

# Dealing With Stress

## Alberta Education Health & Life Skills Programs of Studies Outcomes



The students will...

- R - 9.3 Analyze, evaluate and refine personal strategies for managing stress/crises.

### Teacher Background

Stress is the body's response to anything that makes us feel threatened or pressured. It is caused by any kind of demand to which we must adapt, adjust, or respond. It is the body's automatic way of reacting to changes, challenges, and demands placed on us. Some stress is necessary, however too much stress may cause wear and tear on the body and mind. Major life events, such as moving, separation or divorce of parents, death of a loved one, changing schools or losing a friend, may cause anxiety and distress. Other day-to-day situations, including being late or leaving a project until the last minute, can also cause stress. It is important that students learn to recognize what might be causing them stress and learn strategies to help control and alleviate stress.

### Objectives

- To help students identify stressors and symptoms
- Learn one strategy to help calm oneself

### Materials

- Handout: *Growing Up Stressed*
- Calm music
- Paint, playdough, felts, pencils, journals



### Get Ready

- Discuss with students how stress is part of everyday life, and that there is good stress and bad stress.
- As a class, have students brainstorm types of good stress and bad stress. Write their responses on the board.

## **Activity 1: Growing Up Stressed**

- Have students individually complete the handout *Growing Up Stressed checklist*.
- Ask students to find a partner and discuss their responses.

## **Activity 2: Quiet Time**

- Provide students with 15 minutes of quiet time. Play calming music. Provide students with paint, playdough, felts, or pencils for creating if need be. Students can put their heads on the desk or find a quiet space somewhere in the room to relax.
- After 15 minutes of quiet time, students may journal about the experience of how they felt before, during and after the activity.

## **Take Home Activity & Follow Up Classroom Discussion**

Find a quiet place and practice contemplative time at home for 15 minutes or think about and engage in an activity that helps you deal with stress.

Discuss with partner and/or group what strategy you used for managing stress and why it worked.

## **Assessment Strategy**

Students are able to identify a personal strategy they can use for dealing with stress and describe how it is beneficial.

# Growing Up Stressed



## What causes stress for you?

<input type="checkbox"/> Friends, peer pressure, teasing, bullying	<input type="checkbox"/> Relationships with parents
<input type="checkbox"/> Expectations	<input type="checkbox"/> Dating
<input type="checkbox"/> Responsibilities	<input type="checkbox"/> Appearance/self esteem
<input type="checkbox"/> Tests, homework	<input type="checkbox"/> Divorce/seperation
<input type="checkbox"/> Time pressure	<input type="checkbox"/> Employment
<input type="checkbox"/> Lack of money	<input type="checkbox"/> Language barriers
<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Abuse/violence
<input type="checkbox"/> Sexual orientation	<input type="checkbox"/> Other:

## What are your physical symptoms?

<input type="checkbox"/> Changes in appetite	<input type="checkbox"/> Sleep difficulties
<input type="checkbox"/> Backache	<input type="checkbox"/> Muscle tension
<input type="checkbox"/> Constant restlessness	<input type="checkbox"/> Sweating
<input type="checkbox"/> Indigestion/diarrhea	<input type="checkbox"/> Dry mouth or throat
<input type="checkbox"/> Fatigue	<input type="checkbox"/> Pronounced heart beat
<input type="checkbox"/> Colds/flu's	<input type="checkbox"/> Ulcers
<input type="checkbox"/> Headaches	<input type="checkbox"/> Other:



## What are your emotional symptoms?

<input type="checkbox"/> Feeling mentally drained	<input type="checkbox"/> Increased indecision
<input type="checkbox"/> Feeling tense	<input type="checkbox"/> Lack of ability to feel enjoyment
<input type="checkbox"/> Increased irritability	<input type="checkbox"/> Crying
<input type="checkbox"/> Fear of failure	<input type="checkbox"/> Feeling angry
<input type="checkbox"/> Pessimistic	<input type="checkbox"/> Feeling helpless/hopeless
<input type="checkbox"/> Feeling anxious/worried	<input type="checkbox"/> Other:
<input type="checkbox"/> Feeling sad and depressed	

## What are your behavioural symptoms?

<input type="checkbox"/> Increased smoking, alcohol, drug use	<input type="checkbox"/> Withdrawal from people
<input type="checkbox"/> Backache	<input type="checkbox"/> Accident proneness
<input type="checkbox"/> Absent mindedness	<input type="checkbox"/> Uncalled for aggression
<input type="checkbox"/> Inability to relax	<input type="checkbox"/> Insomnia
<input type="checkbox"/> Impatient	<input type="checkbox"/> Boredom
<input type="checkbox"/> Reduced humour	<input type="checkbox"/> Other:

