SPOTLIGHT ON COVID: STUDENT’S MENTAL HEALTH

by:
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Nowadays, students are facing a wide range of ongoing stressors related to academic demands. Stress is a normal part of life, but too much stress can have serious consequences on mental and physical health. Once these feelings are left untreated and unprocessed it might result to deeper emotional or psychological problems.

While schools have shift to printed and digital way of delivery of classes to avoid the disruption of educational services, the digital platform still remains uncharted ground for majority of student in a low-middle income country such as the Philippines. Since the implementation of New Learning Context parents find themselves mainly responsible for the teaching of their children particularly those who are in elementary and secondary level. They are forced to take over the task of home-schooling to maintain continuity of education. In reality there are parents who are not able to give adequate time to assist their children and there are some who lacks the necessary educational qualifications to teach their children with school matters. It is also a source of stressors for parents since those responsibilities were previously taken care of by their teachers. This is likely to lead to frustration and exhaustion amongst guardians and disturbances of academic activities of the children, leading to stress in both parents and children.

This mental health issue of Academic Stress is complex. There are many contributing factors on student’s uncertainties, it may be an issue on adaptability, isolation, fear and confusion on the current educational system. Pertaining to mental health concerns, the most vulnerable population is those aged 15-29. These numbers illustrate the need for more discussions and programs that will break the stigma around mental health especially in schools. Students already coping with mental health
conditions have been particularly vulnerable to changes, and now we are learning the impacts of this Pandemic to students experiencing unexpected changes in their lives.

Online learning is incredibly convenient, but with this advantage come a few drawbacks. Connecting with classmates, instructor, and maintaining a social life can become a challenge when all interactions take place virtually. Every student has a different way of responding to stressful situations, parents and teachers must be vigilant in observing changes in student’s behavior. As a teacher it is very important to be mindful of students expressing overwhelming feelings during discussions. If there are need for a much deeper conversation the teachers may do referrals on Designated School Counselor. While for the parent, follow your gut. If you sense something might not be right, it’s healthier to talk with them before it might get into something more serious.

Taking actions to support students is essential during this challenging time. In the new normal, there should be a better and more consistent communication and collaboration between teachers and parents. More than just simply making sure that students are learning from lessons and score well on their modules, we should also prioritize their mental health and make sure that psychological needs are also being met.

References:
