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Workplace Wellness for Educators of High-Risk Youth

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Workplace Wellness for Educators of High-Risk Youth

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BACKGROUND

Teaching can result in high psychological stress and burnout which can result in teachers experiencing dissatisfaction, absenteeism, and turnover (Yu et al., 2015). Working with high-risk youth is an additional stressor because the students are affected by poverty, trauma, and/or chronic violence exposure (Bottiani et al., 2019). Much is demanded of these teachers, but they are only provided with limited resources to meet these expectations (Bottiani et al., 2019). Occupational therapy can address and enhance workplace wellness conditions by utilizing the profession's holistic approach to treat a client's needs while also examining the impact of the interaction of a person and their environment. The theories used to approach workplace wellness were the Model of Human Occupation (MOHO) and Ecology of Human Performance (EHP).

PROBLEM

A charter school for high-risk youth that does not currently have a workplace wellness program or resources available.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this capstone project is to conduct a workplace wellness needs assessment of the teachers and staff at a charter school serving high-risk youth. The results were used to develop a detailed proposal of an individualized program to help enhance workplace wellness using an occupational therapy perspective.

Acknowledgement: Special thanks to Kristin Saito for all your guidance and support throughout this process.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Participants:

Staff from a charter school that serves high-risk youth.

Survey:

There were 26 statements in which the participants were prompted to express their level of agreement on a 5-point Likert scale from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." Additionally, there were three multiple-choice questions, six short answer questions, and six select all that apply questions.

Interview

Semi-structured interviews conducted on a voluntary basis. Interviews were recorded, transcribed, and coded for themes.

Observations

Site visits and verbal interactions with staff.

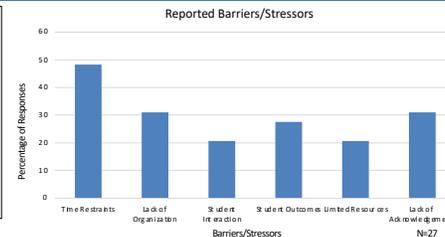
Maslach Burnout Inventory-Educator Survey (MBI-ES)

A 22-point online assessment that measured the three components of burnout: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and low personal causation (Maslach et al., 1986).

RESULTS

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I experience stress at work	26.7%	43.3%	20.0%	3.3%	6.7%
I have experienced burnout at work.	17.2%	31.0%	13.8%	34.5%	3.3%
I feel exhausted during the week (N=29)	26.7%	43.3%	20.0%	3.3%	6.7%

Note. N = 30 unless specified. Total of percentages is not 100 because of rounding.



Summary

The survey results revealed an overall positive school climate. The majority of the responses indicated that the staff were satisfied with their jobs, felt supported and respected by their colleagues, and believed the staff shared a common goal. The survey, interviews, MBI-ES, and observations results did reveal currently unmet needs at the charter school.

Needs

- Lack of acknowledgment
- Need for more communication
- Lack of wellness resources
- Reported stress, trouble sleeping, depression, and anxiety
- At risk signs for burnout

Goals

- *Increase communication and positive acknowledgment*
- *The promotion of healthier lifestyle choices*
- *More wellness resources*

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Actions	Description
Program proposal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of needs assessment results and proposed wellness program. • Feedback was received and considered during the finalization of the program toolkit
Deliverable	Wellness Program Toolkit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6-Session Group Series Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Session 1: Gratitude ○ Session 2: Photovoice ○ Session 3: Wall/barrier ○ Session 4: Problem-solving ○ Session 5: Discrepancies ○ Session 6: Activity Wheel • Positive feedback suggestion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Shout out-staff acknowledging fellow staff • Health Incentive Plan • Resource Packet
Outcome measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher Subjective Wellbeing Questionnaire <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pre and post assessment to measure teaching efficacy, school connectedness, and teacher wellbeing.

DISCUSSION

- The project helped reveal current wellness needs at the charter school and provided a program to address some of these needs.
- Occupational therapy can be beneficial in assessing workplace needs and promoting health and wellness through program development.
- More studies focused on workplace wellness programs for educators who work with high-risk youth using an occupational therapy perspective will be beneficial to increase the literature on possible interventions.

See QR code for References

