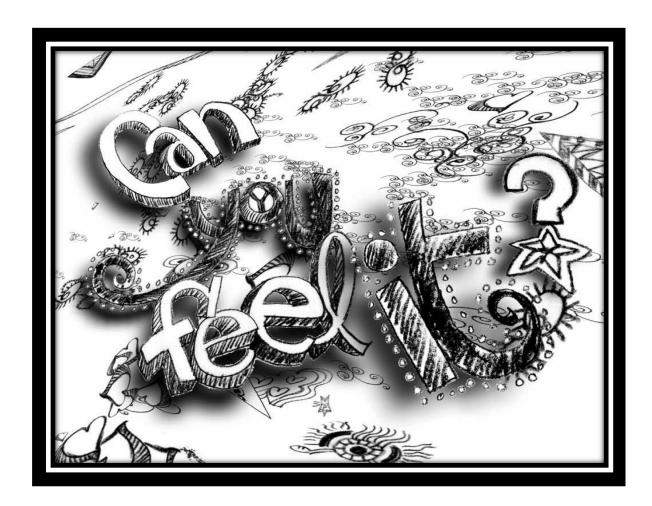
Can You Feel It?



Stress Workshop and Resource Guide



Can You Feel It?

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Contents

Introduction	1
Curriculum Links for Stress	5
Stress Workshop	
Session #1	
Session #2	19
Multimedia Tools	29
Multimedia Tools Disc Content	31
Video and Trailer	33
P.A. Announcements	35
Poster Series	45
Follow-Up Topic Areas	55
Resources	57
Stress and Resilience Resources for Teachers	59
Community Resource Descriptions (Free Services)	60
Appendix I: Can You Feel It? PowerPoint Presentation	61
Appendix II: Can You Feel It? My Life Design Student Workbook	69
Appendix III: Can You Feel It? Coping Strategies Props List	83
Appendix IV: Pictures of Coping Strategies Props	87
Contact Us.	97

can You Feel If?

Stress Workshop and Resource Guide

You feel it in the pit of your stomach. It is part of your life. It is stress. But what does it mean? What causes it—and more importantly— how can you cope with it? The Sudbury & District Health Unit's School Health Promotion Team has learned through locally administered student health surveys that a significant number of our students identify stress and stress management strategies as their number one health priority. For school aged children and youth, mental, physical, and social health are vital strands of life that are interwoven and interdependent. "Mental health and mental well-being are fundamental to the quality of life and the productivity of individuals, families, communities and nations, enabling people to experience life as meaningful and to be creative and active citizens" (World Health Organization, 2005). To address this significant health priority in our local schools the School Health Promotion Team has developed the *Can You Feel It? (CYFI?)* Stress Workshop and Resource Guide to help teachers address this topic. The Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit adopted "Can You Feel It?" because their Healthy School's Program identified similar areas of concern in locally administered surveys in Simcoe Muskoka.



Stress is part of everyday life. It is "a non-specific response of the body to any demand or challenge". Stress can be anything that threatens us, challenges us, scares us, worries us, and/or thrills us. It can be real or imagined, healthy or unhealthy. Stress is highly subjective and differs from one person to the next. Some stress in our lives is necessary to feel alert and energized and helps us to perform better. However, too much stress interferes with our abilities to do normal tasks and, over time, can cause health problems.



The CYFI? Stress Workshop and Resource Guide can be described as a multifaceted tool designed to help provide our students with the opportunity to start building the necessary life skills to manage and cope with the stress in their everyday lives. By helping students understand how their bodies react to their individual stress they can learn to cope with stress in a healthy way.

During the development of the CYFI? Stress Workshop and Resource Guide four key messages emerged:

- Change is constant.
- Recognize the stressors in your life.
- You control your reactions.
- Empower yourself you can do it!

Our goal is to have participants embrace these four underlying messages, recognizing that stress comes and goes, both the good and the bad, and that they have control over how they react and deal with the stress affecting them.

In other words, the core goal of the *CYFI?* Stress Workshop and Resource Guide is to provide teachers with resources to give their students the opportunity to start building and planning their own "Life Design" and to ultimately help foster their individual resiliency.

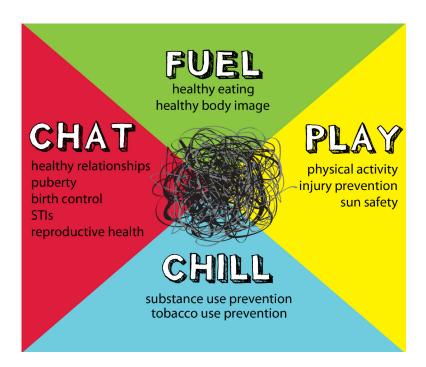


Many definitions of resiliency exist; however, the School Health Promotion Team has developed its own definition of resiliency to simplify things. "Resiliency is the ability to adapt to and/or bounce back from life's changes and challenges."

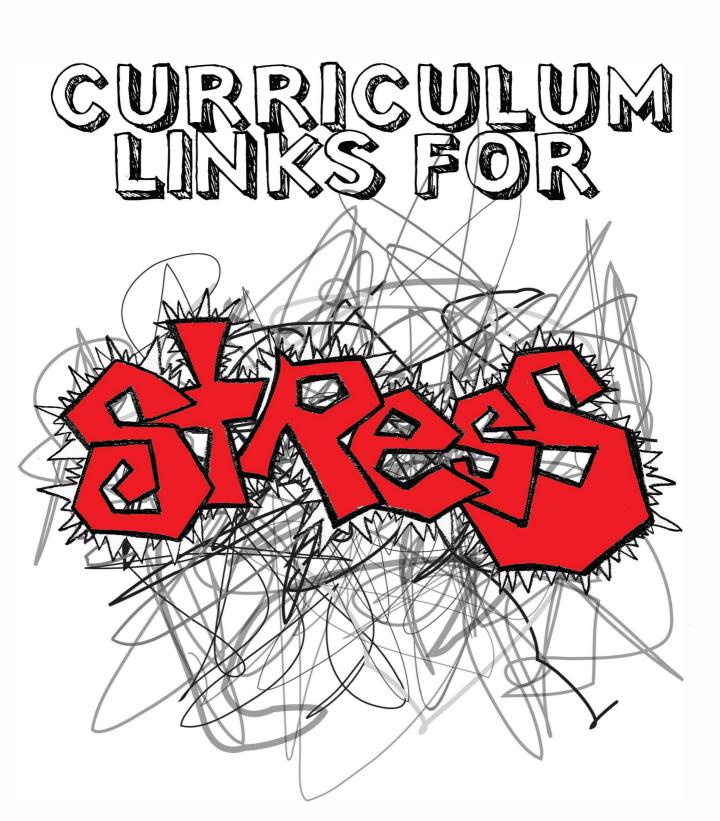
(School Health Promotion Team, 2010)



Possible follow–up activities and resources have been divided into four topic areas that correspond with the multimedia tools included in the *CYFI?* Stress Workshop and Resource Guide. A teacher may wish to build on the workshop materials included in this resource by addressing other health–related topics identified by his/her students.



The Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit offers information, programs and services to support schools in addressing a variety of health related topics. A consultation with a Healthy Schools public health nurse is available to provide teachers with additional resources and materials to assist with meeting the expectations of the curriculum. Contact Health Connection by calling 705-721-7520 or 1-877-721-7520 for more information or to request a consultation.



Grades 5 = 12



Cumculum Links

The Can You Feel It? Stress Workshop and Resource Guide has been developed to support teachers in meeting the mental health, stress, and resiliency themes found throughout the current Health & Physical Education curriculum for students between Grades 5–12 (The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1–8: Health and Physical Education, 2015; The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 9–12: Health and Physical Education, 2015). Teachers are encouraged to consider School Board policies and procedures when determining which activities are appropriate for delivery in their classroom.

Living Skills Expectations

The Health and Physical Education curriculum has been designed to help students realize their full potential in life and to help students understand the importance of not only physical fitness, but also their overall health and well-being. Through the development of *Living Skills* students will be provided with opportunities to learn adaptive, management, and coping skills; to practice healthy communication; learn how to build relationships; and learn how to use critical and creative thinking processes. Students will also strive to become competent, skilled, and knowledgeable individuals equipped to deal with the variety of personal and social demands in their lives.

Issues in the *Living Skills* component address the knowledge and skills that students need to make informed decisions related to healthy growth and sexuality, mental health, substance use and misuse, personal safety, and injury prevention. Mental health, stress, positive coping, and resiliency building skills are raised throughout these topic areas.

In the *Living Skills* component, students will learn to apply decision-making, conflict resolution, and social skills. This in turn will help students develop a positive sense of self and encourage them to express feelings and demonstrate behaviour that is respectful and sensitive to others. The acquisition of these skills will help students make the transition from adolescence to adulthood and become responsible for their decisions and actions. This is particularly important during this developmental stage where risk taking and testing of limits occurs.

i) Personal Skills

Personal Skills allow students to become more self-aware. Through self-monitoring skills, students will begin to build a sense of self. Students will learn to understand and recognize their individual strengths and capabilities and will begin to take responsibility for their learning and their actions as they mature. To respond to challenges and develop some control over their lives, students will need to acquire coping and management skills.

ii) Interpersonal Skills

As students interact with each other and participate in activities and discussions, they will be provided with opportunities to develop their social skills required for positive communication and healthy relationships.

iii) Critical and Creative Thinking

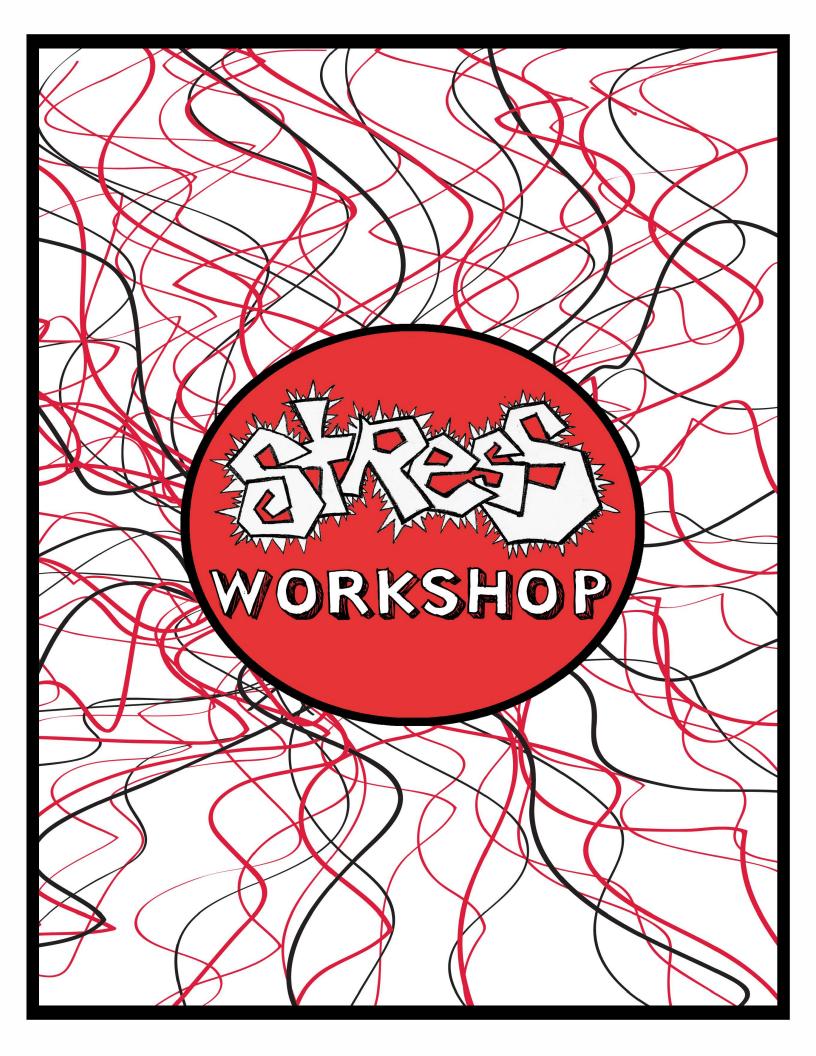
As students are provided with opportunities to apply their *Critical and Creative Thinking* skills, they will learn to problem solve, resolve conflicts, make decisions, set personal goals, and seek out supports when needed.

Summary

The *Can You Feel It?* Stress Workshop and Resource Guide was designed to support the *Living Skills* component of the curriculum by incorporating *Personal Skills* (PS), *Interpersonal Skills* (IS), and *Critical Creative Thinking* (CT) into the activities.

"Some topics within the Healthy Living strand can be challenging to teach because of their personal nature and their connection to family, religious, or cultural values. These topics can include, but are not limited to, topics covered in the Growth and Development section of the 2015 curriculum, as well as topics such as mental health, body image, substance abuse, violence, harassment, child abuse, gender identity, sexual orientation, illness (including HIV/AIDS), and poverty. These topics must be addressed with sensitivity and care. It is important that both teachers and learners have a comfort level with these topics so that information can be discussed openly, honestly, and in an atmosphere of mutual respect." The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1–8, Health and Physical Education, p. 36.

As the classroom teacher, you are in the best position to know your students. It is important to be sensitive to the fact that some of your students might be dealing with high levels of stress in their lives. At the end of the first session, you may want to do a quick "check-out" activity with the students to conclude the session (for example, ask students to use one word to describe how they are feeling). This will provide an opportunity for you to share information about support services with students who might need the information. Please refer to the "Community Resources" (p. 60). You may choose to distribute the "Kids Help Phone" calling card to each student following the "check-out" activity. If a concern is identified that requires follow-up, please refer to your specific School Board policy.





Session #1 has been designed to address the first two of the four key messages, which are:

- Change is constant.
- Recognize the stressors in your life.

Our goal is to have participants embrace the underlying messages, recognizing that stress comes and goes, both the good and the bad, and that they have control over how they react and deal with the stress affecting them.

Overview:

Each activity has an abbreviation beside the title to indicate the link to the Health and Physical Education curriculum (Strands, Subgroups, and Living Skills). They are:

- PS: Personal Skills
- IS: Interpersonal Skills
- · CT: Critical Thinking

Introduction – Icebreaker: Snowball Activity (PS, CT)	10 minutes
Activity #1: View the Can You Feel It? Video (CT)	
Activity #2: Discussion of the Can You Feel It? Video with the PowerPoint	
Presentation (CT)	15 minutes
Activity #3: Beach Ball Resiliency Simulation (PS, CT)	5minutes
Activity #4: What's Your Tangle? Reflection Activity (PS, CT)	10 minutes
Activity #5: Can You Feel It? Stress and the Body: Reflection Activity (PS, IS, CT)	15 minutes
Total Class Time	1h 15minutes

Materials:

- Can You Feel It? Video
- Can You Feel It? PowerPoint Presentation
- Can You Feel It? My Life Design Student Workbook
- Laptop and projector
- Recycled paper for Snowball activity
- Markers/pens or pencils for students
- White board
- · Beach ball.

Objectives:

- 1. Students will identify common stressors that effect youth today (physical, mental, emotional, and social).
- 2. Students will identify the various stressors in their own lives.
- 3. Students will define what "stress" is (feeling in the pit of the stomach, etc.).
- 4. Students will recognize the effects of stress on the mind and body (physical, mental, emotional, and social) and how it can impact one's life.

Introduction:

Icebreaker Snowball Activity (PS, CT)

10 minutes

Instructions:

- 1. Distribute one piece of recycled paper to each student
- 2. Have each student write down one thing on their piece of paper that causes them stress (i.e. too much homework, work, responsibilities at home, etc.).
- 3. Tell the students that what they write down will be shared with the class in an anonymous manner.
- 4. Have the students crumple up their piece of paper.
- 5. With their paper in hand, have the students form a circle or two lines.
- 6. Have the students use their crumpled paper as their snowball. Let students have a snowball fight for 1 to 2 minutes. (You may want to review a few basic safety rules with students; for example, no snowballs in the face).
- 7. When the snowball fight is over, have each student pick up one paper snowball.
- 8. Have each student open up the snowball and read out loud the stressor that is written inside.
- 9. Make a list of the students' stressors on a flipchart or blackboard.
- 10. Inform students that the list generated during this activity will be revisited later in this session.

Activity #1:

View the Can You Feel It? Video (CT)

20 minutes

Instructions:

• Have students view the 20-minute Can You Feel It? Video.

Activity #2:

Discussion of the Can You Feel It? Video facilitated with the Can You Feel It? PowerPoint Presentation (CT)

15 minutes

Instructions:

• Use the PowerPoint presentation and accompanying teacher's notes to guide the discussion with the students.

