



School of Social Work

# Secondary Traumatic Stress: Pervasiveness and Contributing Factors in School Personnel

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# Agenda

1. What is Secondary Traumatic Stress?
2. How common is it?
3. What puts you at risk?
4. What protects you from STS?
5. How can this impact you?



SECTION One

# What is Secondary Traumatic Stress?

# How Many of you have heard of Secondary Traumatic Stress?

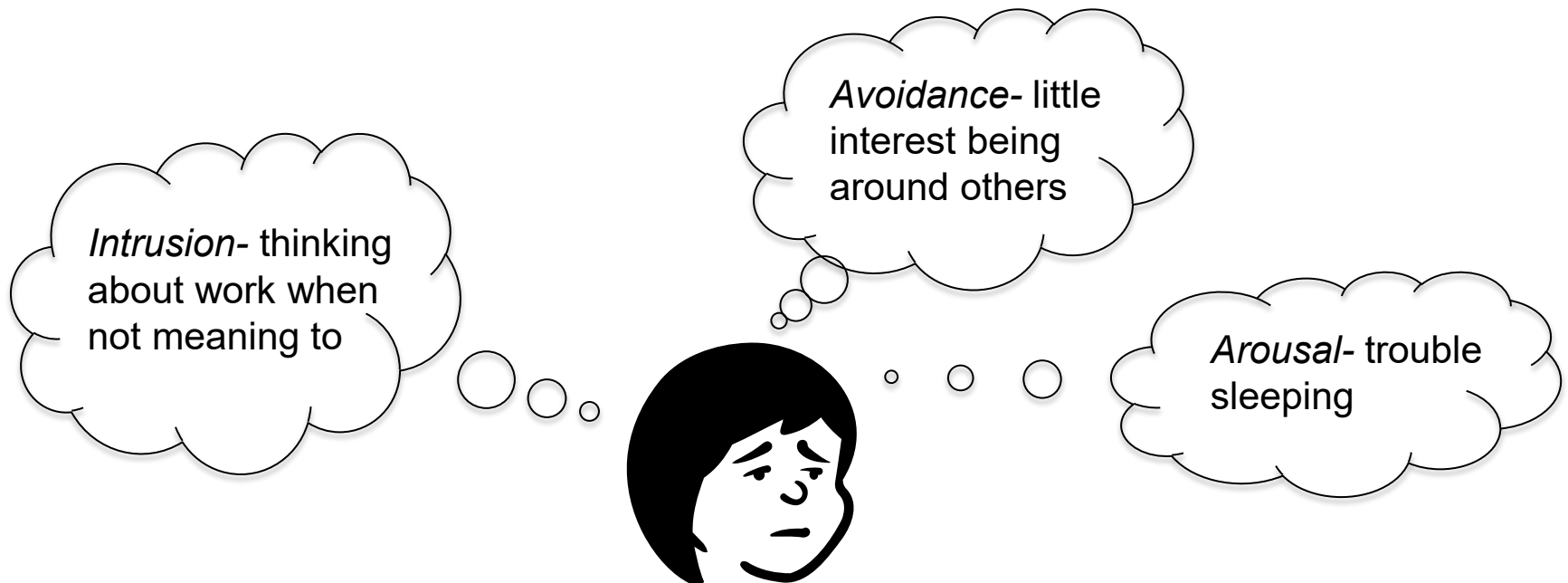
## 1. What about other terms

- Burnout
- Compassion Fatigue
- Vicarious Trauma



# What is Secondary Traumatic Stress (STS)?

The **second-hand exposure** to trauma(s) that occurred to another individual, and results in **post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) like symptoms** (Figley, 1999).





# School Personnel Exposure

- School personnel refers to people employed by or contracted through a school corporation
- 20-50% of children have experienced trauma (Langley, DeCarlo Santiago, Rodríguez, & Zelaya, 2013)
- School personnel are the most common reporters of abuse and neglect with 19.4% of the allegations (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2019).
- School personnel suspect an average of 92 cases of child maltreatment throughout their careers (VanBergeijk, 2007).



