



KidsHealth.org/classroom

Teacher's Guide

This guide includes:

- Standards
- Related Links
- Discussion Questions
- Activities for Students
- Reproducible Materials

Standards

This guide correlates with the following National Health Education Standards:

Students will:

- Comprehend concepts related to health promotion and disease prevention to enhance health.
- Analyze the influence of family, peers, culture, media, technology, and other factors on health behaviors.
- Demonstrate the ability to access valid information and products and services to enhance health.
- Demonstrate the ability to use interpersonal communication skills to enhance health and avoid or reduce health risks.
- Demonstrate the ability to use decision-making skills to enhance health.
- Demonstrate the ability to use goal-setting skills to enhance health.
- Demonstrate the ability to practice health-enhancing behaviors and avoid or reduce health risks.
- Demonstrate the ability to advocate for personal, family, and community health.

Your state's school health policies:
nasbe.org

Everyone gets stressed out now and then. A lot of teens get stressed over the pressures and demands of trying to fit so many things into one day. But people have to remember that they're not alone when it comes to dealing with stress and that there are ways to manage and ease stressful situations. Identifying stressful situations and being able to dial down stressful feelings are important skills that can help teens for the rest of their lives. The following discussion questions and activities will help your students understand the importance of stress management.

Related KidsHealth Links

Articles for Teens:

Stress

KidsHealth.org/teen/your_mind/emotions/stress.html

What Stresses You Out About School?

KidsHealth.org/teen/school_jobs/school/school_stress.html

How Can I Deal With All My Stressful Situations?

KidsHealth.org/teen/expert/emotions/bully_stress.html

Test Anxiety

KidsHealth.org/teen/your_mind/emotions/test_anxiety.html

Handling Sports Pressure and Competition

KidsHealth.org/teen/food_fitness/sports/sports_pressure.html

Can Stress Affect My Weight?

KidsHealth.org/teen/expert/weight/stress_weight.html

Discussion Questions

Note: The following questions are written in language appropriate for sharing with your students.

1. Name some of the things that stress you out.
2. What kinds of signs do people show when they're experiencing stress?
3. How does your body react to stress?
4. What's the difference between good stress and bad stress? Give some examples of each.
5. Name some ways teens can manage or ease stress.



Activities for Students

Note: The following activities are written in language appropriate for sharing with your students.

Taking Note of Stress

Objectives:

Students will:

- Discuss stress and stress management
- Explore strategies for identifying and easing stress

Materials:

- Class set of the KidsHealth article “Stress” and five copies of each of these: “How Can I Deal With All My Stressful Situations?,” “Test Anxiety,” “Handling Sports Pressure and Competition”
- Markers and chart paper
- “Taking Note of Stress” handout

Class Time:

One hour

Activity:

Do you ever feel like there are too many pressures and demands on you? Do you ever lose sleep worrying about tryouts or a school project? Everyone gets stressed now and then. Good stress helps you rise to a challenge and prepare to meet a tough situation with focus, strength, stamina, and heightened alertness. Bad stress -- like coping with a divorce or moving to a new neighborhood or school -- can leave a person feeling overwhelmed and unable to meet challenges. But there are many ways to ease stress. So let’s read the KidsHealth article “Stress” and use the handout to help us take notes. (Note to teacher: You could read the article using a electronic whiteboard, LCD projector, or individual computers.) Next, we’ll break into small groups and choose an additional article on stress that might be relevant to you. You and your group will read the article, then appoint one person as the writer, one person as the speaker, and the rest as information gatherers. The writer will use markers and chart paper to write down the article’s main points, as identified by the information gatherers. After your small group agrees that all the main points are covered, the speaker will share the article’s main points with the class.

Extension:

When you begin to feel stressed, try one of the relaxation techniques cited in the articles “Stress” and “Handling Sports Pressure and Competition” to help ease your stress:

- Deep breathing
- Muscle relaxation
- Visualization
- Mindfulness



Stress SOS!

Objectives:

Students will:

- Examine common school-related stressors for teens
- Develop stress-beating strategies they can apply to their own lives

Materials:

- Class set of KidsHealth article “What Stresses You Out About School?” (or share article using an electronic whiteboard, LCD projector, or individual computers so students can listen to it being read)
- “Stress SOS!” handout

Class Time:

- Two, one-hour

Activity:

(Print handouts and number them in the life preserver image in the upper right part of the page.) All teens experience stress in one form or another. It’s important to know that you’re not alone when it comes to school-related stress. Now it’s time to reach out and get some help from your classmates. First we’ll identify the types of school stressors that students in this class experience. Then we’ll go through and discuss the KidsHealth article “What Stresses You Out About School?” to examine common stressors among teens. Then, think about a stressful school-related situation you’ve been in lately and jot it down on the handout. Don’t write your name on it! Remember the number on your handout, then I’ll collect the papers and redistribute them among the class two times. Each time, you’ll write down one stress-busting tip to help with the anonymous stressful situation at the top. Then I’ll collect the handouts again, and read the numbers so you can get your classmates’ stressbusting suggestions.

