Kaiser Permanente Thriving Schools
A partnership for healthy students, staff & teachers

Supporting Employees – Stress Reduction & Trauma Informed Care

Nov 10, 2016
Webinar Series for School Employee Wellness

- **Sustaining School Employee Wellness**
  - October 26

- **Supporting Employees – Stress Reduction & Trauma Informed Care**
  - November 10

- **Unions in Schools: Important Partnerships**
  - November 17

All webinars will be recorded and posted on kp.org/thrivingschools
Poll - Who is joining us today?

Take a moment to respond to the first poll and let us know your role!
Introductions

Leora Wolf-Prusen, EdD
School Climate & Student Support Specialist
WestED’s Health & Human Development Program

Lara Kain, MPA
Senior Director, Transform Schools
Los Angeles Education Partnership

Stephanie Cariaga, PhD Candidate
Teacher Organizer
People’s Education Movement - LA
Our Objectives & Agenda Today

1. Understand key terminology, theory & research
   What is the problem? Trauma, stress, burnout, compassion fatigue.

2. Elevate importance of caring for ourselves
   Wait, Why?
   Why self & collective care are key for overall school health.
   How helping us helps students.

3. Learn effective strategies
   Oh. But...how?
   Explore programs, practices, paradigms and policies for self & collective care.
   Personal experience from the field.

End with Q&A, share out concerns & celebrations!
Part 1: Why are we here?

How might we create cultures of care not only for youth, but also for us?

Students are at the center of our work. At the same time, school employees in our school communities need support in order to show up for the young people they serve.
Educator self and collective care- So what?

It is a school employee retention issue and a student outcome issue

Danger of pathologizing community violence and environments characterized by distress and damage: Empathy as the interrupter

Grappling with ambiguous loss: attachment, de-attachment, inconsistent relationships

Educators are often the frontline leaders, but not given the societal acknowledgement of their role: disenfranchised trauma

While we know that the student-school employee relationship is critical for such youth, staff are not trained nor prepared to interact or secondarily experience their students’ trauma
## Trauma & Resilience

Understanding trauma dynamics creates opportunities for new behaviors, new connections, and supports towards adaptation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trauma:</th>
<th>Resilience:</th>
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<td>Experiences or situations that are emotionally painful and distressing, and that overwhelm people’s ability to cope, leaving them powerless. –The Center for Nonviolence &amp; Social Justice</td>
<td>The processes of, capacity for, or pathways and patterns of positive adaptation during or following significant threats or disturbances. – Ann Masten</td>
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There are two ways of spreading light: to be the candle or the mirror that reflects it. Edith Wharton

Definitions: What are we actually experiencing?

- Burnout
- Compassion Fatigue
- Secondary / Vicarious Trauma
- [Toxic] [Moral] Stress
So many terms...

**Compassion Fatigue** is the emotional residue or strain of exposure to working with those suffering from the consequences of traumatic events. It differs from burn-out, but can co-exist. Compassion Fatigue can occur due to exposure on one case or can be due to a “cumulative” level of trauma.

Charles Figley (1995)

**Secondary/Vicarious Trauma** is “the natural consequent behaviors resulting from knowledge about a traumatizing event experienced by a significant other. It is the stress resulting from wanting to help a traumatized or suffering person.”

Charles Figley (1995)

**Provider Burnout** is “a state of physical, emotional, and mental exhaustion caused by long term involvement in emotionally demanding situations.” Characterized by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and a reduced feeling of personal accomplishment. Burnout is a condition that begins gradually and becomes progressively worse.


**Persistent/Toxic Stress:** Adverse experiences that lead to strong, frequent or prolonged activation of the body’s stress response system. National Scientific Council on the Developing Child (2005)

**Moral Stress:** caused by a conflict between our deepest values and the work that we are required to do

Francios Mathieu (2016)
Progression of Burnout

Compassion

Empathy

Compassion Fatigue

Vicarious/Secondary Trauma

Burnout
Compassion fatigue, vicarious trauma & burnout can have a strong impact on organizations:

- Unkindness
- Lack of cohesiveness
- Scapegoating
- Bullying
- Sabotage
- Infighting
- Horizontal violence

How can you measure your organizational health?

- Assessment tool: The Professional Quality of Life Scale (ProQOL)

http://www.proqol.org/ProQol_Test

“If we want students to arrive to school ready to learn,

Then we need to want teachers to arrive to school ready to teach,

And school leaders to arrive to school ready to lead.”
Oh. But...how? Models of self & collective care

- Programs, practices, paradigms & policies
- Strategies for renewal
- Example from the field
Self & Collective Care for School Employee Wellness

Adapted from “Self-Care Assessment Worksheet” from Transforming the Pain: A workbook on Vicarious Traumatization by Saakvitne, Pearlman & Staff of TSI/CAAP (Norton, 1996). Created by Olga Phoenix Project: Healing or Social Change (2013)
Do you concentrate on Lucy, the chocolate, or the belt?
Realms of Trauma Informed Care

Self
- Attachment-Significant relationships
- Safety - Holding Space, listening & hearing

Services
- Consistency-Predictability

Structures
- Choice-Agency

Systems
- Competency-opportunities to build worth (HOPE)
- Celebration of historical resilience (across race, gender, class, and sexuality lines)
If I am a team member / manager, how do I support myself and my staff?

Introduce the topic of compassion fatigue at a staff meeting
Offer professional development for your staff
Offer counseling / support services
Bring in specialists (on compassion fatigue, stress, burnout, etc)
Get some support yourself, it’s lonely at the top!
And, school employees are incredibly strong, resilient, and compassionate.