Activity #3:

Beach Ball Resiliency Simulation (PS, CT)

5 minutes

Instructions:

- By using a beach ball, you will demonstrate that too much unhealthy/unmanaged stress in everyday life can affect our ability to "adapt and/or bounce back from life's changes and challenges."
- Show class a fully inflated beach ball. Tell students that the beach ball represents someone who is resilient (i.e. has good self-esteem, is able to cope with their stress, has a positive attitude, etc.). In other words, someone who has the ability to "bounce back".
- Have a student bounce the fully inflated beach ball. Notice how well it is able to "bounce back".

Teacher Prompt:

"Name examples of stressors that Alex identifies in the video."

Student:

"Missing the bus, working, home and family issues (dad sharing his stress, mom maxed out, financial problems), girlfriend dumped him, school is complicated, teachers brutal, friends are needy or unavailable."

- As each stressor is named, take a little air out of the beach ball. Limit the amount of air for each stressor. You want to end up with ½ to ¾ of the air left in the ball.
- Drop the "deflated" ball (i.e. Alex), to demonstrate that it's lost its ability to "bounce back".

Teacher Prompt:

"So, if the beach ball represents Alex, how can Alex learn how to bounce back?"

Student:

"Alex can gain the ability to "bounce back" by: identifying what causes him stress, learning about the how his body reacts to stress and learning healthy ways to better cope with his stress."

Activity #4:

What's Your Tangle? Reflection Activity (PS, CT)

10 minutes

Instructions:

- Using the list of stressors generated during the snowball activity, review what stresses the students.
- Tell students that for this next activity you want them to be more specific in their description of what causes them stress.
- Hand out the Can You Feel It? My Life Design Student Workbook.
- Have students complete the "What Stresses Me Out" section (p.4). Students will be listing three of their stressors.

Teacher Prompt:

"It is important for individuals to know what their stressors are so that they can better deal with, control, and understand them. Once you have identified exactly what an unhealthy stressor is for you, you can then start trying to deal with it."

"The first step in coping is to know yourself." Heart and Stroke – Coping with Stress pamphlet "If you have listed *school* as a stressor, what in particular about *school* causes you to be stressed?"

Student:

"Tests, bullying, workload, difficulty in a particular subject, parent expectations, peer pressure..."

Teacher Prompt:

"If you have listed friends as a stressor, what in particular about friends causes you to be stressed?"

Student:

"Fitting in, when my friends talk to me about their problems, when my friends are not there for me, when I tell a friend something in confidence and they tell someone else, not having any friends . . ."

Activity #5:

Can You Feel It? Stress and the Body: Reflection Activity (PS, IS, CT)

15 minutes

Part I

Instructions:

- List the symptoms of stress that Alex identifies in the video (ball of tension in stomach, freaking out, agitated, etc.)
- Have students sit in a comfortable seated position.
- Inform students that you will be asking them a series of questions to help them reflect on a stressful event that occurred in their past.
- Ask students to close their eyes and think of a time when they were very stressed. It can be something that happened recently or something that happened to them in the past.
- Using a calm, soothing voice, ask the students the following questions, pausing for a few seconds between each question.

Teacher Prompt:

"Where are you? (PAUSE) Who are you with? (PAUSE) What are you doing? (PAUSE) What are you seeing? (PAUSE) What are you hearing?"

• Pause for a few seconds between each question to allow students to reflect in silence. Pause for 30 seconds before asking the next set of questions. Remind students to keep their eyes closed.

Teacher Prompt:

"Now that you have brought yourself back to a place where you felt very stressed, let's reflect on the following questions."

- Using a calm, soothing voice and pausing for a few seconds between each question, ask the students the following questions.
- Remind students to keep their eyes closed.

Teacher Prompt:

"What are you thinking? (PAUSE) What are you feeling? (PAUSE) How are you behaving?"

- Pause for a few seconds between each question to allow students to reflect in silence.
- Pause for 60 seconds.
- Ask students to slowly open their eyes and write down their responses in their *Can You Feel It?* My Life Design Student Workbook (p. 5).
- Generate a list of the signs and symptoms by asking students to share what they have on their worksheet

Part II

Instructions:

- Refer back to the list of signs and symptoms the students have generated in Part I, Activity #4.
- Ask students to identify which signs and symptoms are physical and have a student volunteer circle them on the list.
- Ask students to write these down in their Can You Feel It? My Life Design Student Workbook (p. 6).
- Ask students to identify which signs and symptoms are emotional/behavioural and have a student volunteer underline them on the list.
- Ask students to write these down in their Can You Feel It? My Life Design Student Workbook (p.6).

Teacher Prompt:

"Your body's response to stress can either be physical or emotional/behavioral."

Student: Physical:

- stomach aches
- perspiration
- flushed skin
- headaches
- muscle tension (e.g. jaw, face, neck, and back)
- difficulty sleeping
- · lack of energy
- appetite changes (poor appetite, overeating, eating extra comfort or junk foods)
- getting sick more often
- acne/rashes

- teeth grinding
- · increased heart rate
- rapid breathing
- constipation
- diarrhea
- indigestion
- general aches and pains
- · cold sweaty hands
- drv mouth
- facial tics
- trembling

Emotional/Behavioural:

- mood swings
- irritability
- trouble focusing
- frustration
- confusion
- forgetfulness
- anger (lashing out, overreacting to a situation)
- crying easily or feeling like crying
- sadness
- depression
- social withdrawal
- breakdown in relationships
- feeling overwhelmed

- difficultly making decisions
- avoidance
- panic
- fear
- anxiety
- · low self-esteem (feeling worthless, not good enough, hopeless)
- negative self-talk
- blaming
- impatience
- nervousness
- pessimistic attitude

Teacher Prompt:

"Now that we have a better understanding of what stress is, and how it affects us, next time we will learn how to cope with our stress in a healthier way".



Session #2 has been designed to address the last two of the four key messages, which are:

- You control your reactions.
- Empower yourself you can do it!

By helping students understand how their bodies react to their individual stress, they can learn to cope with stress in a healthier way.

Overview:

Each activity has an abbreviation beside the title to indicate the link to the Health and Physical Education curriculum (Strands, Subgroups, and Living Skills). They are:

- PS: Personal Skills
- IS: Interpersonal Skills
- CT: Critical Thinking

Introduction: View the Can You Feel It? Trailer (CT)	5 minutes
Activity #1: Nail and Board Team Challenge (CT,IS)	10 minutes
Activity #2: Detangle Activity (coping strategies) (PS, CT)	
Activity #3: Healthy vs. Unhealthy Coping Strategies (PS, CT)	
Activity #4: Checkpoint: How am I Doing? (PS,CT)	
Activity #5: Beach Ball Resiliency Simulation Conclusion (PS, CT)	
Wrap-up Activity: Let's Chill Relaxation Exercise (PS)	
	tal Class Time1h 15minutes
Follow-Up Discussion (PS, CT)	

Materials:

- Can You Feel It? Video trailer
- Nail and Board Team Challenge props (see page 21)
- Can You Feel It? My Life Design Student Workbook
- Can You Feel It? Poster Series and P.A. Announcements
- Beach ball
- Laptop and projector
- · Relaxation tracks.

Objectives:

- 1. Students will identify healthy and unhealthy coping strategies.
- 2. Students will identify the people in their lives who can help them cope with stress.
- 3. Students will learn about resources they can access to help them cope with stress (e.g. Kids Help Phone).
- 4. Students will understand how to manage their stress using healthy coping strategies, which can increase their resilience and their ability to overcome life's challenges (i.e. to "bounce back").

Introduction:

View the Can You Feel It? Trailer (CT)

5 minutes

Instructions:

• Have students view the 2 ½ minute Can You Feel It? trailer as a review of key concepts presented in Session #1.

Teacher Prompt:

"Did you notice that the CYFI? trailer referred to 'developing resiliency'? What does resiliency mean for you?" (It's OK if students don't know the answer at this point.)

Student:

"Resiliency is the ability to adapt to and/or bounce back from life's changes and challenges." School Health Promotion Team, 2010.

Activity #1:

Nail and Board Team Challenge (CT, IS)

10 minutes

Materials:

Team #1 Team #2 Spoon

Pencil (sharpened) Pencil (unsharpened)
Ruler (metric) Ruler (imperial)

Board Board Nails (2) Nails (2)

Procedure:

1. Divide class into 2 groups and have each group select 3 volunteers to do the activity. The remaining students will be observers.