Extension:

When you’re stressed, list all the activities you’re doing that day and try to cut one out. Replace that activity with one that relaxes you, even if it’s just for a few minutes. Keeping a balance is important and can help reduce your stress. Try this for a few days and see if it helps dial down your stress levels.

Reproducible Materials

Handout: Taking Note of Stress

KidsHealth.org/classroom/9to12/problems/emotions/stress_handout1.pdf

Handout: Stress SOS!

KidsHealth.org/classroom/9to12/problems/emotions/stress_handout2.pdf

Quiz: Stress

KidsHealth.org/classroom/9to12/problems/emotions/stress_quiz.pdf

Answer Key: Stress

KidsHealth.org/classroom/9to12/problems/emotions/stress_quiz_answers.pdf



Name: _____

Date: _____

Taking Note of Stress



Part 1: As you read the KidsHealth article titled “Stress,” take notes on some of the main points:

1. Stress is a feeling that’s _____.
2. The events that provoke stress are called _____.
3. The body responds to stressors by activating the _____ and _____.
4. The body’s natural reaction to stress is known as the _____.
5. Short-term stress can help you _____.
6. Long-term stressful situations can produce _____.
7. Pressures that are too intense or last too long, or troubles that are shouldered alone, can cause people to feel _____.



8. Signs of stress overload include: _____, _____, _____.
9. Stress management skills work best when they’re used _____.
10. Techniques that help keep stress under control include: _____,
_____, _____.
11. Behaviors and attitudes that can help people stay cool under stress include: _____,
_____, _____.

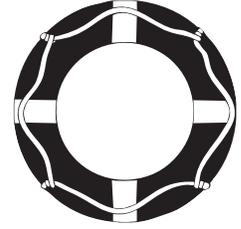
Part 2: Listen to your classmates share additional stress-beating strategies and write down three more techniques to help you manage and minimize your stress:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____



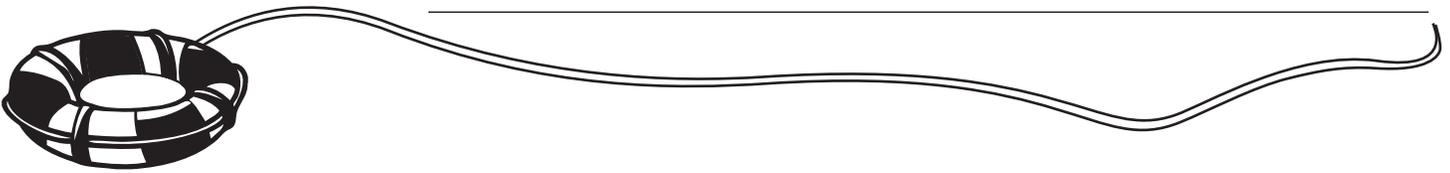


Stress SOS!



Part 1: Imagine if you had a big game after school, then you had to study for a history test, write a poem that's due in English, and go to choir practice that night. Or maybe that favorite shirt you wanted to wear for the school picture wasn't clean, and you were late to school because you had to wash it. Think about a stressful experience you've had that's related to school. Describe that stressful situation below and include how the situation made you feel. **Don't write your name on the paper.** Then give the handout to your teacher.

I felt school-related stress when:



Part 2: Read your classmate's stressful situation above, then write down at least one stressbuster technique that could have helped ease the stress in that situation:

a.

b.



Name: _____

Date: _____

Quiz

Fill in the blank:

1. Stress is the body's way of _____

_____.
2. When a person experiences too many pressures over a long period of time, it can cause _____.
3. Events that cause stress are called _____.

Cross out the one item that doesn't belong in each list:

1. Stressors for teens include: having too many things to do in one day, getting ready for tests or school projects, trying out for a sports team, watching a funny movie
2. Signs of stress overload include: anxiety, stomach aches, problems sleeping, excessive talking, moodiness
3. Good stress situations include: getting ready for the prom, sitting down to take a final exam, dealing with family problems, coming up to bat in baseball

Make a plan:

Using techniques I learned from the KidsHealth articles and from my classmates, here are three strategies I'll use to minimize stress the next time I'm feeling stressed-out:



Quiz Answer Key

Fill in the blank:

1. Stress is the body's way of *rising to a challenge and preparing to meet a tough situation with focus, strength, stamina, and heightened alertness*.
2. When a person experiences too many pressures over a long period of time, it can cause *stress overload*.
3. Events that cause stress are called *stressors*.

Cross out the one item that doesn't belong in each list:

1. Stressors for teens include: having too many things to do in one day, getting ready for tests or school projects, trying out for a sports team, ~~watching a funny movie~~
2. Signs of stress overload include: anxiety, stomach aches, problems sleeping, ~~excessive talking~~, moodiness
3. Good stress situations include: getting ready for the prom, sitting down to take a final exam, ~~dealing with family problems~~, coming up to bat in baseball

Make a plan:

Using techniques I learned from the KidsHealth articles and from my classmates, here are three strategies I'll use to minimize stress the next time I'm feeling stressed-out:

(Any three of these: deep breathing, muscle relaxation, visualization, mindfulness, relaxing activities cited by students in class, limit overscheduling, get a good night's sleep, treat your body well, lower expectations, increase physical activity)
