

## 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.
- 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 advocate for personal, family, and community health.

National Health Education Standards:  
[www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/sher/standards/index.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/sher/standards/index.htm)



## Grades 6 to 8 • Health Problems Series

# Stress

You're late for school, today's assignments aren't done yet, and you spill a drink on your shirt in the car. Let's face it, you're stressed! Your students feel stress, too, at school and at home. These activities can help them to learn more about what stress is, and how to effectively manage it.

## Related KidsHealth Links

### Articles for Kids:

#### Relax & Unwind minisite

[KidsHealth.org/en/kids/center/relax-center.html](http://KidsHealth.org/en/kids/center/relax-center.html)

#### The Story on Stress

[KidsHealth.org/en/kids/stress.html](http://KidsHealth.org/en/kids/stress.html)

#### Five Steps for Fighting Stress

[KidsHealth.org/en/kids/5-steps.html](http://KidsHealth.org/en/kids/5-steps.html)

#### Talking About Your Feelings

[KidsHealth.org/en/kids/talk-feelings.html](http://KidsHealth.org/en/kids/talk-feelings.html)

#### When Tests Make You Nervous

[KidsHealth.org/en/kids/test-anxiety.html](http://KidsHealth.org/en/kids/test-anxiety.html)

#### School Counselors

[KidsHealth.org/en/kids/school-counselors.html](http://KidsHealth.org/en/kids/school-counselors.html)

### Articles for Teens:

#### Stress & Coping minisite

[TeensHealth.org/en/teens/center/stress-center.html](http://TeensHealth.org/en/teens/center/stress-center.html)

#### Stress

[TeensHealth.org/en/teens/stress.html](http://TeensHealth.org/en/teens/stress.html)

#### What Stresses You Out About School?

[TeensHealth.org/en/teens/school-stress.html](http://TeensHealth.org/en/teens/school-stress.html)

#### Test Anxiety

[TeensHealth.org/en/teens/test-anxiety.html](http://TeensHealth.org/en/teens/test-anxiety.html)

#### Handling Sports Pressure and Competition

[TeensHealth.org/en/teens/sports-pressure.html](http://TeensHealth.org/en/teens/sports-pressure.html)

#### School Counselors

[TeensHealth.org/en/teens/school-counselors.html](http://TeensHealth.org/en/teens/school-counselors.html)

## Discussion Questions

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

1. A big test, an annoying little brother, and a bad haircut can all add up to a lot of stress! What stresses you out? How do you feel when you're stressed?
2. Everyone deals with stress differently. How do you deal with it? Do some stress management methods work better for you than others? Why do you think some strategies are more effective in reducing your stress level?  
  
What's the difference between good stress and bad stress? Give an example of a
3. situation in which stress could be helpful. When does stress become a problem?



## Activities for Students

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

### Stress Mail

#### Objectives:

Students will:

- Learn to identify common stressors
- Explore strategies for managing stress

#### Materials:

- Computer with Internet access
- "Stress Mail" handout

#### Class Time:

20 minutes

#### Activity:

Everyone you know is stressed about something - homework, the big game, an argument with a parent. You decide to reduce the stress level in people's lives by creating a new Internet service called Stress Mail. A stressed-out person can write you an email, and you'll respond by providing suggestions for dealing with the stress. Start by reading the emails on the "Stress Mail" handout. Choose one and write a response, using the information from the KidsHealth.org articles. In your response, make sure to:

- Identify what's causing the person's stress
- Provide one or two ways for reducing stress
- Offer a suggestion for avoiding stress in the future

#### Extensions:

1. Now that you've helped others to manage stress, it's your turn to help yourself! Create your own plan for stress management. In your plan, include the following items:
  - Things that make you feel stressed
  - Strategies for managing stress that might work for you
  - Changes you could make in your life to help avoid stress
2. Do you eat chocolate or run a mile when you're stressed? Take a poll of students at your school, and get the lowdown on how they handle stress. Analyze the results. What patterns and trends do you notice about stress management strategies? Do older and younger students deal with stress differently? How about girls and guys? Why do you think you got the results you did?



## Stress Log

### Objectives:

Students will:

- Write about stressful situations and stressbusting techniques for four weeks

### Materials:

- Computer with Internet access
- "Stress Log" handout, pen or pencil

### Class Time:

Several minutes a week outside class for four weeks

### Activity:

Everyone deals with stress sometimes — from little things like missing the bus or having an argument with a friend, to big things like dealing with divorce or a sick family member. First, read the KidsHealth.org articles related to stress, then write down a couple of stressful situations that come up each week, how you dealt with them and how you felt afterward. Are there some things you might have handled differently?

