

# ALBERTA EDUCATION HEALTH & LIFE SKILLS PROGRAM OF STUDIES OUTCOMES

The student will...

R–7.3 identify sources of stress in relationships, and describe positive methods of dealing with such stressors, e.g., change, loss, discrimination, rejection

R–8.3 evaluate the relationship between risk management and stress management, e.g., managing risks effectively reduces stress, managing stress can reduce impulsive behaviours

R–9.3 analyze, evaluate, and refine personal strategies for managing stress/crises

## TEACHER CLASSROOM CONVERSATION GUIDE

Students will be able to define stress, identify their own stressors, understand how stress affects their feelings & behavior, the difference between anxiety disorder and stress, and explain healthy ways of dealing with stress.

## KEY UNDERSTANDINGS

- We often confuse stress with anxiety, and this confusion has led many of us to become afraid of one of the most important and natural states of our physical and mental health, which is our stress response.
- Certain types of stress may not be good for us, but most types of stress can be helpful. Daily stressors can help us build skills and resilience.
- Physical symptoms of stress may include a racing heart, rapid breathing, body tension or not sleeping. The stress response is normal, and it is actually our body's best effort to get us ready to face the challenges that come our way.
- When we experience the stress response, our thoughts can help us work through the challenge or they can make it more difficult. It is important to think about what is causing your stress response in the first place, and what strategies or problem-solving you can use to face the challenge head on, which will reduce the intensity of the stress response.
- The physical sensations associated with the stress response and an anxiety disorder are similar, yet the outcome is very different. The hallmarks of an anxiety disorder are persistent avoidance, withdrawal, and that it causes major impairment in your life
- The stress response is normal. It is a motivator, and is not the same as an anxiety disorder or depression.
- Choose a helpful stress management technique such as box breathing, mindfulness, physical exercise. Keep in mind that calming strategies may provide temporary relief until you are able to face the stressor.
- It is important to reach out to a trusted adult if you need support. Your trusted adult might be a parent, a foster parent, an aunt or uncle, a grandparent, a teacher, a principal, or a coach.
- If we understand our stress response, it will be easier to manage.

# WHAT IS STRESS?

Junior High Focus

WATCH NOW



## QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- What is stress?
- What are some of the physical symptoms of stress?
- What are some situations that cause you stress?
- What is a Stress Response? How can it be a motivator for you?
- How is an anxiety disorder different from experiencing stress?
- What are some strategies or problem-solving you can use to deal with stress?

## CONCLUSION

We have discussed:

- The difference between stress and anxiety
- Most Stress is normal and it can be a motivator for you
- What are common stressors
- How stress affects our bodies
- How our thinking affects our stress response and our emotions
- Some healthy strategies for dealing with stress
- Facing stress takes courage and the more you face your stresses the easier it will be to manage

## MORE INFORMATION:

- Junior High Mental Health Kit — Grade 7 Lesson / Grade 8 Lesson / Grade 9 Lesson
- Teen Mental Health
- Anxiety Canada
- Teen Mental Health Curriculum Guide
- Kelty Mental Health: Managing Stress
- Self-Care 101
- Every Day Mental Health Practices



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