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## An Expressive Arts-Based and Strength-Focused Experiential Training Program for Enhancing the Efficacy of Teachers Affected by Earthquake in China

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### ABSTRACT

The 2008 Sichuan Earthquake killed over 9000 teachers and children leaving profound physical and emotional problems are prevalent among survivors. Many being victims themselves, teachers in the earthquake affected areas not only have to recover a sense of personal efficacy in dealing with the difficulties, they also need to feel adequately prepared in their teaching roles to handle the changes in the classroom environment and student needs. Expressive art is a well-established tool to facilitate the expression of thoughts and feelings that can also be incorporated as interactive classroom activities—an approach that deviates from the traditional top-down teaching mode in China. A 3-day experiential training program based on expressive arts and strength-focused approaches was provided for 57 elementary and high school teachers across the earthquake area. This study evaluated changes after the training program. Results showed that teachers' general self-efficacy and teaching efficacy were significantly improved ( $t = 2.54, p = .01$ ;  $t = 4.08, p = .00$ ). The improvement in teaching efficacy is contingent upon the quality of relationship with students, after controlling for ethnicity.

### KEYWORDS

Expressive Arts; Experiential Learning; Strength-Focused; Efficacy; Earthquake; Trauma

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