THE IMPORTANCE OF MENTAL HEALTH OF TEACHERS

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Teachers are trained to detect any decline in the mental health of their students by correlating it with their academic performance. Since majority of the children’s time were spent within the four walls of the classroom, it is usually the teachers who can determine if there’s a change in their behavior, by relaying their observations to the parents, they bridged the gap between the mental status and the intervention the child needs.

Teachers are the pillars that are strong enough to hold a class or even several classes together, but there are moments when these pillars break, and when they break; who do they turn to? The American Federation of Teachers conducted a survey last 2015 and found that 34 teachers suffered a decline in their mental health status either by experiencing increased stress, depression and/or emotional challenges. For 34% it jumped to 58% in a span of two years. A University of Missouri professor, Keith Herman, found that 93% of elementary school teachers experience high-stress level, in his study he conducted last 2017.

They spend their entire day teaching and putting up a front that everything is okay. When they come home they fulfill their duties and responsibilities to their families, all while finishing the work they brought home. By putting everyone first before them, they don’t even realize that their physical and mental health are being compromised. According to Dr. Cherry in his article about depression, one of the common symptoms of depression is difficulty sleeping — which explains why many teachers, suffering through bleak stretches, also cite having issues with sleep deprivation and insomnia. It can be easily passed off as signs of fatigue, but a more serious problem lurks behind the shadows. If a teachers suffers a mental health problem, it could affect the students and
even his/her colleagues. Despite the rapid increase in the occurrence of problems regarding the mental health of the teachers, studies on how it could be prevented or addressed remain minimal. There are seminars on how to better the teaching strategies or how to properly manage a classroom, but there are none regarding self-care for teachers or cultivating a healthy work environment for them. Co-teachers should step up, listen, and look after one another, for who else could understand the stresses and demands of the teaching profession if not them. In these changing times, it is important to be aware that mental health is as important as physical health. How can one function properly if internally they’re depreciating? Teachers serve as the frontliners for our young generations, we must do what we can to support them in any way we can and that includes making sure they’re healthy in all aspects of their lives

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