



HEALTH LITERACY THROUGH TECHNOLOGY

Connect with Kids

## Lesson Two: Managing Stress

### Background

This lesson provides insight into the “stress-filled world of teens.” Students will learn about the health risks associated with chronic levels of stress, that boys and girls tend to handle and manage stress differently, and that stress is something we need to learn to deal with in a positive manner.

### Discussion Questions

1. In the video, the narrator explained that stress is a normal part of a teenager’s life. What are some causes of stress (stressors) that were shown in the video?
2. Are there times when you feel that “everything is a competition?” Where is this pressure coming from?
3. Stress management is a person’s ability to use certain strategies or activities to keep from getting “too stressed out.” What are some ways that you have found helpful in managing stress?
4. There are four components of health: social, emotional, mental, physical. Let’s review the handout to determine exactly what that means. How does stress affect each of the four components?



## Vocabulary Builders

Term	Definition
<b>Stress</b>	A general term we use to describe what we feel when something (a stressor) disturbs the natural functioning and balance of our lives.
<b>Stressors</b>	Day-to-day occurrences, situations, changes, upheavals, etc. (i.e., making decisions, dealing with family members) that place new or different demands on us.
<b>Eustress</b>	Generally refers to “positive stress” or a “good stressor.” (i.e., winning a basketball game, getting an “A” on a test, trying out for the lead in the school play.)
<b>Distress</b>	Generally refers to “negative stress” or a “bad stressor.” (i.e., failing a test, getting into an argument with a friend).
<b>Stress Management</b>	The strategies or activities a person uses to deal with stress, such as exercising, talking to a friend, relaxing or listening to music. Similar to the term “therapeutic.”

You can use examples to help explain the vocabulary words, or ask the students to give examples. You might discuss:

- In a typical teenager’s day, there are ups and downs, and with every “up” or “down” there is a certain level of stress. Learning to cope with stress – both “good” and “bad” – is an important part of managing your life.
- Stressors are things that cause stress. They can come from a variety of sources. They can be physical (i.e., having a cold, twisting an ankle), social (going to a party, talking with a boy/girlfriend), work-related (making decisions, working with customers), traffic-related (traffic jams, etc.), emotional (fears, worries about school or other anxieties) or chemical (i.e., drinking caffeine to stay up late studying, then not being able to sleep).
- Some stress makes you react positively. For example, stress can give a runner the “edge” he needs to burst through the finish line, or it can help an actor perform better.
- On the other hand, some stress can be harmful. It can increase the risk of developing health problems (i.e., high blood pressure, cardiovascular disease). For this reason, health educators usually divide stress into either good (eustress) or bad (distress) situations.



# Activity

## Handling Stress: What's the Difference?

### Procedure

1. In one segment of the video, the “kids on the couch” talked about how boys and girls handle stress differently. To further a discussion on this topic, make copies of the Venn Diagram Chart and give one to each student. Divide the class into groups of two or three. Have each group list in the left hand circle the ways boys tend to handle stress, and in the right hand circle, the ways girls tend to handle stress. In the intersecting circle, have students list the things that both boys and girls do. For example:

<b>Girls</b>	<b>Boys</b>	<b>Both</b>
Tend to keep feelings inside, will dwell on a situation for a long time  Will talk things out with friends	May get angry, but get over things fairly quickly  May have a difficult time talking to others	May use reading, playing music or other hobbies to cope with stress.  Play sports, take a break (i.e., see a movie)

When students are finished, have them turn in their Venn Diagrams to you.



# Vocabulary

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# The Four Components of Health

<p><b>Social Health</b> Deals with your ability to get along with friends and family members in a productive manner. It generally refers to the overall quality of your relationships.</p>	<p><b>Emotional Health</b> Deals with your ability to express your emotions appropriately. It also refers to your feelings of confidence and self-worth.</p>
<p><b>Mental Health</b> Deals with your ability to think clearly, to make important decisions using sound reasoning, and your ability to solve problems.</p>	<p><b>Physical Health</b> Deals with your physical well being. This refers to your levels of physical activity, adequate sleep, relaxation and nutritional habits.</p>



# How Do They Handle Stress?

