SURVIVING THE WORKPLACE

- STRESS TRIGGERS
- IMPACT ON WELLBEING
- PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS
- COPING STRATEGIES

Raizell Slobodsky
Gail Hunter
STRESS IS …..

• a state of mental tension and worry caused by problems in your life, work, etc.

• something that causes strong feelings of worry or anxiety (negative or positive)

• something that throws you physically or mentally off balance (injury, weather, illness, sick members, sick days, etc)
STRESS IN THE WORKPLACE

Stems from .......

- Anticipation of something (positive or negative)
- Miscommunication
- Exhaustion
- Regulation & administration expectations
- Ministry or local licensing person/expectations
- Shortage of staff
- Children & Families
- Scheduling (early mornings, split shift)
- Environment (shared space, portable, tightly scheduled, poor lighting, basement, poor air, sounds, etc)
REFLECTION

Share identified stress triggers found in the workplace.
NEGATIVE IMPACT ON WELLBEING

Physical & Psychological Issues

- Back
- Knees
- Headaches
- Depression
- Addiction
- Illness
- Lack of self reflection, a skewed sense of performance
- Poor self regulation
- Sense of not belonging
- Exhaustion or Fatigue
- Lack focus
IMPACT ON DAY TO DAY FUNCTIONING

Communication & Attitude

- Short temper
- Sarcasm
- Impatience
- Lack of professionalism
- Avoidance
- Procrastination
- Judgemental
- Lack Confidentiality
- Irritability
- Arguments
- Unable to self regulate
What we can not control!

- Weather
- Behaviour and attitudes of others
  - Co-workers
  - parents/guardians
  - School/building staff
- When licensing happens
- School’s (space, schedules, teachers)
- Personal family issues

ADJUSTING SENSE OF CONTROL

What can we control?
Interpersonal experiences directly influence how we mentally construct reality.
(Siegel, 1999)
PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Relationships
- Licensing inspectors, Consultants
- RECEs (other rooms, room partner, working on your own)
- Families/Guardians
- School/Building staff (principal, teachers, caretakers)
- Supervisor/Staff
- Board of Directors
- College of ECE (meeting criteria)

Strategies
- Establish a social committee
  - Staff
  - Board members
  - Other centres, homecare
- Be reflective & open minded
- Consider perspective of others
  - There is a reason they are making demands
- Recognize they too have stressors
- Shared goal and interest
- Think before you speak
- Be non-judgemental & respectful
- Empower & Share power
PROFESSIONAL ENVIRONMENTS

Challenges

• Work space (noise, air quality, insects, crowded)
• Scheduling (early morning, split shift, closing)
• Transitions
• School demands (room, timing)
• Shared space
• Program requirements

Strategies

• Utilize what is available:
  • Outdoor, small groups, using fabric, Large motor rooms
  • Maintain open on going discussions with supervisor, RECEs and school/building staff
  • Consider perspective of others...reason for making requests
  • Family situation, distance, culture, guidelines
  • Be resourceful, flexible, creative and understanding while ensuring program outcomes are met
What are you doing to create positive working environments at your workplace?
STRATEGIES TO PROMOTE WELL BEING

Strategies

• Use your benefits
• Find hobbies
• Physical movement (swim, ski, walk, lunch walking club)
• Book club (professional with co-workers and other centres, personal friends)
• Stay home when overly stressed, exhausted or ill
• Mindful meditation
• Self reflection (journal)
• Join the wellness and social committees
What stress relievers do you use?
Strategies

- Recognize your own flash points and personality
  - cool-down time
  - Have room RECE take over
- Take breaks and lunch .. Leave the building
- Be positive (can be infectious)
- Re-evaluate what you actually have control over
- Recognize what is important, let go of the small stuff
- Open communication with parents/guardians
  - Be positive and culturally sensitive
- Seek/recommend outside resources( when needed)
- Appreciate your role and who you are
RECE’s need to ‘cultivate authentic, caring relationships and connections to create a sense of belonging among and between children, adults, and the world around them.’

“HOW DOES LEARNING HAPPEN: ONTARIO’S PEDAGOGY FOR THE EARLY YEARS”
What changes do you see yourself implementing Monday morning?
REFERENCES