- 2. Have volunteers come to the front of the classroom. Give one group items for Team #1 and the other items for Team #2.
- 3. Using only the tools and material provided the teams will complete the following challenge:
 - Teams must "nail" the 2 provided nails into board.
 - Nails can be nailed anywhere on the board, but the 2 nails <u>must be exactly 6 cm</u> <u>apart</u> and be <u>nailed only 1 cm into the board</u> (i.e. 7 cm of the nail must protrude).
 - **NOTE:** Since the same board will be used for more than one session, instruct students that they **cannot** use existing nail holes.
- 4. The first team to complete the challenge (with the correct measurements) is declared the winner.

Discussion:

Teacher Prompt:

Through discussion, have the students bring out the following points:

- Team #2 may have experienced "stress" related to trying to complete the task with the tools they had (i.e. unsharpened pencil, spoon...).
- Having the right tools to use makes accomplishing a task much easier (i.e. Team #1, who had hammer, metric ruler and sharpened pencil).
- It is much more difficult, or sometimes even impossible to successfully accomplish a task when you don't have the right tools.
- Sometimes using the "wrong tools", may even be dangerous to your health (i.e. did anyone from team #2 hurt themselves trying to get the nail into the board?)
- "Having the right tools in your "toolbox" is very important to be able to manage your stress. There are many tools (also called "coping strategies") that people use to "cope" with their stress. Some of these strategies can be healthy, while others are unhealthy and may be dangerous to your health.

Activity #2:

Detangle Activity (coping strategies) (PS, CT)

10 minutes

Instructions:

• Using the video and trailer as a jump off point, create a list of coping strategies. Have students brainstorm additional coping strategies to add to the list.

Teacher Prompt:

"In the video/trailer, what did Alex do to try to cope with his stress? You will notice that the strategies Alex uses are divided into four topic areas."

Student:

"Alex in the video:

CHILL — sleep (ten hours a week), breathe

FUEL — eat (four food groups – caffeine, grease...)

 \mathbb{CHAT} — talk to uncle, communicate with mother, chill with his friends

PLAY — soccer in the park ..."

Teacher Prompt:

"Have you used or seen others use different strategies to cope with stress?"

Student:

"Strategies that I have used or have seen others use are..." (It's OK if students don't come up with a comprehensive list at this point. Other strategies will come up during the next activity.)

- After students have given their answers, put up the four posters.
- Have a brief discussion about where Alex's strategies fit under the four topic areas.

Note: The coping strategies mentioned above are not all healthy coping strategies (i.e. sleeping 10 hours a week and living on caffeine and grease are considered unhealthy coping strategies).

Activity #3:

Healthy vs. Unhealthy Coping Strategies (PS, CT)

25 minutes

Part I

Instructions:

• Write the words Healthy, In moderation or Unhealthy on the board.

Teacher Prompt:

"Are all of Alex's strategies healthy? How about the list that we have compiled as a group? Let's look at the strategies a little more closely to try to determine what makes a coping strategy healthy vs. unhealthy."

- Have students select one of the small laminated photos and guess what strategy it represents (depending on the grade level and/or School Board policy, you may want to remove some photos).
- Ask students to identify if the strategy chosen is healthy or unhealthy and write it on the board. You may want to also refer back to the four topic area posters in Multimedia Tools.
- As answers are written on the board, ask students to write the answers in their *Can You Feel It?* My Life Design Student Workbook (p.7).

Note: Some strategies may be healthy or unhealthy depending on how they are used (for example, sleeping may be a healthy activity; however, sleeping too much may be used as an escape or may be a sign of depression. Watching TV or playing video games may be a healthy diversion but too much screen time may become unhealthy. Screaming and letting it out into your pillow may be healthy but screaming at someone else may not be healthy...)

Student:

Healthy strategies for coping with stress

FUEL — Healthy balanced eating, use positive self talk, be kind to yourself

PLAY — Go for a walk, play sports, exercise

— Listen to music, read, hang-out with friends, play with your pet, sleep, breathing and relaxation exercises, yoga, unplug, laugh

CHAT—Talk to friends, talk to someone you trust, journal, build supportive relationships, be positive, be assertive, call someone and get help if necessary (e.g. Kids Help Phone)

Unhealthy strategies to cope with stress

Smoking, sleeping too much or not enough, drinking or using drugs to escape, unhealthy eating (unhealthy "comfort" food, overeating or undereating), skipping school or work, getting angry, getting even, acting impulsively or recklessly, ignoring/or not dealing with the problem, pretending that nothing is wrong, negative self talk, negative attitude, wasting time, withdrawal from friends and family, cutting/self harm, engaging in unhealthy sexual behavior, risky behavior, turning to gangs or cults for support.

Activity #3: Healthy vs. Unhealthy Coping Strategies (PS, CT)

Instructions:

Part II

• Have students complete the "Who Can I Talk to?" section (p. 8) in their *Can You Feel It?* My Life Design Student Workbook.

Teacher Prompt:

"One of the healthy strategies mentioned was talking to someone. Let's spend a little more time thinking about who in your life you can talk to. Is there anyone in your family, a friend, someone in your neighborhood, in your school, someone you look up to and trust (for example, a coach) that you would feel comfortable talking to?"

Teacher Prompt:

"If, for whatever reason, you cannot talk to one of these people (for example, person is unavailable, the problem is too big or you feel you can' talk to anyone, or if you want to talk to someone anonymously), there is Kids Help Phone. It is an anonymous and confidential phone and online professional counselling service for youth. Big or small concerns, 24/7, 365 days a year. I encourage you to check out "Self Quest" on the website. It helps you create a map and figure out what to do when the going gets rough".

• Provide phone number to students: 1-800-668-6868.

Alternate activity: If time permits you may also want to browse the Kids Help Phone website with your students or alternatively you may wish to have students explore the site individually as a class assignment. The website includes many interactive features.

Activity #4

Checkpoint: How am I Doing? (PS, CT) 5 minutes

Instructions:

- Have students complete the Checkpoint: How am I Doing? Section (p.9) of their *Can You Feel It?* My Life Design Student Workbook.
- Let students know that you will be following up on the activity in the next couple of weeks.
- Ask students to challenge themselves by trying to put into practice the new strategy they have identified.

Activity #5:

Beach Ball Resiliency Simulation Conclusion (PS, CT)

5 minutes

Instructions:

- Show class the partially deflated beach ball from Part 1 of the simulation. Tell students that the beach ball represents someone who is not very resilient (i.e. has poor self-esteem, is unable to cope with their stress, has a negative attitude, etc.) In other words, someone who is not able to "bounce back".
- Ask students to name healthy coping strategies that would work best for them. With each example given, re-inflate the ball slightly until it is fully inflated.
- Have a student bounce the ball.

Teacher Prompt:

"What have we just demonstrated with this simulation?"

Student:

"...by learning and using healthy coping strategies, you will be able to better detangle/manage your stress and thus improve your resiliency, your ability to "bounce back."

Note: You may wish to have the students write some of the healthy coping strategies on the beach ball and hang it in the classroom as a visual reminder.

Wrap Up Activity: Let's Chill Relaxation Exercise (PS)

10 minutes

Note: Evaluations from the pilot sites showed that students, both male and female, rated the relaxation exercise as one of their favorite activities of the workshop. We encourage you to continue to practice relaxation techniques with your students on a regular basis with the relaxation CD provided or with relaxation activities of your choice.

A good relaxation technique is something that calms your mind and clears your thoughts. It is a tool that you carry with you to help you deal with a stressful situation when they arise. Breathing is something that you can do whenever you need to. It is like "taking a time out". Deep breathing provides extra oxygen to the blood and causes the body to release endorphins, which are naturally occurring hormones that reenergize and promote relaxation. There are many different types of relaxation exercises. They include:

- Breathing exercises
- Centering or focusing
- Progressive relaxation
- Guided imagery
- Meditation

Instructions:

- If possible, ensure that the temperature of the room is comfortable.
- Have students place themselves in a comfortable position (in their chairs or on the floor if you are in a larger room such as the gym).
- Tell students that you will be turning off the lights and ask that no one move around during the exercise (for safety reasons).
- Make sure that all electronic devices are turned off.
- Ask students to close their eyes and to focus on the voices in the audio tracks.
- Tell the students that the relaxation exercise that you will be doing will take approximately 5 minutes.

Teacher Prompt:

"We will now be doing a relaxation exercise together. Doing relaxation is a learned skill. If this is the first time that you try this, it may not be easy. It requires practice and will become easier to do over time. Relaxation is something that calms your mind and clears your thoughts. It is like "taking a time out".

