Ask the Experts Webinar:
*Return to School Special Series*

Secondary Traumatic Stress and Staff Well-Being

*NASP*
“Ask the Experts” Webinar

Return to School Special Series

- Special series of recorded webinars to be posted on the NASP website for NASP members only that provide more in-depth skill-based content to help school psychologists prepare for the return to school.
- Webinars are designed to offer support to school psychologists, interns, and practicum students as they navigate the delivery of school psychological services during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Each webinar will be followed by the opening of a discussion thread on the NASP member exchange community.
- Each webinar will:
  - Address critical questions emerging as a result of the need to provide virtual telehealth school psychological services.
  - Provide advice and guidance from experts.
  - Offer suggested strategies and resources for addressing professional practice issues.
Expert Panelists

Presenter and Discussion Facilitator
Eric Rossen, PhD
NASP Director, Professional Development Standards and Author, Supporting and Educating Traumatized Students

Panelists
Luke Clamp, EdD
Principal, River Bluff (SC) High School, 2019 NASSP National Principal of the Year

Franci Crepeau-Hobson, PhD
Associate Professor & Director of Clinical Training School Psychology, University of Colorado Denver, Cochair, NASP School Safety and Crisis Response Committee
Topics for Discussion

• Staff well-being should not be solely an individual’s responsibility

• Systems must enable staff to effectively care for themselves and each other

• Self-care is best accomplished within the context of systemic efforts toward promoting well-being
Common Elements of Tier I Schools

- **Tier 1**
  - Whole school safety programming
  - Whole school prevention programming
  - Whole school trauma programming
  - Classroom-based strategies
  - Community context
  - **Staff self-care**

- **Tier 2**
  - Early intervention trauma programming

- **Tier 3**
  - Targeted trauma programming

Treatment and Services
Adaptation Center for Resilience, Hope, and Wellness in Schools

The Stress Experienced Now is Real and Unprecedented

• Actual comments on social media

“Maybe they’ll be interested in going back once they’re furloughed.”

“Just wait when they start firing [teachers] when the district realizes it doesn’t need them, just the little videos they make.”
Added Stress of…

• Uncertainty/unpredictability
• Fear
• Feeling Unsupported & underappreciated
• Loss (personal, financial, physical/medical, social)
• Change in job structure and function
• Personal and financial liability

• Administrators have unique challenges to decide about:
  • School funding
  • Workforce retention
  • Academic planning
Add This on to Existing Stress and Risk

Among a sample of 2,149 teachers in Maine that completed the survey, how many reported at least 4 out of 10 ACEs on the ACE screener?

A. 6%
B. 8.5%
C. 11%
D. 14.5%

Kennedy, 2019
Secondary Traumatic Stress (STS)
What is STS?

- “The natural consequence emotions and behaviors resulting from hearing and knowing about traumatizing events experienced by significant others….the stress resulting from helping or wanting to help a traumatized or suffering person.  

(Figley, 1995, p. 7)
What Might STS Look Like?

- Emotional indicators
- Physical indicators
- Personal indicators
- Workplace indicators
Promoting Staff Well-Being is a Tier 1 Initiative
NASP Organizational Principles (2020)

- NASP 2020 Professional Standards lay out organizational principles that enable SPs to do their work effectively
Peer Support

- Knowing each other – liking (or tolerating) each other
- Environment of collaboration and shared mission
- Induction/mentor/peer-pairing
- Opportunity for discussion with co-workers

- **Organizational Principle 2.1**: “School systems promote cooperative and collaborative relationships among staff members …”
- **Org. Principle 2.3**: “School systems promote work environments that maximize job satisfaction of employees in order to maintain the high quality of services provided to students. “
- **Org. Principle 4.1**: “School systems provide opportunities for employees to communicate with each other about issues of mutual professional interest on a regular basis.”
- **Org. Principle 5.3**: “School systems allow time for school psychologists to participate in supervision, peer consultation, and mentoring”
Administrator Recognition

- Acknowledgement of STS
- Commitment to support
- Active encouragement of self-care
- “office hours” to allow for direct communication with district staff
- Regular opportunities to solicit honest input
  - (without fear of retribution)
School-Wide Efforts to Address Secondary Traumatic Stress

Trauma-informed schools support the adults:

- Pinch hitters
- “Buddy” classrooms
- Reducing stigma around mental health
- Recognizing and awarding each other
  - SHOUT-OUT WALL for staff
  - NASP Possibilities In Action Partner Award
- Adequate “substitute” pool
- Allowing “self care in the background”
Virtual Gratitude or Shout-Out Wall

Padlet.com
Tap In/Tap Out

• Identify your own triggers as educators
  • From Paradigm Shift Education
  • Uses free GroupMe app
Boundary Setting Activity

Is it ok to:

1. Ask for a response to an email over a weekend
2. Expect grading to get done in the evening
3. Buy lunch or snacks for other colleagues
4. Have an awards night for staff
5. Pitch in for a colleague when they are having a tough time
6. Coordinate happy hours after work

Org. Principle 2.4: “School systems promote and advocate for balance between professional and personal lives of employees.”
Boundary Setting Activity

Is it ok to:

1. Transport student(s) in your car.
2. Call students to remind them about assignments/
3. Make home visits.
4. Go to students’ important events outside of school (e.g., piano recitals, gymnastics tournaments).
5. Provide students with school supplies they do not have
6. Provide students with personal items they need, like food, shoes, coats, toothpaste, shampoo
7. Find ways to provide students with healthy snacks without being reimbursed.
8. Babysit for students when their parents are in need.
9. Touch a student when they need a hug.
10. Keep a student’s secrets.
Engage in Resource Mapping

Steps and Timing

- Step 1: Pre-Planning
- Step 2: Map Resources (30 minutes)
- Step 3: Analyze Resources (30 minutes–1 hour)
- Step 4: Maintain Map and Consider Changing Resources (ongoing)

Check out https://mcc.gse.harvard.edu/resources-for-educators/resource-mapping-strategy
Individual Strategies
Commitment to Self-Care

- Physical
- Psychological
- Emotional
- Spiritual
- Professional
Self-Care Strategies

- Refocus on rewards
- Nurture relationships
- Set boundaries
- Create Healthy Escapes
- Foster creativity and connection with the profession
- LAUGH
Self-Care is Not...

- Simply indulgent behavior
- Hard to access
- A drain on our resources
- An activity that should take away from our overall health
- Involve comparison with others
Self-Care is a Mindset

• It can be habit-forming
• Prioritize well-being over self-sacrifice
• Avoid glamorizing the “perception of busyness”
Applying an MTSS approach to Staff well-being

- Tier 1 –
  - E.g., appropriate staffing**, PD, coaching, assessment
- Tier 2 –
  - E.g., social events to gather staff, Buddy classes, Pinch hitters
- Tier 3 –
  - E.g., mentoring, access to MH support

**Org. Principle 3.2: “School systems support recruitment and retention of qualified staff by advocating for appropriate ratios of school psychologists to students…”

Org. Principle 6.1: “The school system provides support to ensure that school psychologists have sufficient access to continuing professional development “
Expert Panel Discussion
NASP Resources

• NASP COVID-19 Resource Center

• Care for the Caregivers webinar

• Possibilities in Action Partner Award
External Resource

- Free online STS training for educators
- [https://statprogram.org/](https://statprogram.org/)

STAT
Support for Teachers Affected by Trauma

Geared toward preK-12 teachers, STAT (Support for Teachers Affected by Trauma) was developed over a two-year period by a group of experts in the fields of secondary traumatic stress (STS), education, and technology. STAT comprises five online modules that explore the concepts of secondary trauma, risk factors associated with susceptibility to STS, the impact of STS across multiple life domains, and tangible self-care skills.

STAT is a user-friendly curriculum that allows participants to engage in a range of STS learning interactives; explore scenarios that highlight the impact of STS; listen to teachers describe their experiences with STS and self-care; and complete self-assessment scales that can measure and track STS levels over time. STAT brings much needed attention and understanding of secondary trauma to the field of preK-12 education.

Visit the Training page to access the STAT course.
Other External Resources


- Treatment and Services Adaptation Center: https://traumaawareschools.org/secondaryStress
Organizational Assessment

• The Secondary Traumatic Stress Informed Organization Assessment (STSIOA)

- Total score:
  - Less than 28 – little to no STS
  - 28-37 – mild STS
  - 38-43 – moderate STS
  - 44-48 – high STS
  - 49 or greater – severe STS

ProQOL Scale (2009)

https://proqol.org/uploads/ProQOL_5_English.pdf

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 = Never</th>
<th>2 = Rarely</th>
<th>3 = Sometimes</th>
<th>4 = Often</th>
<th>5 = Very Often</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I am happy.</td>
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<td>2. I am preoccupied with more than one person I [help].</td>
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<td>3. I get satisfaction from being able to [help] people.</td>
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<td>4. I feel connected to others.</td>
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<td>5. I jump or am startled by unexpected sounds.</td>
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<td>6. I feel invigorated after working with those I [help].</td>
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<td>7. I find it difficult to separate my personal life from my life as a [helper].</td>
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<td>8. I am not as productive at work because I am losing sleep over traumatic experiences of a person I [help].</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. I think that I might have been affected by the traumatic stress of those I [help].</td>
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<td>10. I feel trapped by my job as a [helper].</td>
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<td>11. Because of my [helping], I have felt “on edge” about various things.</td>
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<td>12. I like my work as a [helper].</td>
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<td>13. I feel depressed because of the traumatic experiences of the people I [help].</td>
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<td>14. I feel as though I am experiencing the trauma of someone I have [helped].</td>
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<td>15. I have beliefs that sustain me.</td>
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<td>16. I am pleased with how I am able to keep up with [helping] techniques and protocols.</td>
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<td>17. I am the person I always wanted to be.</td>
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<td>18. My work makes me feel satisfied.</td>
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<td>19. I feel worn out because of my work as a [helper].</td>
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<td>20. I have happy thoughts and feelings about those I [help] and how I could help them.</td>
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<td>22. I believe I can make a difference through my work.</td>
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<td>23. I avoid certain activities or situations because they remind me of frightening experiences of the people I [help].</td>
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<td>24. I am proud of what I can do to [help].</td>
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<td>25. As a result of my [helping], I have intrusive, frightening thoughts.</td>
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<td>26. I feel “tagged down” by the system.</td>
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<td>27. I have thoughts that I am a “success” as a [helper].</td>
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<td>28. I can't recall important parts of my work with trauma victims.</td>
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<td>29. I am a very caring person.</td>
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<td>30. I am happy that I chose to do this work.</td>
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References

