

Abstract

An important aspect of healthcare is to treat the whole person. This includes the physiological, sociological, environmental and the psychological. Unfortunately, the psychological component is often overlooked even in the healthcare field, but more so in areas outside of healthcare. In providing early prevention interventions for the mental health of children, adolescents and young adults, healthcare professionals are remiss in excluding one very important and viable resource from the problem-solving equation – educators. The purpose of this project was to determine the effectiveness of a mental health educational intervention in-service in providing educators with the knowledge and skills to be aware and prepared to manage students who are experiencing a mental health issue or crisis during school hours. The study took place in a vocational school district in central New Jersey. The study involved a pre-intervention survey, an educational intervention in-service provided over a two-week period and followed with a post-intervention survey provided to the educators to determine the effectiveness of the in-service.

The pre-intervention surveys provided a vivid depiction of where the educators felt they were in regard to mental health overall. Questions were grouped into seven categories – comfort, experience, general perception, identifying and recognizing, knowledge, training and understanding. This was followed by the delivery of the Educational Intervention In-Service which was well received by the participants. Participants were then asked to complete a post-intervention survey whose data would be compared to the results of the pre-intervention survey. The comparison of post-intervention data to the pre-intervention data was overwhelmingly positive in determining the effectiveness of the intervention. The benefit of the educational intervention to school districts should be considered as an addition to educator training.