### Extension:

Choose one stressful situation that came up during the month you kept a stress log. Write a brief essay about the situation, how you dealt with it, and how you felt afterward. In retrospect, did you deal with the situation in the best way? If not, write a better way you could have dealt with it.

## Reproducible Materials

### Handout: Stress Mail

[KidsHealth.org/classroom/6to8/problems/emotions/stress\\_handout1.pdf](http://KidsHealth.org/classroom/6to8/problems/emotions/stress_handout1.pdf)

### Handout: Stress Log

[KidsHealth.org/classroom/6to8/problems/emotions/stress\\_handout2.pdf](http://KidsHealth.org/classroom/6to8/problems/emotions/stress_handout2.pdf)

### Quiz: Stress

[KidsHealth.org/classroom/6to8/problems/emotions/stress\\_quiz.pdf](http://KidsHealth.org/classroom/6to8/problems/emotions/stress_quiz.pdf)

### Answer Key: Stress

[KidsHealth.org/classroom/6to8/problems/emotions/stress\\_quiz\\_answers.pdf](http://KidsHealth.org/classroom/6to8/problems/emotions/stress_quiz_answers.pdf)



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Stress Mail

Instructions: Read the KidsHealth.org articles on stress, then choose one of the emails below. Write a response, making sure to:

- Identify what you think is causing the person's stress
- Provide one or two ways for reducing stress
- Offer a suggestion for avoiding stress in the future

From: kate@stressfulschedule.com  
To: Stress Mail  
Subject: Stress on the go

I am so stressed! I barely have a minute to relax all day long. Before school, I go to swim practice, and after school, I work on the school newspaper and have piano lessons. On Saturday mornings, I volunteer at the local hospital. Then the rest of the weekend, I try to catch up on the schoolwork that I didn't have time for all week. I never see my friends, and I always eat on the run. I'm starting to have headaches and stomachaches. What should I do?

From: nicholas@numericallystressed.com  
To: Stress Mail  
Subject: Math stress

I can't remember the last time I got a good night's sleep. I keep waking up because I'm so stressed about my math class. I just toss and turn, thinking about about the next question I'll get wrong when the teacher calls on me. When the morning alarm goes off, I'm exhausted, and by the time math class rolls around, I can barely keep my eyes open. Help!

From: will@woefullystressed.com

To: Stress Mail

Subject: Stuck in bed

ARGH! Everything is going wrong. I have a science fair project due at the end of the month and it will take me forever to do because science class is hard for me. To make things worse, we're playing basketball in P.E. next week and I've never even dribbled a ball. With so much stress, there are some days I just don't want to get out of bed.

From: sam@stressedandlonely.com  
To: Stress Mail  
Subject: Stress in the family

My parents are getting a divorce, and I'm really stressed out about it. I can't stop thinking about what's going to happen to my family. I don't feel like hanging out with any of my friends, and I don't think there's anyone I can talk to who will understand what I'm going through. When someone does try to talk to me, I snap at them and tell them to leave me alone. I don't know what to do to get this knot out of my stomach.



## Stress Log

Everyone deals with stress sometimes — from little things like missing the bus or having an argument with a friend, to big things like dealing with divorce or a sick family member. Write down a couple of stressful situations that come up each week, how you dealt with them and how you felt afterward. Are there some things you might have handled differently?

Week 1	Stressful situation		
	How I dealt with it		
	How I felt afterward		
Week 2	Stressful situation		
	How I dealt with it		
	How I felt afterward		
Week 3	Stressful situation		
	How I dealt with it		
	How I felt afterward		
Week 4	Stressful situation		
	How I dealt with it		
	How I felt afterward		



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Quiz

1. True or false: Stress is always bad.
2. Common physical symptoms of stress might include:
  - a) headache
  - b) stomach ache
  - c) racing heart
  - d) all of the above
3. Things that cause stress are called \_\_\_\_\_.
4. True or false: Doing things like breathing exercises, yoga, or \_\_\_\_\_ can help ease stress.
5. Underline healthy ways to deal with stress:
  - a) talking to a trusted adult
  - b) exercising, going for a walk, or riding a bike
  - c) eating a dozen doughnuts
  - d) listening to music
  - e) throwing your phone out a window
  - f) playing with a pet

### EXTRA CREDIT:

6. The human body responds to stressors by activating the nervous system and specific hormones. The hormones \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ speed up heart rate, breathing rate, blood pressure, and metabolism.



## Quiz Answer Key

1. True or false: Stress is always bad.
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  - a) headache
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  - c) eating a dozen doughnuts
  - d) listening to music
  - e) throwing your phone out a window
  - f) playing with a pet

### EXTRA CREDIT:

6. The human body responds to stressors by activating the nervous system and specific hormones. The hormones adrenaline and cortisol speed up heart rate, breathing rate, blood pressure, and metabolism.