

Ways to Maximize Your Summer Break (and Mental Health)!

Teaching is a rewarding, yet demanding profession. Teachers spend long hours in the classroom grading papers, preparing lesson plans, and supporting their students both academically and emotionally. Due to the multi-faceted nature of the profession, it is easy for teachers to get caught up in the demands of the job and neglect their own mental, emotional, and physical well-being. Yet, focusing on these areas is essential for teachers to stay healthy, happy, and effective inside and outside of the classroom.

Summer break is here, and it is great a time for teachers to concentrate on their health and wellness in ways that might seem difficult throughout the school year. Teachers can recharge their batteries and come back to the classroom with renewed energy and focus by implementing the following practices:

1. Quality Sleep

During the school year, teachers often must wake up early and stay up late to finish grading papers and prepare lesson plans. Getting plenty of sleep is essential to help one recharge over the summer break. Quality sleep is the foundation for emotional and physical health, so try to aim for 7-8 hours each night to help the body and mind restore.

2. Physical Activity

Regular physical activity can help teachers stay healthy all year long. Whether it's going for a walk, running, cycling, or swimming, being physically active has numerous benefits. The mental health benefits of exercise are especially significant! Regular activity has been shown to reduce stress levels and boost cognitive functioning. Whether it's going for a walk, a run, or a swim, try to engage in at least 30 minutes of physical activity each day.

3. Nutritious Meals

Let's face it— what we eat impacts how we feel. Summer is a great time to try new recipes with plenty of colorful fruits and vegetables. Some of the best ones are tastiest in the summertime, like watermelons, cucumbers, and tomatoes. Overall, try to aim for a balanced diet that includes whole grains, lean proteins, and healthy fats. Eating a variety of nutrient-dense foods is key to feeling (and thinking) better!

4. Self-Care

Regular self-care is crucial to one's whole health and wellness. Remember that self-care is not selfish, it's necessary. Self-care activities such as getting a massage, making time for hobbies, and saying "no" when needed can help teachers reduce stress and improve their mental health. Intentional self-care activities allow teachers to recharge their batteries and come back to the classroom with renewed energy and focus. Because the school environment can be stressful, mindfulness practices can also help to reduce mental overload. Consider practicing meditation, yoga, or deep breathing exercises to help calm the mind and central nervous system. Taking a few minutes each day to practice mindfulness can help teachers stay calm and focused while at home and in the classroom.

5. Social Connection

Teachers often have little time to spend with friends and family during the school year, so the summer break is a great opportunity to catch up with loved ones and make new memories

together. Whether it's a barbecue, a day at the beach, or a movie night, spending time with those who matter most can be a great way to unwind. Being around friends and family helps us feel more emotionally grounded, which in turn promotes positive mental health.

Back to School Care

The above information mentions ways to take good care over the summer, but it is also important to explore options for school-year care. The best way for an organization to grow and maintain resiliency throughout the school year is by being equipped with a robust Employee Assistance Program. Employee Assistance Programs are designed to help employees manage their work life and personal life. The balance between both worlds is crucial to mental and emotional well-being. EAPs offer mental health counseling sessions, and financial and legal consultations, along with childcare and eldercare referrals. All benefits are at no cost to the employee, making it a no-brainer for employers to provide this type of program. EAPs also offer management/supervisor consultations, onsite critical incident responses, as well as training for topics on mental and emotional well-being for the entire staff.

No one does EAP better than CorpCare! For over 31 years, CorpCare has been providing top-quality emotional support and mental health services to schools. CorpCare is very proud of the partnership with MISBO and aims to strengthen as many schools as possible with incredible mental health and work-life services. Interested in adding EAP to your organization? It couldn't be easier. Give CorpCare a call today at 877-843-6036 or visit www.corcareeap.com to get started.

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