Workplace Wellness for Tired Teachers

Palliser Teachers Convention
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Presenters:
Nannette Gropp & Christine Vokins
Health Promotion Coordinators
Healthy Children & Youth
Population Public & Indigenous Health
Alberta Health Services

Life is not about how fast you run or how high you climb but how well you bounce.

A paradigm shift...

Positive psychology

The study of human flourishing – the strengths and virtues that enable individuals and communities to thrive.

The Positive Psychology Institute
www.positivepsychologyinstitute.com.au/what_is_positive_psychology.html

A paradigm shift...

2012 - The Happy Secret to Better Work (Ted Talk, 12:21)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1AfJd0q9Z06

What stuck with you?

https://www.edx.org/course/science-happiness-up-berkeleys-pp101x-6

The Science of Happiness Podcast
15-20 minute episodes
Dr. Dacher Keltner
University of Berkeley
Greater Good Science Center
What is your wellness strategy or goal?

what, how much, when

Ways to Wellness

- Gratitude / journaling
- Exercise / movement
- Mindfulness / Meditation
- Calm welcoming spaces
- Kindness

Wellness, reimagined!

Gratitude / Journaling

- 3 Good Things (10 min/day)
- Meaningful Photos (15 min/day + 1hr/week)
- Gratitude Journal (15 min 3x/week)

Need inspiration? Try www.1000awesomethings.com and related materials by Neil Pasricha

Gratitude and sleep

- Before-bed gratitude exercises and/or positive journaling may support healthy sleep
- Other tips:
  - Plan – allow for 7 to 9 hours
  - Establish routine
  - Limit caffeine
  - Unplug electronic devices

http://healthysleep.med.harvard.edu/healthy/getting/overcoming/tips

Gratitude at work

- Staff meetings
- Monday morning re-connect
- Gratitude circles – notice, think, wonder
- Gratitude jars, art, photography, etc.

http://heartmindonline.org/resources/lesson-plan-what-is-gratitude

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Wellness, reimagined!
Exercise

- Boost in heart rate = boost in mood!
- Focus on “the fun fifteen”
- Do-able in many ways:
  - Bursts of vigorous activity
  - Light or moderate exercise
  - Moving (not sitting!)

Exercise: Vigorous Activity

- Lead fitness activities at lunch, after school
  - Participate in morning fitness programs: RVS SPARK [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QZy6WrLj7q]
  - Join an AMA Run Club - [www.amayouthrunclub.com]
  - Organize staff-only fitness classes before/after school
  - Do what you like, at a time that works for you
- Offer aerobic movement breaks in class
  - Exercise videos (e.g., Go Noodle)
  - Dance-based activities
  - Fitness (not fire!) drills

Exercise: Light-to-Moderate Activity

- Try green commuting - walk or cycle to/from school, or at lunch time
- Take it outside – start with the 30x30 nature challenge: [http://30x30.davidsuzuki.org/]
- Put activity breaks on the agenda
- Try whole-school activities

Exercise: Movement

- Re-design your work station, classroom, and hallways
- Incorporate movement and music into your teaching
- Minimize sedentary behaviour (sitting)

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Mindfulness

Mind Full, or Mindful?
Mindful Breathing

• Be aware of your own breathing – watch, listen, feel

Guided meditation
Audio Examples:
http://marc.ucla.edu/mindful-meditations

https://consciousdiscipline.com/free-resources

Mindful Minute for Kids (1:16)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3M1HbKw4l4A

Mindful Listening
Quieting the Mind: Singing Bowl,
Basu bowl (gold color)

Awe Walk (natural settings, urban settings, indoor settings)
https://ggia.berkeley.edu/practice/awe_walk

Mindful Listening

Mindfulness - Grounding

• 5 things you see
• 4 things you feel
• 3 things you hear
• 2 things you smell
• 1 thing you taste

Mindfulness

Mindful eating

• Mindful eating
  – Pay attention
  – Be intentional
  – Plan for healthy food

  – Create a supportive environment
    • Salad Tuesdays
    • Soup, chili, or salads for birthdays and celebrations
    • Healthy options (or non-food items) for staff meetings, PD days, etc.
    • Healthy items for the classroom
Mindfulness Challenge

30 days of mindfulness

- Gratitude / journaling
- Exercise / movement
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Wellness, reimagined!

Ways to Wellness

Calm Welcoming Spaces

- School and classroom environment
- Visual stimulation
- Auditory stimulation

Calm welcoming spaces

- Coloring
- Music
- Singing
- Finger labyrinth
- Walking
- Mind jar
Ways to Wellness

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Wellness, reimagined!

Acts of kindness

It takes 2 minutes!

- E-mails
- Post-cards
- Rocks!
- Phone calls
- Often linked to gratitude

Kindness at work

Staff
- Mentorship programs
- Challenges – walking, healthy recipes, drinking water, snow angels
- Cover someone’s supervision time
- Make note of favourite things for each teacher – coffee, hobbies, etc.

Students
- Food/clothing drives, fundraisers
- Multi-age pairs, groups, clubs
- Embed throughout class mission, student roles, classroom routines
- RVS Kindness Ninjas #RVSKind @rj_kindergarten

In summary...

- The lens through which you view the world shapes the way you behave
- You can buffer your brain against the negative by creating just a single positive change
- Your positivity can impact those around you, – smiling is contagious (so is yawning, boredom, etc.)

Going Forward

Make a commitment to train your brain!

what, how much, when

What is your wellness strategy or goal?
Going forward

- Be specific about **what, how much, when**
- Examples:
  - I will lead my class in one breathing exercise (from Safe Breathing Icons) every day, after one recess.
  - I will write one ‘thank you’ email every morning at 6:30
  - I will take one awe walk (for 15 minutes) on Sunday mornings.

Jessica’s daily affirmation:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H0IQONaXBE&safe=safe-activity

Thank you!

- You are…
  - an amazing role model
- You are…
  - a wellness champion

Contact Info

Christine Vokins
Health Promotion Coordinator
Healthy Children & Youth
Population, Public & Indigenous Health
Phone: 403-773-2510
Email: Christine.Vokins@ahs.ca

Nannette Gropp
Health Promotion Coordinator
Healthy Children & Youth
Population, Public & Indigenous Health
Phone: 403-943-6726
Email: Nannette.Gropp@ahs.ca

Questions?

www.ahs.ca/csh