

Advisory Lesson – Stress Management

GOAL: This session will raise students' awareness about the causes of stress in their lives and ways they can successfully manage it.

Lesson Timing: 25 minutes total. If advisory is less than allotted time, you can choose to shorten the celebrations or the launch to 1 minute a piece.

Social Emotional Learning Competency: Self - Awareness, Self - Management

Materials Needed:

Lesson Plan
Stressed Out! Worksheet (Below) - enough for entire class
Sticky Notes - 2 - 3 Per Student
WhiteBoard / Chalkboard

Celebrations: (3 Minutes)

- 1.) Welcome each student to class as they enter with a handshake and a warm welcome.
- 2.) When class has begun, share a celebration with the class. This can be something personal that's happened that you're willing to share, something at school that you want to share, or something else that's positive that you are willing to share with the class.
 - **NOTE: The important piece is that you are modeling appropriate sharing, as well as your expectations for this activity.**
- 3.) Have students share with the class. Set a timer and limit sharing to this time frame.
 - You might want to call on students randomly as you grow your group and they become more familiar with each other.
 - When students share their good thing, engage them by asking one follow up question. For example, if a student shares that he or she was able to go to a friend's house, you might ask what kind of activities they did together.

Warm Up: (2 Minutes)

- 1.) Ask the class the following question. Have students turn and talk to their neighbors to answer.
 - On your first day of middle school, what was scary or what worried you the most?
- 2.) Have pairs share to the group. Teacher or student scribe should write down student responses on the board. If an answer is said more than once, put a checkmark next to the response. (IE – if lockers is said 3 times, it will have 2 checkmarks next to the word "Lockers")

Activity: (15 Minutes)

- 1.) Explain to students that today's session will raise their awareness about the causes of stress in their lives and ways they can successfully manage it.
- 2.) Make 3 columns on the board, labeled as follows:
 - Home / Family
 - Friends and Relationships
 - School, Classes, and Teachers
- 3.) Give each student four sticky notes. Ask students to write something that is stressful to them on each sticky note (one item per sticky note). For example, someone may write that on older brother picks on him or her and the writer has to share a room with him. Another sticky note may say that the writer is very anxious in math class because it is hard.
 - **NOTE:** It is suggested you, as the teacher, model this activity with your own stressful items on sticky notes.
- 4.) Ask students to put their sticky notes on the appropriate column. They can put all of their sticky notes on the same column if they wish.
- 5.) Either the teacher or a student reads some sticky notes from the Family / Home column. Ask students if anyone would like to volunteer and elaborate on his or her sticky note. Repeat this process with the other two columns.
- 6.) Distribute the Stressed Out! Handout and have students read each response aloud to the class. Have students practice their breathing and the muscle work when they are read.
- 7.) Read each direction below, giving students time to complete each task before moving on to the next one:
 - Put an "X" next to two techniques you have used to manage stress in the past.
 - Circle all strategies you have never used to manage stress.
 - Put an "!" next to two strategies you will try out to manage stress.
 - Put an "*" next to one strategy that you'd like to try but would like some help with.
- 8.) Ask students to pair up with someone and share their responses from the Stressed Out! Handout. Encourage students to share only what they are comfortable sharing.
- 9.) Have students put handout somewhere they can access it easily throughout the day
 - Sample places include planner / binder / folder

Debriefing: (3 minutes)

Ask the following questions to students regarding the activity:

- What did you like / dislike about today's activity?
- What is one way of managing stress that you want to try?
- What is one way of managing stress that you know WOULDN'T work for you? Why?
- What is one way of managing stress that you want to know more about?
- What is one way we can support one another (in advisory / in school) to reduce stress?

Closing: (2 minutes)

Have students return any materials used for the day.

Read the quote below to students and have them reflect on the question. Students can write this

in a journal or on a piece of paper as their ticket out the door.

"It's not stress that gets us, it's our reaction to it" - Hans Selye

Stress is a normal part of everyday life. Make a plan for how you will practice the skills you

identified today so they become habits when you need them most.

STRESSED OUT!

- A.) Put an "X" next to TWO techniques you have used to manage stress.
- B.) Circle all strategies you have NEVER used to manage stress.
- C.) Put an "!" next to two strategies that you will try out to manage stress.
- D.) Put an "*" next to one strategy that you'd like to try, but would like some help with. Next to each one, identify a person who might be able to help you with this technique.

Remove yourself from the situation and take a break.

Talk with a friend, teacher, or family member.

Take time alone.

Exercise or do an activity you enjoy the most (basketball, go for a run, biking).

Try not to "sweat the small stuff" and learn to let go.

Eat healthy foods for more energy.

Practice taking deep breaths. (Example: Take 5 to 10 deep, slow paced breaths through your mouth, inhaling, and then exhaling.)

Take a nap.

Make a "to do list" of the things you need to accomplish. Include a due date for each item.

Let others know how you're feeling

Rethink old routines and look for new ways of doing things.

Tackle the most difficult tasks when you have the most energy.

Tighten up the muscles in your body. Example, start with your feet, toes, and ankles. Tense your muscles and hold for 10 seconds. Then move to your thighs and repeat the count. You can move to your stomach, chest, arms, wrists, neck, etc...

Other:
