Northeastern University
College of Professional Studies

Bethany Chandler, Doctoral Candidate,
Northeastern University

Impressions and the Impressionable, working with staff to treat personal and secondary trauma.

Background

Many researchers have found that teacher's responsibilities are to educate the whole child including their social emotional needs (Durlak, J., Weissberg, R., Dymnicki, A., Taylor, R., & Schellinger, K., 2011). Research suggests that teachers are faced with challenging behaviors (Wong, 2017). Social emotional programming, crisis prevention methodologies, positive reward systems, and disciplinary sanctions, such as suspension and expulsion, are all responses to the massive concern of dysregulated students. Suspension practices continues to be over used in Massachusetts as noted in the 2015/2016 article, "Suspended Education in Massachusetts". The authors noted that there were 30 schools and districts that need help in addressing high discipline rates and large disparities (Losen et,al., 2019). It is essential then, for Massachusetts school administrators to explore resources to prevent trauma in staff in order in order to have a healthy working environment.

Theoretical Lens

Kolb's, Spiral of Learning (2009) resonated within the curriculum of Social Emotional Curriculum has due to the belief that learners develop their self identity, meta cognition and control emotional responses through a spiral process that engages experience, self reflection thinking and acting (2009).

Literature

Jerome Bruner, a reconstructional theorist believed that children have the ability to interpret knowledge with their own perspective and learn through experience. Kolb, an experiential theorist reflected the importance of not just experience but self reflection. In combining the theories of both Kolb and Bruner, individuals have the potential to use their perspective and positionality to judge themselves, judge the immediate community members around them and their experiences, and to form their knowledge including opinions, comparisons, and conclusions about the state of their worth.Recognizing one's mood and emotions (behavior) through experience and self reflection may positively affect student and staff outcomes.

Essential Question

What emotional curriculum resources and approaches are effective in treating trauma among staff members in order to maintain an emotionally healthy environment?
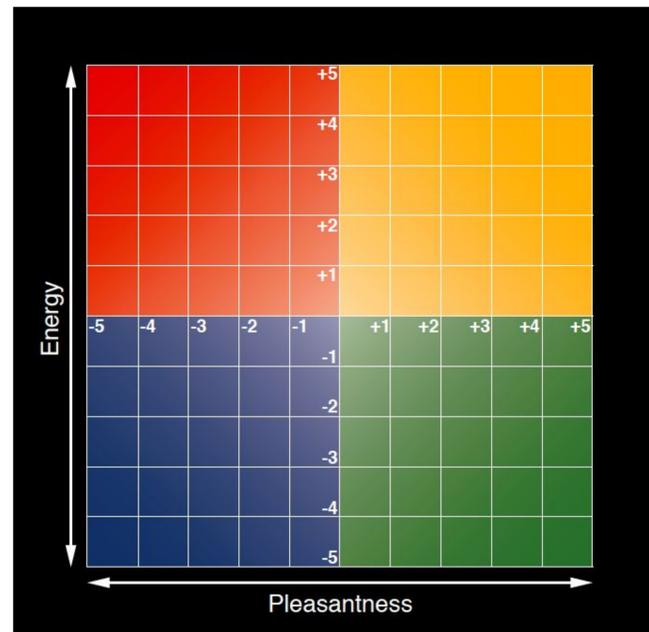
Response to the Question

There are several resources administrators may use with staff to develop an emotionally healthy staff. Although some Social Emotional Curriculum including Safety Care, Crisis Prevention Intervention,and Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports are curriculums/programs developed for students. There are resources that have interventions and supports for staff. Two such programs include the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence and Casel's Collaborative that has developed a framework for schools to use for all school community individuals.
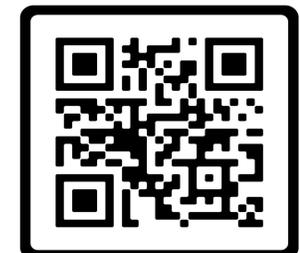

Findings

The Yale Center of Social and Emotional Intelligence provides staff members an opportunity to actively explore their moods by utilizing the Mood Meter tool. This Cartesian Coordinate grid allows individuals to measure their current mood based on the in the moment experience they are having. This active plot and journal helps the user collect their own data about a mood triggered by a certain experience. To plot a mood, use the x axis to rate the level of pleasantness and the y axis to rate energy. One example may be a (+5, +5) could be "ecstatic" while a (-5, -5) may exhibit "despair". This tool may prove to be a valuable resource for staff to use to express their feelings in an active way. In addition to this resource, The Yale Center of Social Emotional Intelligence provides videos, and a playlist of ways to "move" your mood.

The Casel's Collaborative may also prove to be an effective resource to use with staff as this program provides 5 competencies as seen in the circular chart below to help guide individuals the pieces seemingly needed to embark on a comprehensive SEL curriculum experience.

Implications/ Next Steps

- Share the two resources with stakeholders to gain their opinions of each.
- Use the strategies within the programs to collect data through interviews.
- Analyze the data through coding the results to provide findings.

References

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