

Feelings Matter

LESSON 6

The Impact of Stressful Feelings

Growing up can sometimes be a challenging and frustrating experience. Your body is experiencing new changes, your family may be adjusting to a different schedule because of your school activities, and you're gaining more responsibility as you become a young adult. All these changes can be stressful! It's important to recognize when you are feeling stressed and even more important to learn how to positively work through your stress.

Stress is a normal and natural part of life. Every person has stress. When working right, stress can help you stay focused, energetic, and alert; sometimes, it can even save your life! However, when you experience too much stress it can be bad for you. It can begin to cause damage to your health, mood, grades, relationships and overall quality of life.

People often show stress in three ways:

- Anger, irritability, nervous energy and overly emotional
- Sad, withdrawn, shut-down, lack of care
- "Frozen" on the outside, but angry on the inside

Being stressed all the time may cause:

- Trouble sleeping
- Digestive problems
- Depression
- Extreme weight gain/loss
- Pain

The best way to manage stress is to connect with the people around you. Talk to your friends about the things you are feeling or ask your parents to allow you to participate in new activities. The more people around you who know how you are feeling, the more likely they will be able to help. Don't let stress become a burden to your mental health. Take action the moment you realize the stress in your life is too much.



Activity:



1. Research the impact stress can have on your mental health. Choose one topic and make a poster to educate your classmates about what you have learned. Be sure to include ways they can reduce the impact of stress as well.
2. Think about a time you felt stressed. What caused the stress and how did it affect you? Did your friends and family recognize how you were feeling? How did you overcome that stress?

Look for lesson 7 on Thursday, December 15.

This lesson is part of the Newspapers In Education program, *Feelings Matter*.

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