Resilience
The positive capacity to cope, adjust to, or recover from stress and negative events

Vicarious Resilience/Compassion Satisfaction
Compassion satisfaction = pleasure from doing work well, helping others through work, positive feelings about colleagues, contributions to society
Vicarious resilience = Process in which workers in helping professions may experience positive influences through their work with trauma survivors

Posttraumatic growth or “trauma capital”
Changes in perceptions of self, improvement and deepening relationship with others, an increased ability for expressing emotions and find meaning in the trauma experienced

Burning Out to Sourcing the Flame

Boundaries: emotional, physical, spiritual

Identify your Practitioner Joy

Colleagues & Students as the Influencers & Primary Teachers

Realignment: Self as Hero to Client as Hero

Example activity

What color do you feel right now?

Comfort Zone

Challenge Zone

Stress Zone
Example Activity

Partners in Compassion

Choose a partner and write your names on a post-it and place on the chart.

In your pair, identify individual strategies or ways that you will practice self-care. Check in with this person every so often.
Teacher story: Stephanie Cariaga
Personal context of stress & self-care

- 6 years high school English teacher, three different schools, six different principals
- Desire to enhance curriculum to center social justice
- Turning point: Miscarriage in sixth year
- Researching and teaching about role of self and collective care in developing pedagogies of healing (for students and educators)
- Mother of 2 children
- Grassroots teacher organizer for People’s Education Movement-LA
When stress is unconscious: Biology of Belief

1. I have to be strong.
2. I cannot/should not show anger.
3. If I’m angry, I will not be accepted.
4. I’m responsible for so many people besides myself.
5. I can handle it by myself.
6. I’m not wanted. I’m unworthy.
7. I need to be busy doing something to feel good about myself.
8. I have to be very ill to deserve being taken care of.
## Self-care for body, mind, and spirit

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Goals</th>
<th>Self Strategies</th>
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| **Body**: How will I care for my body? How will I recognize, understand, and transform heavy emotions? | • Yoga  
• Meditation  
• Journaling |
| **Mind**: How will I gain knowledge I desire? How can I rest my mind? | • Family = no work zone |
| **Spirit**: How will I purposefully integrate joy (back) into my work/life? How will I connect with others/source/spirit? | • Join / initiate an autonomous teacher organization |
| **Boundaries**: What am I able/wanting to commit to? What can I say no to? How will I ask for help? | • Monthly, quarterly goal setting  
• Check in with “accountability buddy” |
Collective Care for the body, mind, and spirit

Sample Agenda

- Share feelings/needs/stories through Circle
- Share strategies for self-care
- Affirmation/gratitude journaling + meditation
- Dancehall workshop with Nina Flagg
Takeaways

Self care is about understanding, healing, and affirming ALL parts of your self: body, mind, and spirit

Less guilt, more joy!

Saying NO takes practice, as does saying YES to self care

Hold yourself, others you care about and your institutions accountable for self & collective care

- rupi kaur

i am learning how to love him by loving myself
# Next Steps YOU Could Take

## Right away

- In group setting/meeting do the color wheel activity to gauge stress levels
  - ✔️

## Going forward

- Identify ‘partners in compassion’ who you can go to when stress levels are high
  - ✔️

- Explore interest in a collective care culture/activities with employees at your school site
  - ✔️
Questions & Answers

Don’t forget to join us on our next webinar on partnering with unions– Nov 17th!
Appendix & Further Resources
References & Resources


TEND: https://www.tendacademy.ca/what-is-compassion-fatigue/


Contact us!

Leora Wolf-Prusan, WestEd: Lwolfpr@wested.org
https://www.wested.org/about-us/programs/health-human-development-program/services/

Lara Kain, LAEP: Lkain@laep.org
http://www.laep.org/our-work/transform-schools/
Burning Out to Sourcing the Flame

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Burn Out Creation</th>
<th>Burnout Prevention</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Work Overload</td>
<td>Sustainable workload</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lack of control</td>
<td>Feelings of choice and agency</td>
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<tr>
<td>Insufficient Rewards</td>
<td>Recognition and affirmation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unfairness</td>
<td>Equity, respect, justice</td>
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<tr>
<td>Breakdown of community</td>
<td>Sense of community</td>
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<tr>
<td>Value conflict</td>
<td>Meaningful, valued work</td>
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<tr>
<td>Job-person incongruity</td>
<td>High job-person fit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Other</td>
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</tbody>
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Adapted from Skovholt & Trotter-Matheson’s take on Maslach & Leiter’s 2008 model
If I am a team member / manager, how do I support myself and my staff?

Discuss it as an occupational hazard, something that happens to those who do their jobs well, and have a group discussion about ways to deal with it around the workplace such as peer supervision and clinical debriefings. Your staff may have other great suggestions. Don’t be surprised if their main focus is on reducing workload and scheduling flexibility: recent research shows that those are the two main areas of work that most significantly contribute to employee stress and illness.

Offer professional development for your staff. PD on topics related to trauma-informed care and other skill-building strategies. Unfortunately, one of the first things to get cut when there are budget restrictions are education, training and backfill to release staff to attend workshops. Research clearly demonstrates that this is short-sighted. Helping professionals need time to learn new skills and opportunities to attend refresher.

Offer counseling / support services as part of your benefits package and encourage people to use the service. Be sure to use non-judgmental language and explain all aspects related to confidentiality.

Bring in specialists in to speak to your team or provide opportunities for staff to attend a compassion fatigue workshop.

Many managers tend to be quite isolated and have very stressful jobs themselves. Join an on-line or teleconference support group for managers. This can often be a good way for busy managers to receive support.

Offer counseling / support services as part of your benefits package and encourage people to use the service. Be sure to use non-judgmental language and explain all aspects related to confidentiality.