

SECONDARY TRAUMATIC STRESS IN THE SCHOOL SETTING

TAYLOR OREN, BA | MACIEL VAN ECKHARDT, BA |
MELISSA HOLLAND, PHD | STEPHEN BROCK, PHD, NCSP



SECONDARY TRAUMATIC STRESS (STS)

STS is emotional strain or tension felt as a result of trauma exposure experience by another individual, group, or community.

Prevalence of Trauma in Schools

- Longitudinal study found, by age 16, over 68% of sampled children had experienced at least one traumatic stressor

Relevance to Schools

- Teachers often find themselves supporting the emotional needs of trauma exposed students
- When employees suffer from health-related illnesses, schools also pay high costs

Relevance to School Psychologists

- Implement social-emotional learning curriculum to address school-wide trauma
- Support staff:
 - Encourage autonomy, confidence, and positive staff relationships
- Support school psychologists:
 - Recognize consequences of STS

RESOURCES

http://proqol.org/ProQol_Test.html
Futureswithoutviolence.org
Nctsn.org
Tendacademy.org
Compassionfatigue.org
<http://vtt.ovc.ojp.gov/>
http://proqol.org/ProQol_Test.html

KNOW THE SIGNS:

- Detachment, irritability, numbness
- Sleep and concentration difficulties
- Loss of meaning, hope
- Difficulty managing emotions
- Flashbacks, unwanted memories
- Staff burnout and turnover
- Costs for schools & districts

STRATEGIES: INDIVIDUAL LEVEL

- Self care
 - Connect with family/friends
 - Mindfulness
 - Psychoeducation

STRATEGIES: SYSTEM LEVEL

1. Organizational culture
2. Focus on prevention
3. Notice STS early and address immediately
4. Evaluate efforts