Note for teacher: If you would prefer to lead an exercise with your class, practice reading the exercise ahead of time. Read it aloud to yourself slowly and clearly using a calm, quiet voice, pausing at the end of each sentence. You may also choose to have a student volunteer who has a relaxing voice lead the breathing exercise.

Follow-Up Discussion

15 - 30 minutes

• In a few weeks, have students revisit their Can You Feel It? My Life Design Student Workbook.

Teacher Prompt:

What did you put down in your workbook as the "one thing you could do better to cope with your stress"?

• Have students turn to the Personal Reflection section (p. 10), and answer the questions. Students do not need to share their answers.

Teacher Prompt:

"For those of you who would like to share..."

"Did you try your strategy?"

"How often did you try it?"

"Did it work for you?"

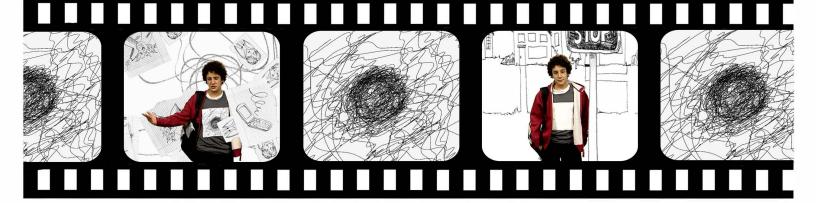
"If it worked well, will you continue to use it?"

"If it didn't work well, what could you do instead?"

• Encourage students to continue to reflect on a regular basis. They can use the Journal section (p. 11-12) to help them do this.



MULTIMEDÍA TOOLS



ZOZ ZOZ

MULTIMEDIA TOOLS



Tools:

- Can You Feel It? Stress Workshop and Resource Guide (complete guide)
- Can You Feel It? Trailer video (running time 2 minutes)
- Can You Feel It? Full Length Video (English running time 20 minutes)
- Can You Feel It? Video Discussion PowerPoint
- Can You Feel It? Session #1 Outline
- Can You Feel It? Session #2 Outline
- Can You Feel It? Poster Series (6 posters, print to 11" x 17")
 - Cover
 - o Can You Feel It?
 - o Chill
 - Chat
 - o Fuel
 - o Play
- My Life Design Student Workbook
- Colour Pictures for Activity
- Relaxation tracks



video and trailer



For elementary and high school students, mental, physical and social health are vital strands of life that are interwoven and interdependent. Beginning in 2007, the Sudbury & District Health Unit's School Health Promotion Team conducted confidential health surveys in secondary schools from all four school boards in its service area. The number one health priority identified by the students was stress and stress management. Consultations with teachers reinforced that stress was the number one health issue at their schools.



Staff from the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit's Healthy Schools program work with schools/School Boards and community partners to enhance the physical, emotional, mental, social and spiritual health of the whole school community. Through needs assessment surveys and discussions related to school health strengths and issues, mental health (including stress and anxiety) is consistently identified as a health issue in schools in Simcoe Muskoka.



Mental illnesses are characterized by alterations in thinking, mood, or behaviour – or a combination thereof – associated with high levels of stress and impaired functioning (Health Canada, 2006). Part of being resilient is having good mental health. Mental health involves balancing different aspects of life. It involves our ability to think, feel, act, and interact in a way that we can enjoy our lives and cope with the challenges that arise throughout our lives.

Given the survey results, and the abundance of supporting evidence, a 20-minute engaging video has been created and has been received very positively by both students and teachers. The CYFI? video was produced by Sudbury and District Health Unit using local Sudbury students as actors. The CYFI? video takes us through a day in the life of today's teen. Alex's story can be used to initiate discussion about all the aspects of stress and how it really affects him. The video builds anticipation and allows students to relate to the issues that Alex is facing so that they can start thinking about stress in their own lives and how to deal with it in a healthy way. Students are provided with the opportunity to build resiliency by planning their own "Life Design". The focus is on four key messages:

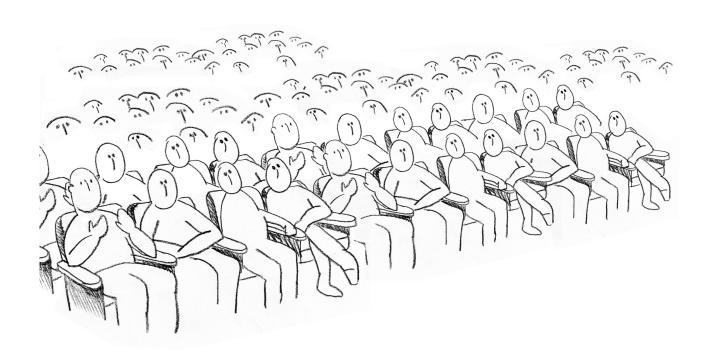


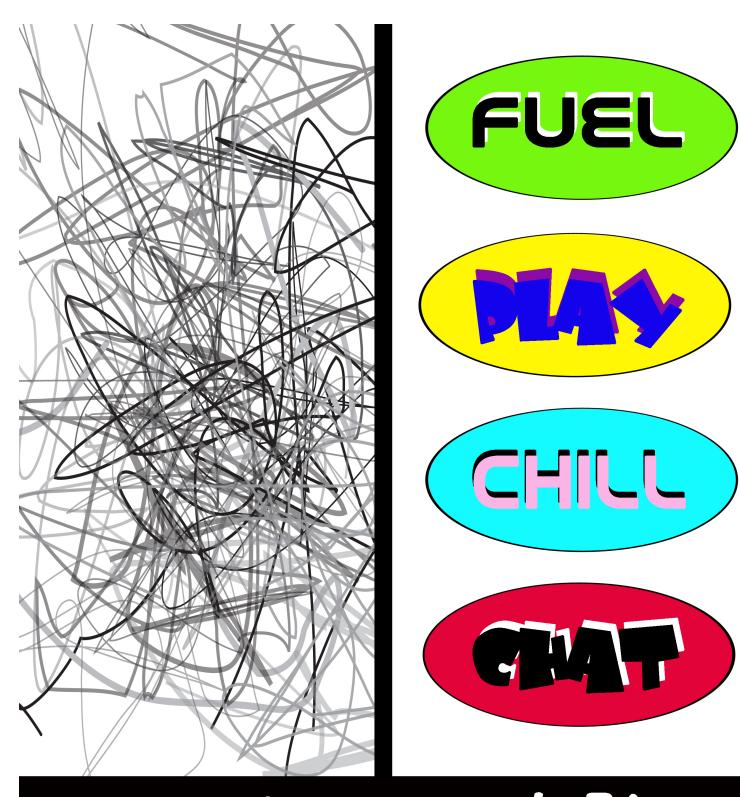
The accompanying 2-minute trailer can be viewed several days before the video to pique students' interest in the topic of stress. It can also be used to reintroduce the topic of stress as it relates to each of the four follow-up topic areas.

P.A. Announcements

In order to promote a Comprehensive School Health approach, a series of P.A. announcements has been developed to accompany the *Can You Feel It?* video, trailer, and poster series.

Students integrate messages when they hear them repeated in different ways. Therefore, each topic area and poster has an accompanying P.A. announcement. These announcements are meant to be read by students over the P.A. system or in the classroom. They can be read as an introduction or a wrap-up to each topic area (fuel, play, chill, chat) or they can be read during the time period that activities are being carried out for a particular topic.





Can You Feel It? Pa Announcements





ANNOUNCER: Can You Feel It?

NOT a good day, rough week, lousy year. Actually, my whole life so far is pretty much a disaster, thanks for not asking...(PAUSE)

You feel it in the pit of your stomach...that 40 pound hairball of tension. It's part of everyday life, it's stress. It can all be really exciting and totally get you going in a good stress kind of way. However, too much stress can affect your health. (PAUSE)

That's why it's important to learn strategies to cope with your stress.