# Take a moment a find your score

1. Use the QR code to take the Secondary Traumatic Stress Scale

[https://iu.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_29o506xrBR7KWk5](https://iu.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_29o506xrBR7KWk5)



# Interpret Your Score

<b>STS Level</b>	<b>Score</b>
Little or No STS	<28
Mild STS	28-37
Moderate STS	38-43
High STS	44-48
Severe	49+





# Things to keep in mind

1. The score can change at various time points depending on:
  - Risk factors
  - Protective Factors

As we review risk and protective factors think about how some of the risk and protective factors may apply to you, and how they may impact your STS score.



Section Two

# How Common is it?

Systematic  
Review

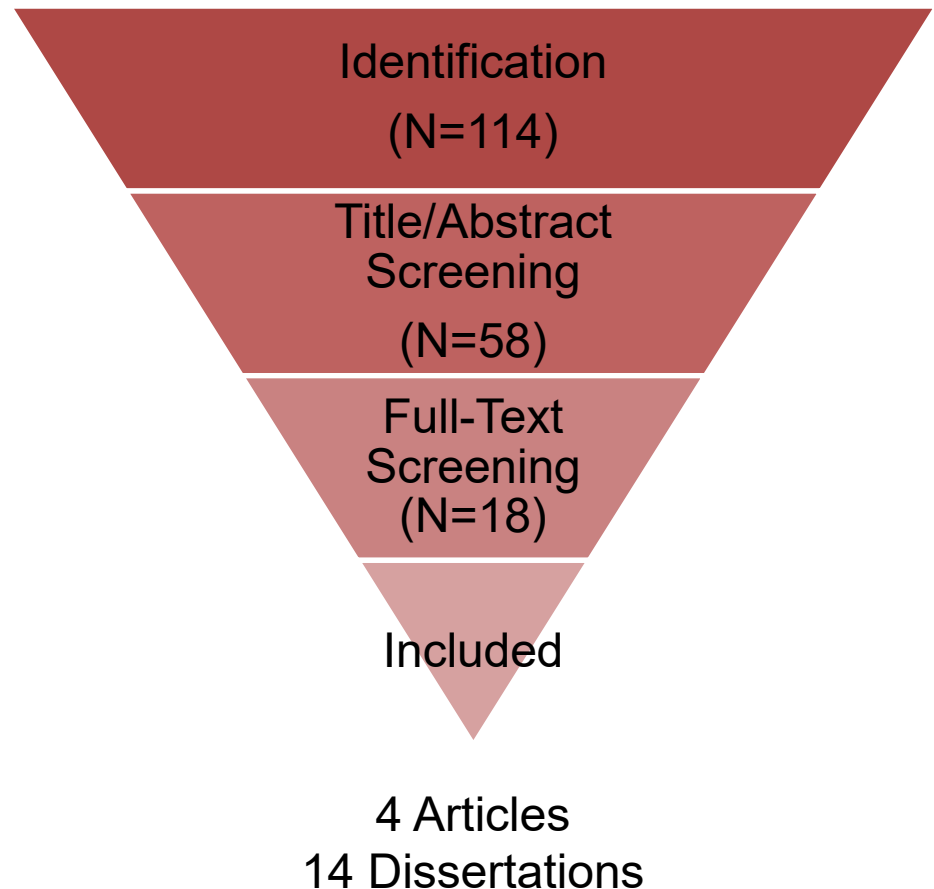


Quantitative  
Study



# Systematic Review & Methods

1. Registered with PROSPERO
2. PRISMA Guidelines
3. JBI Critical Appraisal



# STS Measures

ProQOL-STS subscale (Stamm, 2010)	STSS (Bride et al., 2004)
Includes symptoms like fear, sleep difficulties, avoiding reminders; however, excludes frustration, anger, and depression.	Symptoms mirror those found in the DSM-IV for PTSD.
STS is a subcategory of compassion fatigue	STS is its own construct independent of compassion fatigue
Low, Average, High	Little or No STS, Mild, <b>Moderate, High, and Severe</b>

*Secondary Traumatic Stress:* The **second-hand exposure** to trauma(s) that occurred to another individual, and results in **post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) like symptoms** (Figley, 1999).



# Study Characteristics

1. Ranged from 6 to 450 participants
2. Totaled 2583 participants combined
3. 3 Midwest, 4 West, 2 Northeast, 3 Southeast, 3 nationally, and 3 did not provide a specific region
4. Females range from 70.9 % to 93.2%
5. Mean ages ranged from 39.9 to 45.6 years old
6. White participants ranged from 32.4 % to 97.2%
7. 12 studies focused on teachers only, 2 on school counselors or social workers, and 4 explored school personnel





# STS in School Personnel

1. STS (Average levels, ProQOL) or (Mild, STSS)
  - ProQOL Nine studies subcategory only (N=1065)
  - ProQOL Four studies ProQOL altogether (N=579)
  - STSS Six studies, (N=1172)
2. This study only looked at averages it is unclear how many participants indicated high STS (ProQOL) or moderate to severe STS (STSS).
3. Unknown how many had high levels of STS (ProQOL) or Moderate or greater levels of STS (STS)



Section Two

# How Common is it?

Systematic  
Review

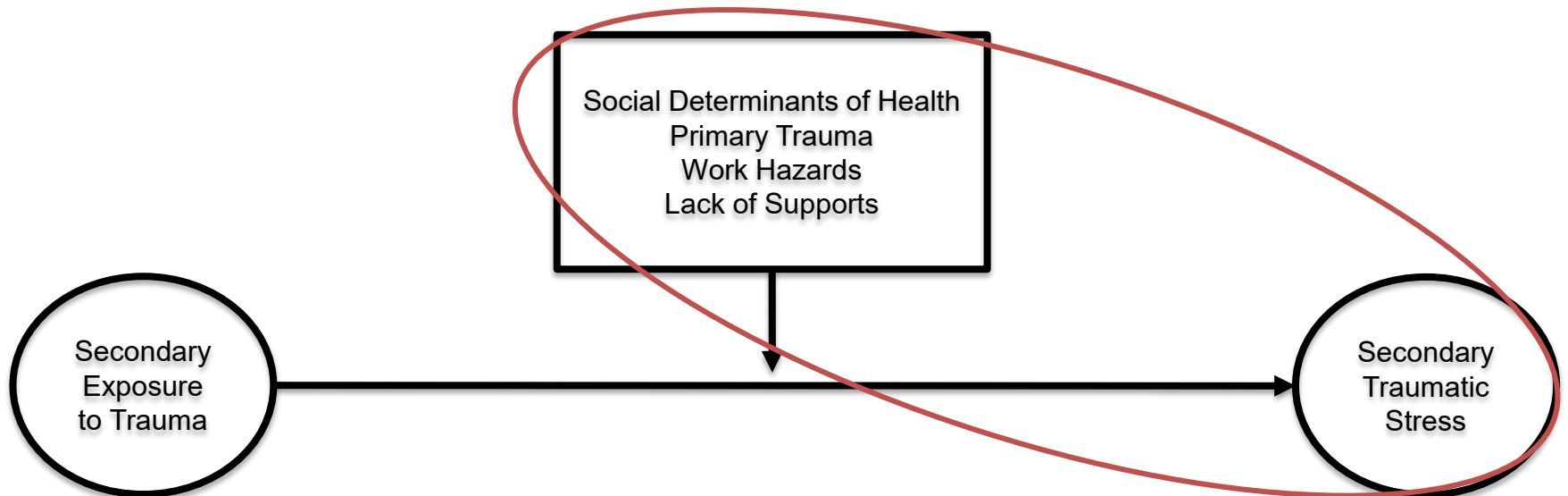
Quantitative  
Study





# Research Questions

- 1) How pervasive is STS in school personnel in this Midwestern County?
- 2) What factors increase/decrease the likelihood of developing secondary traumatic stress symptoms in school personnel?

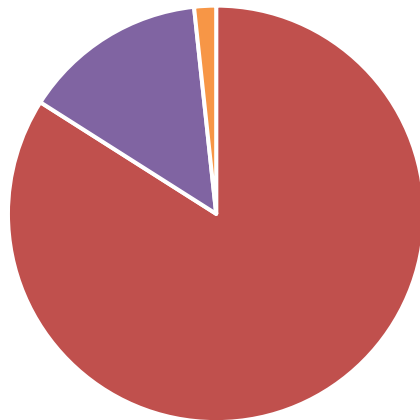






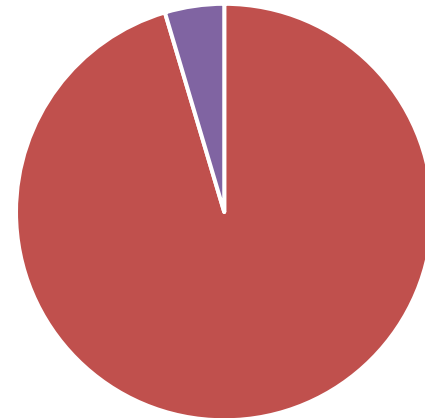
# Social Determinants of Health (N=175)

