



SAMPLE LESSON PLANS

Grade 8 – Social Emotional Health

SOLs:

Describe effective coping mechanisms for managing personal and family stress.

Title: Stressed Out

Objectives/Goals:

- Students will identify 10 positive coping skills that they can implement into their life to reduce stress.
- Students will identify one trusted adult away from school, two trusted adults at school, one friend, and one local/national hotline for help with stress.

Materials:

- [Stress Out Presentation PDF](#)
- [Positive Coping Skills](#) -handout (printed for class)
- [TeensHealth: Stress](#) (Reading)
- [MedlinePlus: Stress and your health](#) (Reading)
- Line paper (students)
- Computer, projector, and screen

Procedure:

Step 1: Introduction/Hook

- **Do Now Activity: Start “Stress Out” slide presentation, stop at slide #2 and discuss with class**
What are five things that stress you out?

Step 2: Present and go over slides # 3-6

- Slide 3 Definition of Stress
- Slide 4 Eustress (positive stress)
- Slide 5 Distress (negative stress)
- Slide 6 Signs/Symptoms of Stress

Step 3:

Pass out **Positive Coping Skills** handout

Students will read positive coping skills handout.

- Students will write down 10 strategies they like on a scratch piece of paper

Step 4:

Students will read both articles below on stress. This is on the Stressed Out ppt [Slide: 9] If you have a Learning Management System you can put the articles online. Otherwise, copy and print class sets to read:

- **TeensHealth: Stress** (Reading)
- **MedlinePlus: Stress and your health** (Reading)

Step 5:

Students will create a stress relieving poster using this **rubric** as a guideline (either print a class set or display rubric on projector). If students have access to internet/wifi they can create an 8.5 x 11 poster on canva.com. Students may also create a collage.

Assessments:

- **Stress Relieving Poster Rubric**

Assessments, References, & Sources

- Teens Health Stress
<https://kidshealth.org/en/teens/stress.html?WT.ac=en-t-stress-center-a#catguys>
- MedlinePlus: Stress and your health_
<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003211.htm>

Kimberly Ohara-Borowski, M.Ed. Ocean View High School

Stressed Out

The background is a blue gradient with a repeating pattern of small, light blue icons. These icons include various office and school-related items such as paper clips, pens, paper airplanes, folders, and documents, scattered across the entire surface.

Do Now Activity:

What are the top 5 things that stress you out?

Stress

- Stress is a feeling of emotional or physical tension.
- It can come from any event or thought that makes you feel frustrated, angry, or nervous.

(Medlineplus.gov, 2018)

Eustress

- Is positive stress
 - It can motivate
 - It is short-term
 - Feels exciting
 - Is perceived within our coping abilities
 - Improves performance
-
- Examples:
 - A big athletic game or performance
 - Excitement to meet someone for the first time
 - Getting a new job

(mentalhelp.net, 2018)

Distress

- Causes anxiety or concern
 - Can be short or long term
 - Is perceived as outside of our coping abilities
 - Feels unpleasant
 - Decreases performance
 - Can lead to mental and physical problems
- Examples:
- Loss of a loved one
 - Divorce
 - Losing contact with loved ones
 - Injury or illness (oneself or family member)
 - Being abused or neglected

(mentalhelp.net, 2018)

Signs/Symptoms of Stress

- Headaches
- Upset stomach
- Diarrhea or constipation
- Frequent aches or pain
- Stiff jaw or neck
- Lack of energy or focus
- Irritability
- Trouble sleeping or sleeping too much
- Use of alcohol or drugs to relax
- Weight loss or gain

(mentalhelp.net, 2018)

Stress and your Body

Chronic stress on the body can put your health at risk:

- **High blood pressure**
- **Heart disease**
- **Diabetes**
- **Obesity**
- **Depression or anxiety**
- **Skins problems such as acne or eczema**
- **Menstrual problems**

(mentalhelp.net, 2018)

Positive Coping Strategies

- Write down 10 you like

Move your body:

- Go on a walk
- Practice a skill of your favorite sport
 - Shooting hoops
 - Skating boarding
 - Kick a ball

Talk it out:

- Call a friend
- Text a friend
- Video chat/facetime someone
- Call a hotline

Get Creative:

- Make art
- Write (poetry, stories, journal)
- Play a musical instrument
- Sing
- Play video games

Relax:

- Take a bath
- Cry it out
- Pet an animal
- Bake
- Listen to music
- Mediate
- Yoga

Want more strategies?