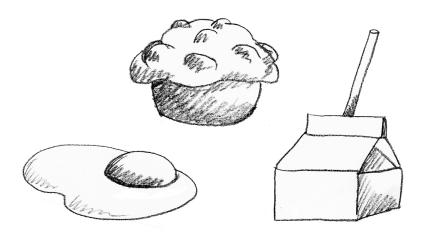


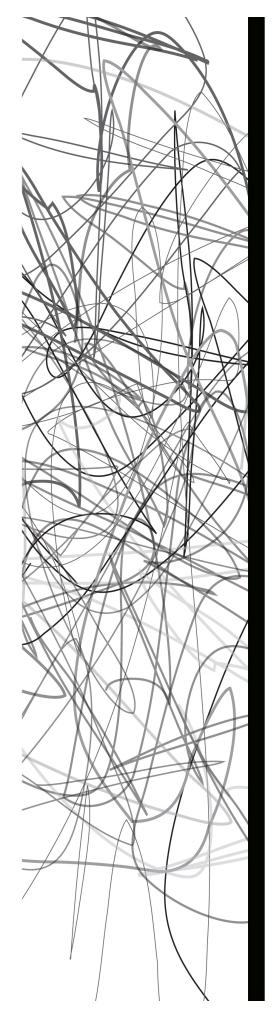


ANNOUNCER: Out of gas?

What four food groups are you living on: grease, starch, sugar, and caffeine? What we eat can affect our ability to cope with stress. Fuel your days with healthy food choices. Grab an apple or a glass of milk. (PAUSE)

Fill up on the positives! It feels good!





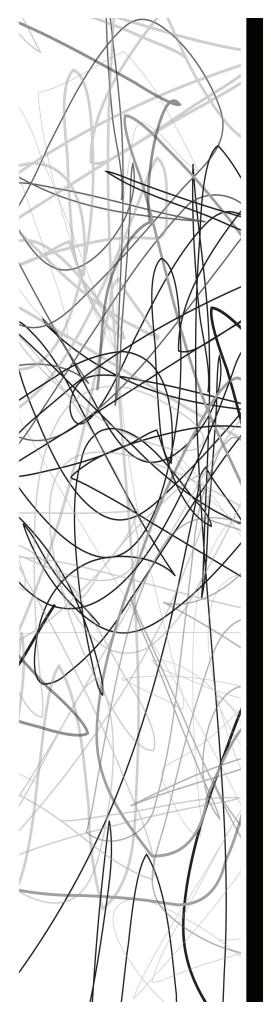


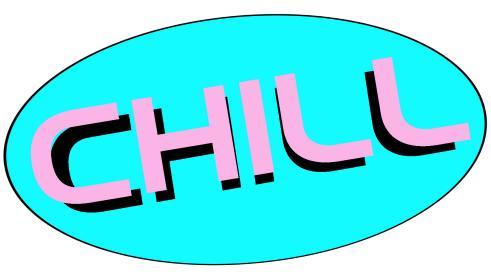
ANNOUNCER: Wound up?

Get outside and play. Being active is a great way to relieve stress. Ride your bike, shoot some hoops, a little soccer in the park. (PAUSE)

Choose something fun that "you" like to do.



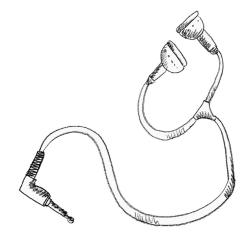




ANNOUNCER: Wired?

Take time to relax. Use healthy coping strategies like reading a book, writing in a journal, playing with a pet, or just unplugging. No i-anything for a while. Allow yourself time to reenergize. Forget life style, call it "life design". (PAUSE)

You can actually choose, or even create, the way you want to live.







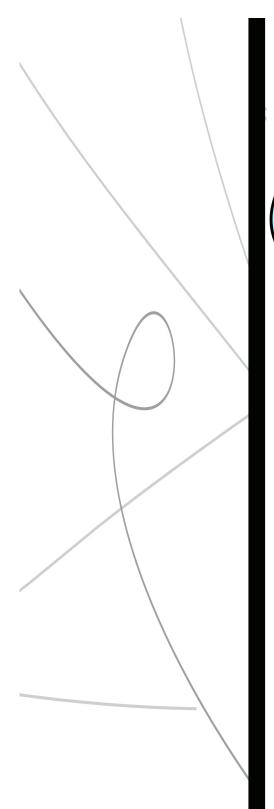
ANNOUNCER:

Tied in knots?

There's always gonna be new stuff, but you can handle it if you cut yourself some slack, and if you can't, you can get help. If you're feeling tense, try talking to someone you trust like a parent or relative, friend or teacher. (PAUSE)

Unload, feel better!





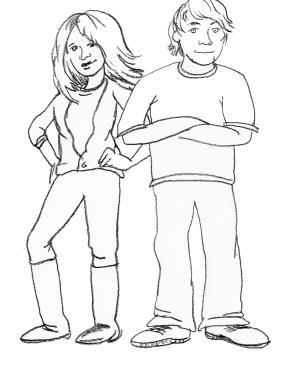
can you feel It?

ANNOUNCER: (DEEP BREATH)

I dunno exactly WHAT I'm gonna do about everything. But that's okay. One thing at a time. And I just know, I can either keep going the way I've been going until I twist myself into a pretzel and snap or I can CHOOSE, right now, to get on it and get on with it. I guess THAT is the point. I can choose, and I choose NOT to be a pretzel...

or a hairball. (PAUSE)

Can You Feel It?



Poster Series

To address stress as a significant health priority in our school communities, the School Health Promotion Team has developed the *Can You Feel It?* poster series as an additional supportive tool to the *Can You Feel It?* video and workshop. The poster series was designed to help raise awareness about four topic areas that relate to stress. The posters can be used in a variety of ways depending on the school environment and current school needs.

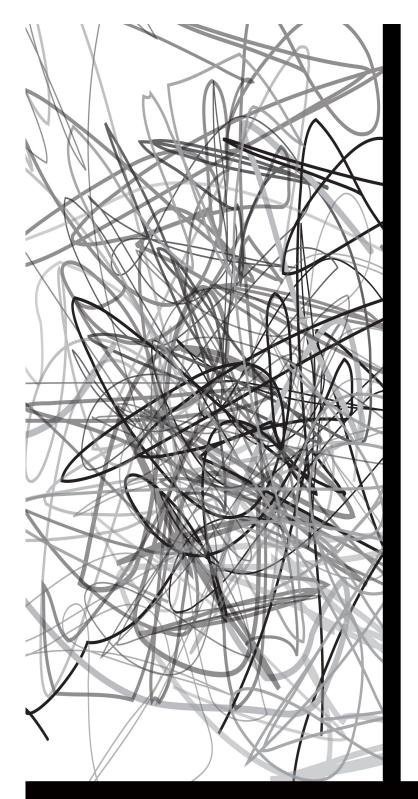
The first poster *Can You Feel It?* has graphics to associate with a disordered or stressful state. The tangles represent the ball of knots that students may feel in their stomach or the jumbled thoughts they may have when they are stressed. This poster is meant to grab the students' attention and to have them continue to question what the poster is all about.

The next four posters offer some possible healthy coping strategies linked with each of the four topic areas.

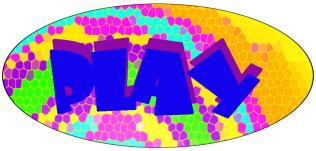
The final poster is a repeat of the *Can You Feel It?* with minimal graphics to simulate a more peaceful or stress-free state.

Achvity Ideas/Options

- Post one poster weekly and complement it with the accompanying P.A. announcement read by students over the P.A. system.
- Post all the posters at one time throughout your school and run events or contests to promote healthy coping strategies.
- Post one poster weekly and have peer leaders run activities that relate to that topic throughout the week.
- Post one poster weekly and invite community partners to give presentations on healthy coping strategies related to that topic.
- Have a contest between classes, grades, etc. on different ways to cope with stress based on the weekly poster.





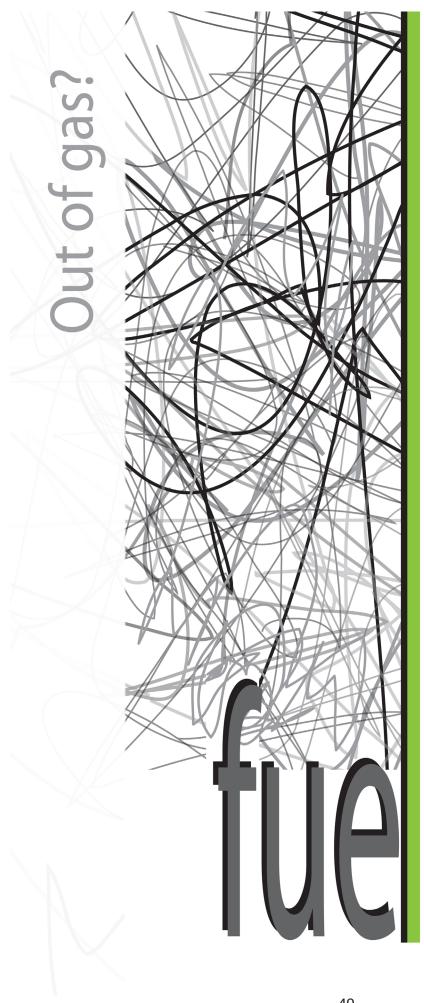






Can You Feel It? Poster Series

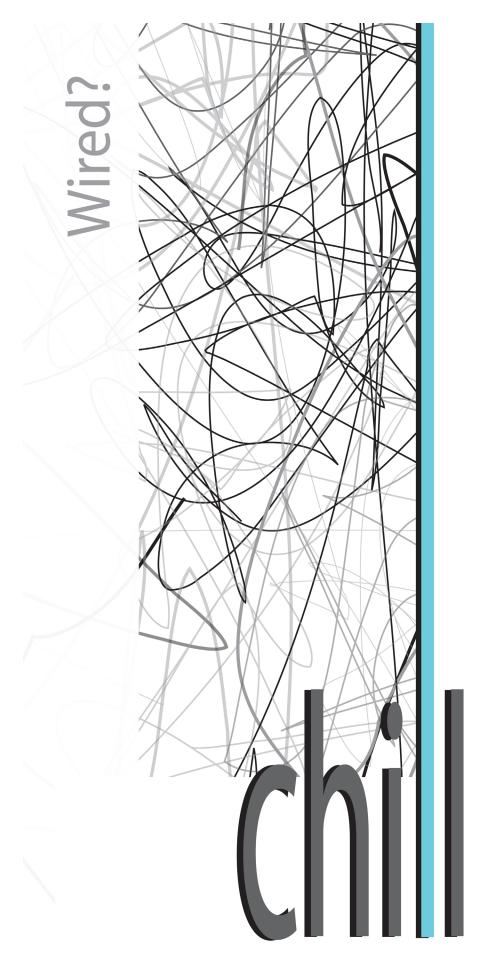




feel good! fill up on the positives



Wound up? have fun, get moving Your Health Connection



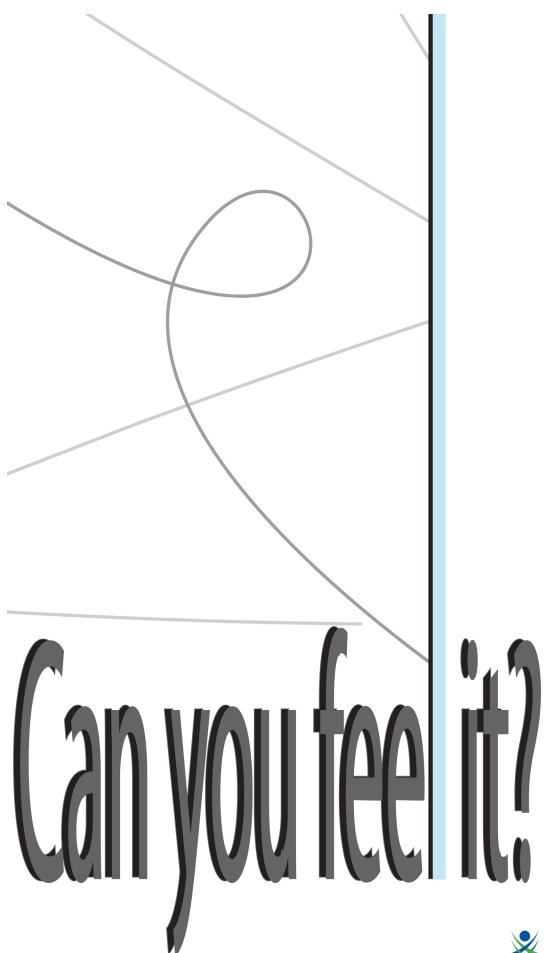
unplug, do something you love





detangle by talking to someone you trust





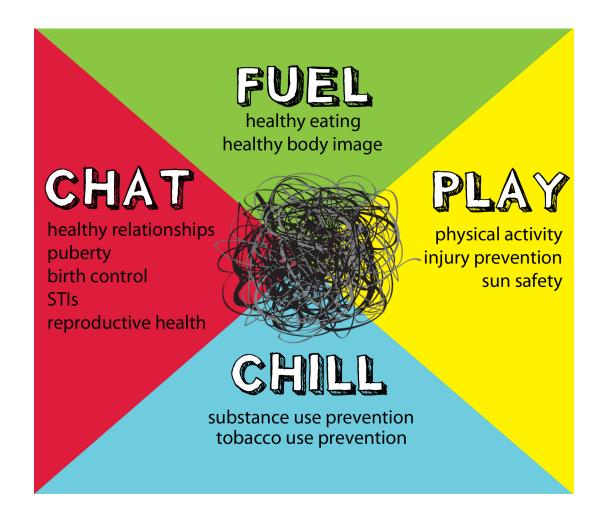
Consultations are available with a public health nurse for the

Follow-Up Topic Areas

The stress workshop provides students with a better understanding of what stress is, how it affects their bodies, and provides strategies to help them cope with their stress in a healthy way. We know that there are many factors that affect how students manage and cope with stress.

In order to address these factors, teachers are recommended to follow–up with the four topic areas found below. Each topic area deals with issues that may affect the lives of youth.

Consult with your Healthy Schools public health nurse if you have any questions or contact Health Connection at 705-721-7520 or 1-877-721-7520.



RESQURCES



Stress and Resilience Resources for Teachers

Mind your Mind (ConnexOntario Health Services Information) for mental health information.

Teen Mental Health for teen mental health information.

MindUp (The Hawn Foundation) for mental health, self-regulation and mindfulness information.

Kids Have Stress Too (The Psychology Foundation of Canada) child and youth stress lessons and educations and parents.

Kids Help Phone for counseling for children and youth.

OPHEA (teaching tools, programs, professional learning and resources for schools.

ParticipACTION for physical activity information.

UnlockFood.ca for family nutrition, healthy eating and healthy weights information.

Food in Simcoe County for food policy, access and security information.

Bright Bites (Ontario Society of Nutrition Professionals in Public Health) for incentivized school nutrition program information.





Community Resource Descriptions (Free services)

Kids Help Phone

An anonymous and confidential phone and on-line professional counselling service for youth. Big or small concerns, 24/7, 365 days a year.

Service Mini Directories

Service directories for 12 topics (e.g. mental health services, crisis services, financial assistance, etc.) with services organized by ages, First Nation Metis and Inuit, and Francophone. You can search by location in Simcoe County—Barrie and area; North Simcoe; North West Simcoe; Orillia and area and South Simcoe.

211 is a free, 24 hour a day, seven day a week, confidential, multilingual service providing information and referral to community and social services. Dial 211 to speak with a trained information and referral specialist or visit www.infosimcoecounty.ca or www.infomuskoka.ca to search their database for services in your area.

Click for Success (Muskoka) is a website developed to assist in searching for key mental health and well-being services, supports and resources for school-aged children and youth in the Districts of Nipissing, Parry Sound and Muskoka. Services are categorized into four levels: prevention, support, treatment and crisis. Visit: www.clickforsuccess.ca.

Counselling services through Employee Assistance Programs

Some employers offer an Employee Assistance Program that provides access to counselling away from the workplace. It provides confidential, professional consultation, and assistance for individuals and families around issues such as relationships, anxiety and stress, emotional difficulties, etc.

Appendix I: Can You Feel It? PowerPoint Presentation



Teacher Prompt:

Now that you have had the opportunity to watch the video we will use the next 15–20 minutes for discussion.

What did you like about the video? Name three things.

What did you dislike?

Could you identify with Alex's day?



- **Q.** How does Alex describe stress?
- **A.** A feeling in the pit of your stomach...that 40 pound hairball of tension.
- **Q.** How would you describe stress?
- **A.** Allow students to give their own description.

Teacher Prompt:

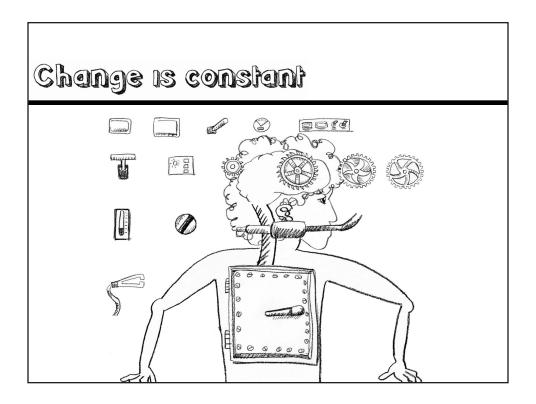
Stress is part of everyday life.