Gender



■ Female ■ Male ■ Other

Race



■ White ■ Not-White

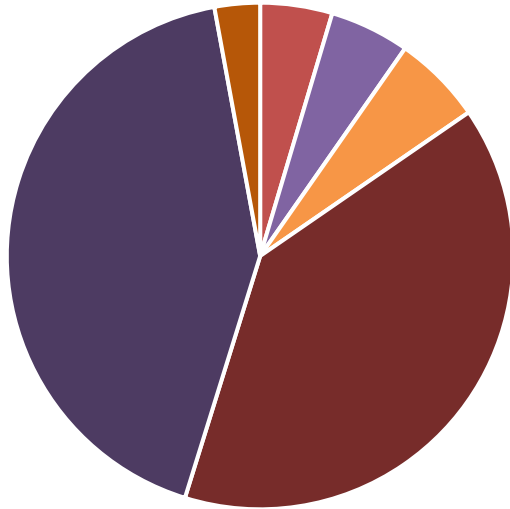
*43.8 Years Old*

Range 22-70 years old

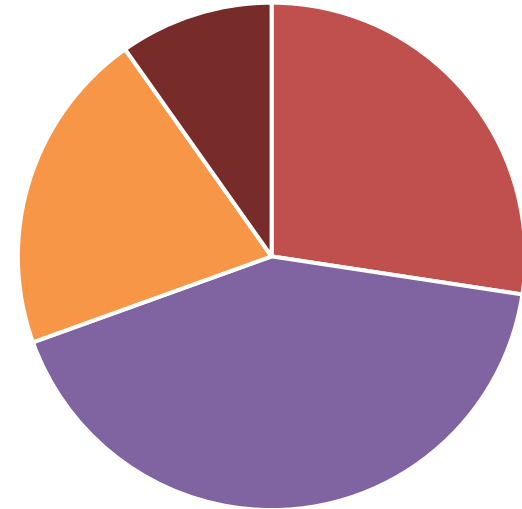


# Social Determinants of Health

Education



Household Income



- High School Diploma
- Associate's Degree
- Master's Degree

- Some College
- Bachelor's Degree
- Doctorate or Professional Degree

- 0-\$49,999
- \$50,000-\$99,999
- \$100,000-149,999
- \$150,000

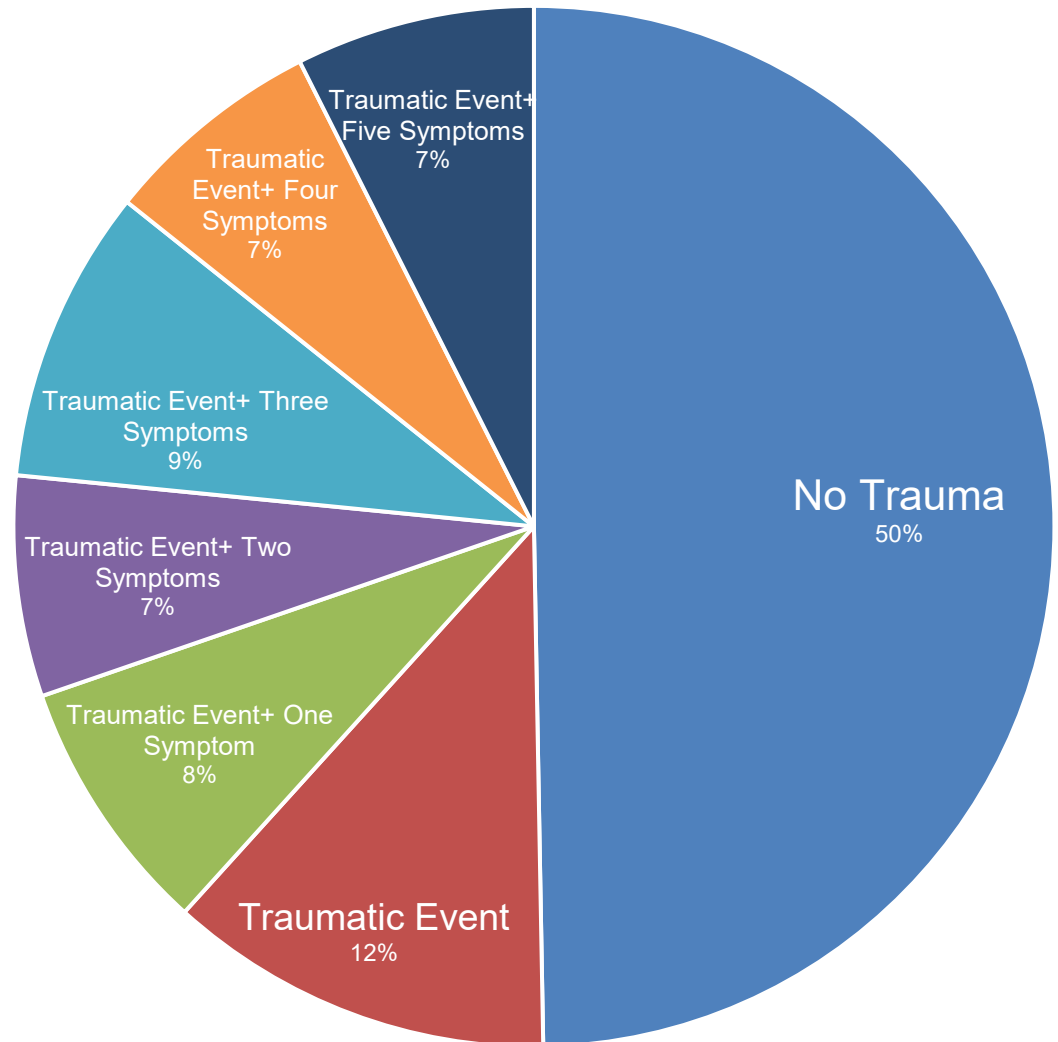
	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Range</b>
<b>Extended ACE</b>	175	3.5	3	0-15





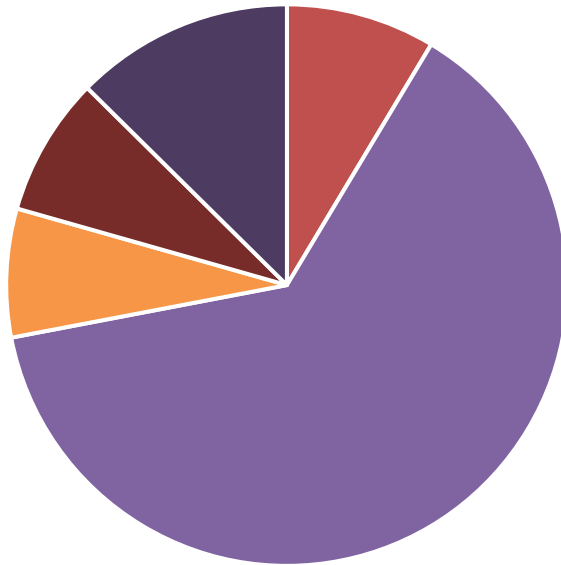
## Primary Care-PTSD Screen

# Measures-Trauma



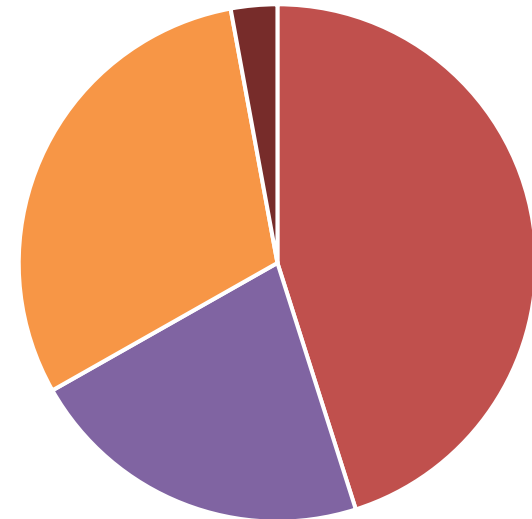
# Results- Work Related Demographics

Role



- Admin, Deans, and Office Staff
- IA's and Substitute Teachers
- Other Staff
- Teachers
- Health and Mental Health

Level



- K-Elementary
- Middle School
- High School
- Other

11.9 Years worked with employer

8.9 Years Worked in job position

Work Hazards M=12.4 (SD=3.4, Range=5-22)



# How pervasive is STS in school personnel in this Midwestern County?

$M=41.5$   
( $SD=15.5$ , Range=17-77)

<b>STS Level</b>	<b>Score</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Little or No STS	<28	21
Mild STS	28-37	21
Moderate STS	38-43	17
High STS	44-48	9
Severe	49+	32



Why do you think some schools may have low STS scores and others have high STS scores?