[click here](#)

Click on
these two
links below to
learn more
about stress



Read



[Kidshealth article on stress](#)
[Stress and your health article](#)

Create a poster

Canva.com

- Template "poster"

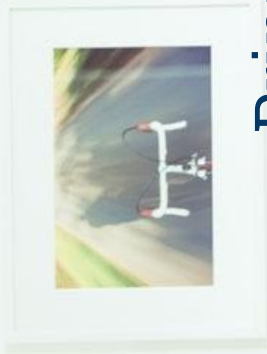
Or

Make a handmade collage



Stress Relieving Poster Rubric

Poster Must Include:	Content
Signs/Symptoms of stress:	Identify 5 signs/symptoms you get when you are stressed out
Positive Coping Strategies	10 + coping strategies (personalized for you; something you would actually do)
Who can help?	Identify: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• One trusted adult in your personal life• 2 trusted adults at school• One friend• Local/National Hotline for help
Inspirational Quotes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Includes to inspirational quotes to live by



**Print and hang your poster
where you will see it**



Bonus Activity:

Share your poster with a trusted adult:

- Share your signs/symptoms of stress and your favorite positive coping strategies with them
- Let them you know they are a trusted “ally” on your team when stress arrives
- Get their signature that you talked with them are return it to your instructor

Stress Relieving Poster Rubric

Directions:

Design a poster that can help remind you of signs/symptoms that stress you out. Include 10 positive coping skills, Identify: 1 trusted adult, 2 trusted adults at school, 1 friend and a local/national hotline for help.

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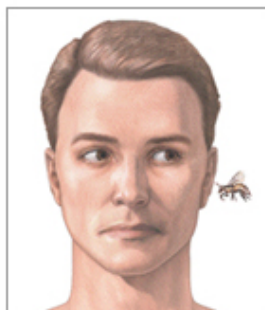
[Home](#) → [Medical Encyclopedia](#) → Stress and your health

URL of this page: [//medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003211.htm](https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003211.htm)

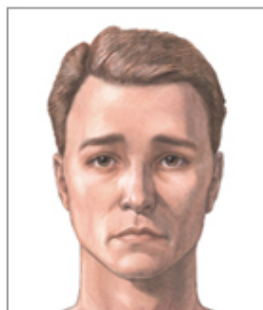
Stress and your health

Stress is a feeling of emotional or physical tension. It can come from any event or thought that makes you feel frustrated, angry, or nervous.

Stress is your body's reaction to a challenge or demand. In short bursts, stress can be positive, such as when it helps you avoid danger or meet a deadline. But when stress lasts for a long time, it may harm your health.



Stress is caused by an existing stress-causing factor or “stressor”



Anxiety is stress that continues after the stressor is gone



Considerations

Stress is a normal feeling. There are two main types of stress:

- **Acute stress.** This is short-term stress that goes away quickly. You feel it when you slam on the brakes, have a fight with your partner, or ski down a steep slope. It helps you manage dangerous situations. It also occurs when you do something new or exciting. All people have acute stress at one time or another.
- **Chronic stress.** This is stress that lasts for a longer period of time. You may have chronic stress if you have money problems, an unhappy marriage, or trouble at work. Any type of stress that goes on for weeks or months is chronic stress. You can become so used to chronic stress that you don't realize it is a problem. If you don't find ways to manage stress, it may lead to health problems.

STRESS AND YOUR BODY

Your body reacts to stress by releasing hormones. These hormones make your brain more alert, cause your muscles to tense, and increase your pulse. In the short term, these reactions are good because they can help you handle the situation causing stress. This is your body's way of protecting itself.

When you have chronic stress, your body stays alert, even though there is no danger. Over time, this puts you at risk for health problems, including:

- High blood pressure
- Heart disease
- Diabetes
- Obesity
- Depression or anxiety
- Skin problems, such as acne or eczema
- Menstrual problems

If you already have a health condition, chronic stress can make it worse.

SIGNS OF TOO MUCH STRESS

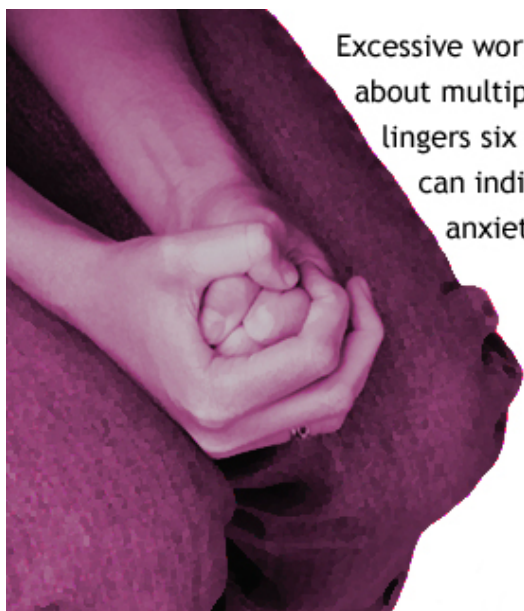
Stress can cause many types of physical and emotional symptoms. Sometimes, you may not realize these symptoms are caused by stress. Here are some signs that stress may be affecting you:

- Diarrhea or constipation
- Forgetfulness
- Frequent aches and pains
- Headaches
- Lack of energy or focus
- Sexual problems
- Stiff jaw or neck
- Tiredness
- Trouble sleeping or sleeping too much
- Upset stomach
- Use of alcohol or drugs to relax
- Weight loss or gain

Causes

The causes of stress are different for each person. You can have stress from good challenges and as well as bad ones. Some common sources of stress include:

- Getting married or divorced
- Starting a new job
- The death of a spouse or close family member
- Getting laid off
- Retiring
- Having a baby
- Money problems
- Moving
- Having a serious illness
- Problems at work
- Problems at home



Excessive worry or anxiety about multiple issues which lingers six months or more can indicate generalized anxiety disorder



When to Contact a Medical Professional

Call a suicide hotline if you have thoughts of suicide.

