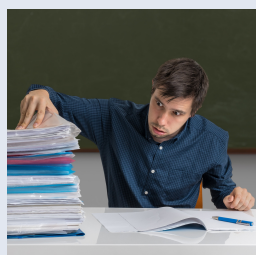




A WAY OF BEING WITH CHILDREN

Burnout for Teachers

Tips to Promote Child Well-Being and Resilience



What is Burnout?

Burnout is an overwhelming feeling of being exhausted by everything you have to do, while still worrying that you're not doing enough. It's often accompanied by a "I have nothing more to give" sentiment. Burnout is more than stress and more than simply having a bad day (which is natural).

Signs & Symptoms of Burnout

Physical

- Feeling drained/exhausted
- Headaches
- Muscle pain
- Appetite changes
- Lowered immunity (frequent colds/flu)

Cognitive

- Poor memory/forgetfulness
- Reduced creativity
- Poor problem-solving

Behavioral

- Neglecting responsibilities
- Withdrawing from social events/self-isolating
- Procrastinating
- Increased use of food, drugs, or alcohol to "feel better"
- Work tardiness
- Changes to sleep patterns



Stress and Burnout are Different

Stress

- Involves significant pressure
- Involves physical, mental & emotional demands
- Occurs when few resources available
- Includes concerns over incomplete tasks
- Feels physically demanding
- Involves a sense of urgency
- Bring on overwhelming emotions
- Feels chaotic
- Is associated with low energy levels

Burnout

- Involves emotional, physical & mental exhaustion
- Is caused by prolonged, excessive stress
- Often affects high-performers
- Comes with a sense of helplessness
- Feels emotionally draining
- Results in blunted/muted emotions
- Is signified by a loss of motivation
- Makes people feel detached from work
- Results in detachment from social supports

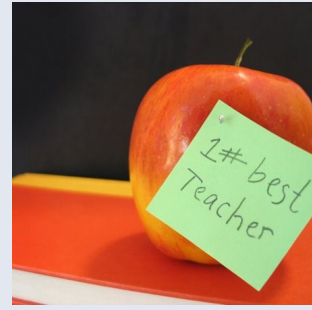
Causes of Burnout

Work-Related Causes

- Little to no control over work
- Lack of recognition and/or reward
- High and/or uncertain job demands
- Low stimulation (monotonous work)
- Chaotic work environment

Teacher-Specific Causes

- Work overload & hours
- Lack of autonomy
- Student behaviors/concerns
- Changing classroom dynamics
- Financial/income concerns
- Little support from administration
- Increased demands + decreased funding



Why Do We Ignore the Signs?

- No time! Identifying burnout requires introspection and self-awareness
- Requires effort to make the necessary changes
- High expectations of self and excessive demands on self
- Mentality: "The harder I work, the better I'll be/feel."
- Fear of causing conflict by addressing concerns
- Coping with burnout may involve a financial investment
- Really addressing burnout requires society/system change



What Can Schools Do?

- Reduce "burnout culture"
- Celebrate teachers' accomplishments
- Lighten teachers' workloads
- Offer mental & physical health support
- Plan teambuilding and community activities
- Encourage a positive environment
- Improve and support professional development
- Encourage staff lunches and socials
- Support time-off with clear hand-over plans
- Adopt a policy for addressing burnout & care



What Can Teachers Do?

- Adopt self-care & coping skills
- Learn and practice mindfulness
- Take a mental health day/time-off
- Set boundaries
- Maintain work-life balance
- Leave school at school
- Connect with loved ones
- Share experiences with colleagues
- Find value in your work
- Seek out new challenges
- Advocate for mental health policies

Strategies for Beating Burnout

- You need more than just "self-care"
- Develop awareness of your thoughts and feelings
- Treat yourself with kindness and non-judgement
- Create feelings of safety and acceptance in own body
- Put reliable support systems in place
- Work to shift your daily mindset/way of being
- Advocate for society/policy changes to reduce burnout

Get more resources at: www.centerforchildcounseling.org/awayofbeing