

Exceptional Programs for Exceptional Learners Monthly Newsletter

Parsons, Neodesha, Fredonia, Cherryvale, Thayer, Independence, Coffeyville, Caney

TEACHERS DON'T GET STRESSED—THEY HAVE SPRING BREAK AND SUMMERS OFF! *Coping with Stress in the Special Education Classroom*

Goals for teachers:

- Be experts in your field
- Search for best practice in your field
- Utilize best practice
- Change what is not working
- Diagnose needs with appropriate tools
- Progress Monitor student needs at least weekly
- Be excited about your growth and your students' growth
- Care about all children, even the tough ones

BEST PRACTICE

Amy Burnett is the EC teacher for Cherryvale, Neodesha, & Fredonia. Amy consistently demonstrates enthusiasm and energy in engaging her pre-school learners. Her classrooms have a positive learning climate. Kids have a fun and productive time learning. Amy is keenly aware of the strengths and needs of her students. She provides instruction that matches preferred student learning modalities. Amy has a high regard for her students and her paraeducators. Her teaching, management and interpersonal practices promote her success.

“Meeting the daily learning and behavioral needs of student makes teaching a stressful job. Although not all stress associated with teaching is negative, stress that reduces a teacher’s motivation can have deleterious effects such as alienation from the workplace, absenteeism, and attrition. In fact, when special education teachers are highly stressed by the unmanageability of their workload, they are more likely to leave the special education classroom (Miller, Brownwell, & Smith, 1995). The ability to successfully manage stresses related to teaching is critical if special education teachers are to survive and thrive in the classroom. “

- SET REALISTIC EXPECTATIONS of yourself and your students. List the jobs you must accomplish on a daily basis and determine those that are a priority to you personally and to your administration, and deal with those jobs in order of importance. Don't take on the world—just a piece of it :)

- MAKE DISTINCTIONS BETWEEN YOUR JOB AND YOUR PERSONAL LIFE You can be empathetic to do the needs of your students but you can not become preoccupied with the personal and family problems of your students. If you are going to vent a frustration, vent only a few times a week and try to find solutions to your stressful situations.
- EXERCISE PROFESSIONAL DISCRETION AND INCREASE YOUR AUTONOMY Schools/education is a bureaucracy and these environments often feel inflexible. But evaluate each aspect of your job and determine changes that you can make that will improve your environment and that you can reasonably make. Focus on these changes and leave behind changes that are not within your control.

More to come from this article...

From *Coping with Stress in the Special Education Classroom: Can Individual teachers More Effectively Manage Stress?* Mary Brownwell
www.eric.ed.gov/

Paraprofessionals have more options on our website

Mary Hogan has been working hard to continue to update the Tri-County website and put new and important information on the web. Recently she has added a lot of really cool stuff for paras. Paras can access a wealth of training material such as articles,

modules, videos, and other library materials. Not only can paraprofessionals go to the site for training needs but also for college degree options.

Monica Wallace, a para at IMS, researched Kansas online degree programs as

well as community colleges and financial aid opportunities. Her hard work can help any para interested in completing their education take that next step.

Tri-County will cross their fingers and hope that next step is in special education!