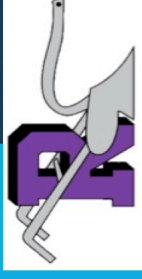


A STUDY OF STRESS LEVELS IN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS GRADES 9TH, 11TH, AND 12TH

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Abstract

In a medical or biological context stress is a physical, mental, or emotional factor that causes bodily or mental tension. Stresses can be external (from the environment, psychological, or social situations) or internal (illness, or from a medical procedure). Stress can initiate the "fight or flight" response, a complex reaction of neurologic and endocrinological systems. (Medicine Net, 2018). Previous studies have shown that a healthy level of stress for an adult is 3.6 on a scale from 1-10. Roscoe Collegiate experience extremely high levels of stress; a survey was given to students in freshmen, junior, and senior years to get a total of 104 survey participants.

Introduction

All over the world, high school students are getting anxiety and depression due to the high expectations and the huge amount of stress that has been put upon their shoulders. According to The Recovery Village and drugabuse.gov, 44% of high school students resort to unhealthy coping mechanisms such as drugs and alcohol. This study was done in order to prove that high school students are experiencing levels of stress that are too high.

Literature Review

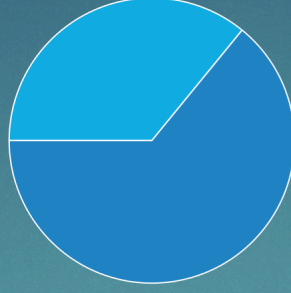
It's a well-known fact that drug addiction and alcohol use exist in public schools. A study done in Los Angeles, CA found that 26.2% of high school students reported that one of their stress coping mechanisms were drugs or alcohol both for themselves and just within their family. High rates of adolescent suicide, depression, and substance abuse have been identified as responses to an increase in stressors in the lives of adolescents and their lack of sufficient coping skills to deal with the stress they generate (University of California, 2000). Another study done by Dr. Diane de Anda at the University of south Florida found that stress is a clear risk factor for mental health disorders, which have been estimated to affect approximately one in five children ages 9 to 17 years (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2004) (University of South Florida, 2008).

Materials and Methods

For this study, 103 surveys were passed out to students in the 9th, 11th, and 12th grades. These students took the survey anonymously and answered essay, yes/no, and number scale questions asking them about their average school day. After the surveys were individually scored and recorded in an excel sheet, they were shredded in order to maintain the students' privacy and anonymity.

1. Microsoft Excel
2. A 21 Question survey
3. 30 pencils
4. A pencil sharpener
5. A two inch binder
6. A Shredder
7. An Apple Mac Air Laptop

Overall stress levels of all students surveyed



Turquoise: 7 and higher
 Blue: 4-6
 Yellow: 2-3
 Green: 1

Results:

After the surveys were distributed and scored, it was discovered that 84% of the Roscoe Collegiate students that were surveyed were experiencing unhealthy levels of stress. The vast majority of the students questioned reported experiencing levels commonly marked anywhere from 5 to 10 on the 10 point scale. One student even went so far as to write in 11 when it wasn't an answer choice included in the survey question. Only four students reported healthy stress levels. Two students reported a 3 and the other two reported 1 and 2.

Conclusion and Discussion

The results of the survey showed that 84% of the student body at Roscoe Collegiate High School is over stressed. Not only that, but it has become such a normal thing to be overwhelmed that many students don't realize that their stress is unhealthy and puts them at a risk of depression and anxiety. Because these adolescents believe it is normal and acceptable to be under this much pressure, they don't tell their parents or get help when they begin feeling helpless and alone. However, because their peers may be feeling similar, they begin to seek solace in unsafe practices such as drugs and alcohol in order to escape their feelings of worthlessness and depression. Left unnoticed, this can lead to unchecked rage and aggression as well as suicidal thoughts.

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