Call your health care provider if you feel overwhelmed by stress, or if it is affecting your health. Also call your provider if you notice new or unusual symptoms.

Reasons you may want to seek help are:

- You have feelings of panic, such as dizziness, rapid breathing, or a racing heartbeat.
- You are unable to work or function at home or at your job.

- You have fears that you cannot control.
- You are having memories of a traumatic event.

Your provider may refer you to a mental health care provider. You can talk to this professional about your feelings, what seems to make your stress better or worse, and why you think you are having this problem.

Alternative Names

Anxiety; Feeling uptight; Stress; Tension; Jitters; Apprehension

References

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www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/stress/index.shtml [<https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/stress/index.shtml>]

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Not helpful



Very helpful



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**TeensHealth.org**

A safe, private place to get doctor-approved information on health, emotions, and life.

Stress

Feeling like there are too many pressures and demands on you? Losing sleep worrying about tests and schoolwork? Eating on the run because your schedule is just too busy?

You're not alone. Everyone feels stressed out at times — adults, teens, and even kids. But you can avoid getting too stressed out by handling everyday pressures and problems, staying calm, asking for help when you need it, and making time to relax.

What Is Stress?

Stress is a response to pressure or threat. Under stress we may feel tense, nervous, or on edge. The stress response is physical, too. Stress triggers a surge of a hormone called **adrenaline** that temporarily affects the nervous system. As a result, when you're nervous or stressed you might feel your heartbeat or breathing get faster, your palms get sweaty, or your knees get shaky.

The stress response is also called the **fight-or-flight-response**. It's an automatic response that prepares us to deal with danger.

But a situation doesn't have to be physically dangerous to activate the stress response. Everyday pressures can activate it, too. For example, you might feel stress before taking a test or a giving class presentation, facing a tough opponent in a sport, or going on stage for a performance.

Even in these situations (which are hardly life-or-death), the stress response activates to help you perform well under pressure. It can help you rise to a challenge and meet it with alertness, focus, and strength. Facing these challenges — rather than backing away from them — is a part of learning and growing.

When the challenge is over, the stress response lets up. You can relax and recharge, and be ready for a new challenge.

When Stress Doesn't Ease Up

Stress doesn't always happen in response to things that are immediate and over with quickly. Ongoing or long-term events, like coping with a divorce or moving to a new neighborhood or school, can cause stress, too.

Long-term stressful situations can produce a lasting, low-level stress that can leave a person feeling tired or overwhelmed. Finding ways to cope with the difficult situation can prevent this from happening, and ease stress that's been lasting. Sometimes, people need help to deal with difficult situations that lead to intense or lasting stress.

Keep Stress Under Control

Here are some things that can help keep stress under control:

- **Take a stand against overscheduling.** If you're feeling stretched, consider cutting out an activity or two, choosing just the ones that are most important to you.
- **Be realistic.** Don't try to be perfect — no one is. Don't put unnecessary pressure on yourself. If you need help with something like schoolwork or dealing with a loss, ask for it.
- **Get a good night's sleep.** Getting enough sleep helps keep your body and mind in top shape, making you better equipped to deal with any negative stressors. Because the biological "sleep clock" shifts during adolescence, many teens prefer staying up a little later at night and sleeping a little later in the morning. But if you stay up late and still need to get up early for school, you may not get all the hours of sleep you need.
- **Learn to relax.** The body's natural antidote to stress is called the **relaxation response**. It's the opposite of stress, and is a feeling of well-being and calm. You can activate the relaxation response simply by relaxing. Learn and practice easy breathing exercises, then use them when you're caught up in stressful situations.

- **Make time for fun.** Build time into your schedule for activities you enjoy — read a good book, play with your pet, laugh, do a hobby, make art or music, spend time with positive people, or be in nature.
- **Treat your body well.** Get regular exercise and eat well to help your body function at its best. When you're stressed out, it's easy to eat on the run or eat junk food. But under stressful conditions, you need good nutrition more than ever.
- **Find the upside.** Your outlook, attitude, and thoughts influence the way you see things. Is your cup half full or half empty? A healthy dose of optimism can help you make the best of stressful circumstances — and even recognize something you've learned from the situation.
- **Solve the little problems.** Take action to solve problems that crop up. For example, if you're stressed out over homework, size up the situation and figure out ways to handle it better.
- **Build positive relationships.** Knowing that there are people who believe in us boosts our ability to deal with challenges. Ask for help and support when you need it. Share what you're going through — including the good things that are happening.

You can do things to handle the stress that comes along with any new challenge, good or bad. Stress-management skills work best when they're practiced ahead of time, not just when the pressure's on. Knowing how to "de-stress" and calm yourself can help you get through challenging circumstances.

Reviewed by: D'Arcy Lyness, PhD
Date reviewed: January 2017

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