Let’s Talk It Out: Staff & Student Stress for School Staff

Facilitated by

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Led by Community Leaders

Michelle Rosenau, MA, LPCC has worked specifically with teenagers in the Human Services field for over 20 years and as a licensed mental health therapist for the last 5+ years. She is currently providing school based mental health services in a High School setting.

Nita Kumar, PhD, LMFT, LPCC has 15+ years of experience as a school district administrator, a managed health care leader, and school-based mental health therapist. Dr. Kumar has extensive experience collaborating with various community organizations.

Brought to you by Allina Health’s Change to Chill
In partnership with Hennepin County Public Health
Agenda

• Why are we here?
• Responses to stress & change
• Conversation starters
• Self-care
• Resources
• Q&A

“It is perfectly normal and appropriate to feel bad and lost... No sane person feels good during a global disaster, so be grateful for the discomfort of your sanity.”

- Aisha Ahmad, Director of the Islam and Global Affairs Initiative, University of Toronto
Your Stress

THE MODERN SCHOOLTEACHER

Disheveled hair from getting up at 5:00 after getting to bed at 1 am.

Money for classroom supplies (out of her own pocket)

Shoes for traffic duty, playground duty, cafeteria duty, and that really fast brat

I wonder how long we’ll be in hybrid learning.

Lesson plans, papers to grade and grade books to update

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Student Stress Factors

• Most of your students are minors
  • Developmental issues/the brain
  • More affected by the isolation of quarantines and lockdowns than adults.
  • Ability to access supports (guardian consent, transportation, funds)

Are we all in this together?

• The already disparate mental health needs of many Black, Indigenous, and non-Black people of color (BIPOC) are now being experienced on top of the isolation of social distancing and remote learning.

• LGBTQIA+ youth often face additional challenges such as quarantining with unsupportive family and lack of access to affirming spaces and people.

https://hbr.org/2020/05/how-u-s-companies-can-support-employees-of-color-through-the-pandemic
https://www.keshetonline.org/resources/supporting-lgbtq-youth-during-covid-19/
Common Factors in Diverse Communities

- Stigma and help seeking behavior
- Strength and resilience
- Access and Quality Healthcare
- Systemic Racism
- Support Systems
Stress

Variability

Helpful vs Harmful

Physical Response
Grief reactions in response to change

• In our current situation, “stress” can in a way be viewed as “grief.”

• Grief is the natural response to the loss of something or someone important to you.

• It is how your whole self responds to and copes with loss.

https://www.changetochill.org/how-can-i/living-with-grief-loss/
Conversations about Mental Wellness

1. Acknowledge
2. Listen actively
3. Notice
4. Help identify

Tips for Talking with Teens About Stress & Mental Well-Being

Change to Chill talked with a group of teen interns about things that help and what things hurt when it comes to talking about stress.

Do:

- Help teens recognize that while important, grades, test scores and athletic performance don’t define them as a person. They’re much more than that.
- Help teens put things in perspective. Remind them that tough or stressful situations will pass. Put yourself in their shoes—what if something doesn’t feel like a big deal to you, recognize and provide understanding that it feels like a big deal to them.
- Make time to be there—both physically and mentally.
- Take time to talk. Start with the small stuff to build a trusting relationship. This makes it easier to talk about bigger issues when they come up.
- Show your appreciation, meaningful affection, and encouragement goes a long way.
- Help them understand that it’s okay to have feelings, but it doesn’t mean that teens are lazy, weak, or that they should just ‘tough it out.”
Self-care

- Be gentle and patient with yourself
- Be gentle and patient with others
- Connect with others

“He had to keep her calm, keep himself calm; panic, he knew, could spread between two people more quickly than any virus.”

- Anthony Marra, A Constellation of Vital Phenomena

https://www.changetochill.org/how-can-i/living-with-grief-loss/
Self-care

- Do what you can to keep a routine for health
- Find rituals that support your journey

https://www.changetochill.org/how-can-i/living-with-grief-loss/
Mindfulness is the act of bringing awareness to the present moment by acknowledging and accepting thoughts, feelings and sensations in the body.

https://www.changetochill.org/mindfulness-for-teens/

“Every child deserves a champion – an adult who will never give up on them, who understands the power of connection and insists that they become the best that they can possibly be.” -Rita Pierson
Resources

Change to Chill, NAMI MN, Make it Ok

The Gratitude Diaries

Happify, Calm, Meet Ups

Crisis Text Line
Resources

Session for Staff/Educators
- **Monday, November 9** ALL school staff, educators and community partners

Sessions for Parents
- **Tuesday, November 10** ALL parents, caregivers
- **Tuesday, November 17** Latinx parents/caregivers
- **Tuesday, December 1** Native American parents/caregivers
- **Tuesday, December 8** Black/African American parents/caregivers

Five Sessions for Youth (age: 13 – 19 years)
- **Thursday, November 12** For ALL teens
- **Thursday, November 19** For Latinx teens
- **Thursday, December 3** For Native American teens
- **Monday, December 7** For LGBTQIA+ teens
- **Thursday, December 10** For Black/African American teens
Questions?

• This is a complicated topic
• Although there is a shared experience, there are also many individual factors influencing each of us and we recognize that a one hour presentation just touches the surface.
• What can we answer for you, in the time we have remaining?