

your School Connection

SCHOOL:

DATE:

Talking to Your Teen about Stress Management

Stress management is something that many teens struggle with. Teens have a lot of responsibility and often feel pressured to please teachers, parents, coaches, and peers. There is the yearning to fit in, to excel at sports or other groups, to make good grades, and to build positive relationships.

When too many stressful situations arise during a short time frame, teens may not be able to identify the cause of stress, or manage the complicated feelings that go with it. Unmanaged stress

can cause feelings of anxiety and worry, and it can cause a loss of self-esteem. In extreme cases, stress can cause weight loss, high blood pressure, headaches, and other health problems. Parents can help by teaching teens how to take control of their health by practicing positive ways of dealing with the pressures of everyday life.

Teens often learn ways to respond to the stresses of daily life by watching the behavior of the adults around them. By being a good role model, you can

demonstrate positive stress-management techniques that will help your teen prepare for adulthood.

In addition, parents can help their teen manage a daily schedule, making sure there is time for adequate sleep and a balance of work, school, family, and personal activities. Learning to manage stress and maintain balance will enhance your teen's self-respect, improve leadership skills, and help him or her deal with daily stress.

What Are the Key Things You Should Tell Your Teen?

Help your teen learn and practice effective stress-management techniques by discussing these basics:

How can you manage stress?

- identify the source of the stress
- take deep breaths
- stay calm
- let go of unrealistic expectations
- let go of control and perfectionism
- prioritize important tasks and focus on them first
- handle problems one at a time

How can you create balance in your life?

When you have too many demands pulling on your time—and no way to accomplish the things you care about most—you can end up feeling down,

sick, and frustrated. You operate best when you have established a good balance in your life that makes room for work, personal time, friends and family, sleep, and health and exercise. Here are some ways you can regain balance in your life:

- Get enough sleep (at least nine hours a night).
- Learn to say no to the things you don't need or want to do (within reason).
- Try to balance school/work time with personal time.
- Quit worrying about being perfect. Feel good about being your best self right now.
- Visualize feeling calm, peaceful, and content.
- Exercise regularly and avoid caffeine and sugar.

How Can You Support Your Teen in Learning Stress-Management Skills?

- Keep in mind that your teen may feel a lot of pressure to fit in and to excel in sports, academics, and other activities. Try to reach out and ask your teen how these issues are affecting him or her.
- Let your teen know that you are available if he or she wants to talk. Find a time when you know your teen will be around and check in regularly to see how things are going.
- Practice good stress management as a family. Get involved in community organizations or plan fun family activities together. These breaks from everyday pressures will help your teen relax and feel the support of family.
- Help your teen come up with a plan to manage his or her daily schedule. Make sure that your teen's schedule allows time for sleep, family time, and personal time, in addition to work, school, social activities, and exercise.



Learning to manage stress and maintain balance will enhance your teen's self-respect, improve leadership skills, and help him or her deal with daily stress.

WE'RE HERE TO HELP!

Parenting is hard work. Teens are not the only ones under stress and pressure—so are parents! Make sure you take some time to manage your stress as well. Helping your teen create balance in his or her life is not always easy, especially when you have your own hectic schedule to manage. We're talking about stress management in the classroom, and we're here to support your efforts to deal with this subject at home.

If you need help, please feel free to contact