Section Three

# Risk Factors



# STS Risk Factors from other Fields

- Personal history of trauma,
- Younger/ inexperienced professionals,
- Exposed to multiple traumatized clients,
- High case loads,
- Low peer support,
- Low administrative support,
- Organization stressors,

(Arvay & Uhlemann, 1996; Brady et al., 1999; Meyers & Cornille, 2002; Regehr, Hemsworth, Leslie, Howe, & Chau, 2004).





# Significant

Gender

Frequencies of  
**secondary  
exposure**

**Social-  
emotional  
difficulties**

**Verbal  
aggression and  
indirect  
aggression**

Exposure to  
**school  
shooting**

Professional  
distress

Cognitive  
Reappraisal

Self-efficacy

Elementary  
School

Leadership

School Safety





# Mixed Results

History of  
Trauma

Teacher  
Type

Underserved  
Schools

Seeking  
other  
employment

Burnout

Compassion  
Satisfaction

Self-Care

Trauma  
Informed  
Care



# Not Significant



YEARS  
EXPERIENCE



EMPATHY



PROFESSIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT





# Personal Risk Factors, SDH, & Trauma

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Statistically Significant</b>	<b>Not statistically significant</b>
Gender	Rankin, 2022; Shoieb, 2020	Klemme, 2022
Age	Klemme, 2022	
Education	Klemme, 2022 (Model 1 & 2)	
Income	Klemme, 2022, (Model 2)	
Extended ACE	Klemme, 2022 (Model 1)	
Trauma	Klemme, 2022; Rankin, 2022; Simon, 2020	Borntrager et al., 2012; Grybush, 2021





# Work Risk Factors

Variables	Statistically Significant	Not statistically significant
Years Experience		Gomez, 2021; Klemme, 2022; Shoieb, 2020; Rankin, 2022
Teacher	Gomez, 2021; Klemme, 2022	Steen, 2020
Compounding Exposures/ Hazards Level	Klemme, 2022; Rumesy 2017; Simon 2020; Stevens et al., 2020	
Underserved School	Denham, 2019	Gomez, 2021
Seeking Other Employment	Borntrager et al., 2012	Christian-Brandt et al., 2019
Professional Distress	Steen, 2019	
Burnout	Anama-Green, 2020; Hydon, 2016; Steen, 2019; Grybush, 2021	Hydon, 2016



Section Four

# What Protects You From STS?

# Personal Protective Factors

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Statistically Significant</b>	<b>Not statistically significant</b>
Self-care/ mindfulness	Anama-Green (2020) Vanderwill, 2021(Sept. & June)	Vanderwill,2021 (Dec. &Feb.)
Self-Efficacy	Rumsey, 2017	
Empathy		Rumsey, 2017
Cognitive Reappraisal	Simon, 2020	
Compassion Satisfaction	Grybush, 2021; Hydon, 2016; Steen, 2019	Hydon, 2016
Personal Support		Klemme, 2022



# Personal Protective Factors

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Statistically Significant</b>	<b>Not statistically significant</b>
Professional Development		Grybush, 2021
Leadership Practices	Borntraeger et al., 2012; Klemme, 2022; Wilson, 2020	
School Safety	Wilson, 2020	
Trauma Informed Care	Christian-Brandt, 2020;	Grybush, 2021





Which protective factors surprised you  
(if any)?



Section Five

**How can this impact  
you?**



# Impact

- Lower retention rates (Montgomery & Rupp, 2005)
- STS interferes with workplace productivity (Kulkarni & Dalton, 2003)
- Higher job strain (Bock et al., 2020).
- Physical health (Lee, Gottfried, & Bride, 2018).
- Symptoms of depression and anxiety (Bock et al., 2020).



# Practical Implications



# Final Thoughts?



**Thank You!**



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