational institutions have a vital role to play in fostering the mental health and well-being of their teaching staff. Recognizing the challenges teachers face, institutions should proactively create a supportive environment that prioritizes mental health of their educators



Conclusion

We can all agree that mental health for teachers is quite a significant issue. It influences the learning atmosphere, student development, and the effectiveness of teaching. It is of utmost importance to acknowledge the mental health challenges of our educators. Helping them deal effectively with these challenges is not only a moral obligation but also a strategic



investment in the quality of education. When teachers are mentally well, they exude positivity that directly impacts the learning environment and education standards of isolated concern; it is a fundamental pillar that supports the entire education system.

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