Stress is "a non-specific response of the body to any demand or challenge".

Stress is anything that: threatens us, challenges us, scares us, worries us, thrills us.

Stress can be real or imagined, positive or negative.

Stress is highly subjective and differs from one person to the next.



Teacher prompt:

It's important to recognize that stress is an inevitable aspect of life that comes and goes, both the good and the bad, and that students have control only over how they react and cope with the stress and/or stressors affecting them.

In today's fast paced world we continue to evolve and develop new technologies and advancements that are supposed to make our lives and jobs easier. However, the speed at which these technological changes occur is just one example of how quickly things can change and continue to challenge us from day to day.

By teaching students to be flexible and to be less resistant to change we are in turn helping them develop life skills that allow them to make decisions, solve problems, set appropriate goals, and continue to strive to attain them. Recognizing that we cannot always control the world around us and that change is continuous and constant is the first step towards becoming a healthier version of yourself!



Q. What is causing stress in Alex's life?

A.

- Father is out of work
- Parents are always arguing
- Job
- Girlfriend
- Homework
- Missed the bus

Q. How does this compare to the stresses in your life?

A. Have students list their stressors.

Teacher Prompt:

It is important for individuals to know what their stressors are so that they can better deal/control and understand them. Once you have identified exactly what is an unhealthy stressor for you, you can then start trying to deal with it.



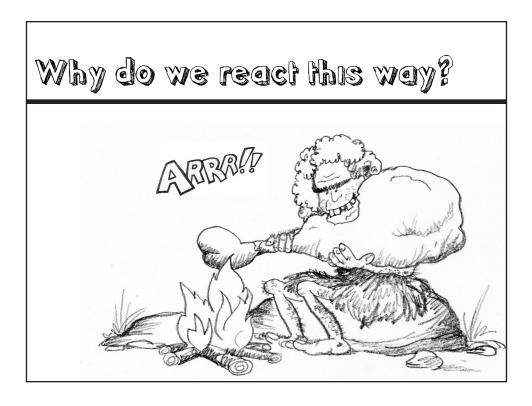
Q. Who needs stress in their life?

A. We all do.

Teacher Prompt:

Nobody can escape stress! Stress is a normal, everyday occurrence. Stress can be real or imagined, healthy or unhealthy. Stress is highly subjective and differs from one person to the next.

Some stress in our lives is necessary to feel alert and energized and to help us perform better. However, too much stress interferes with our abilities to do normal tasks and, over time, can cause health problems.



Q. Why does our body react this way when we feel stressed?

A. Allow students to give their own answers.

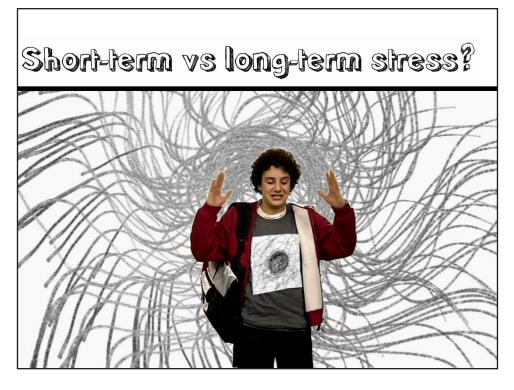
Teacher Prompt:

Stress is not a new phenomenon. It goes way back to the caveman days when we needed to react quickly in order to avoid becoming lunch for predators like sabre–toothed tigers. Cavemen had two choices; they could bash the cat or dash for safety. This required a finely tuned nervous system that could instantly mobilize the body into what we now call the "fight–or–flight" response. Prehistoric folks who weren't good at it became tasty snacks, and those who could run or fight lived to tell the story around the fire.

Over millions of years, the people with the best fight–or–flight skills survived, and the others didn't come home after lunch. While most of us never have to face real tigers, the world you live in can feel every bit as threatening as the one your long-ago ancestors experienced. For example, it can produce anxiety to:

- watch your parents have a major fight
- take a test in a tough class
- have an argument with a friend
- juggle all of the responsibilities of home, school, and work

The problem is, whenever you're up against something that makes you feel threatened, your body still responds as if it's meeting a hungry tiger. At the first hint of danger, off goes the alarm, and instantly you're ready to physically and emotionally fight or flee. (Fighting Invisible Tigers pp.11-13).



Teacher Prompt:

Your body is designed to handle stress only for the short–term. Your entire body reacts to the stressor but as soon as the "danger" or stressor passes your body calms down and returns to normal. During your body's initial reaction to the stressor there is an increase in bodily activity. The hypothalamus signals the adrenal glands to produce more hormones, adrenaline, and cortisol for release into the blood stream. This is what we now call the fight or flight response. Other responses to stress are not only physical, but also emotional and/or behavioural.

Q. What happens if the stressor persists?

A. Allow students to provide their own answers.

Teacher Prompt:

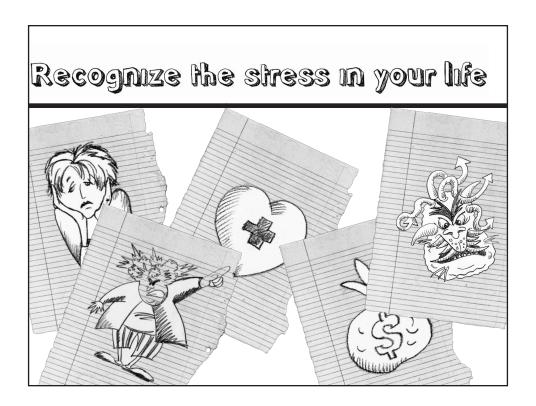
If a stressor continues our body begins to use up its resources and releases stored fats and sugars. Symptoms at this stage include anxiety, feeling pressured, tiredness and fatigue, loss of memory, and a weakened immune system resulting in illnesses (like colds and flu, etc.). To respond to the continued stress, some people may choose to cope in unhealthy ways and choose to drink more caffeinated drinks like coffee or pop, drink more alcohol, or smoke more than usual. When stressful situations continue to remain unresolved, chronic long—term stress may result.

Q. What are some of the dangers of feeling that ball of stress on a regular basis and not dealing with it? (chronic stress)

A. Depression, chronic illness, and making unhealthy choices such as substance abuse to escape or cope.

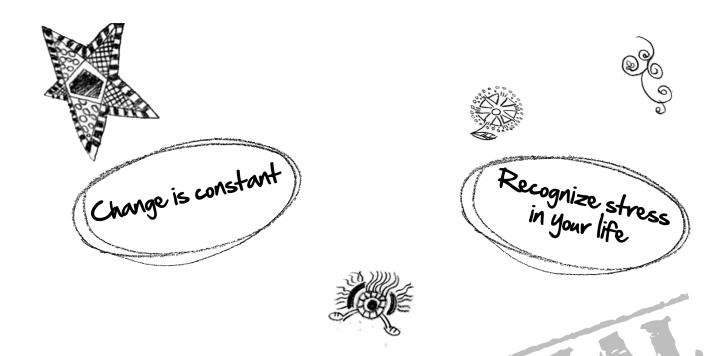
Teacher Prompt:

When stressful situations remain unresolved, chronic stress may result. At this time, the body is unable to continue to produce an adequate amount of energy needed to combat the stressors. Serious chronic health problems will eventually result. Symptoms may include difficulty sleeping, changes in personality, and judgement errors. Other serious illnesses may include ulcers and heart disease.



Teacher Prompt:

By understanding yourselves and becoming more aware of the stressors in your life you will become better equipped to deal and cope with your stress in a more healthy way.



Gen You Feel Uff My Life Design Student Workbook





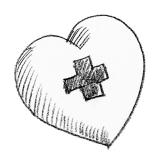








Four Rey Messages



Change is constant

Recognize the stressors in your life

You control your reactions

Empower yourself - You can do it!



Detangle your stress with the Can You Feel It? My Life Design Workbook

This workbook is for you. It is designed to help you identify your stressors. You will discover what signs and symptoms stress can cause. You will be able to explore some healthy coping strategies and decide which ones work the best for you. When we find ways to manage and cope with the stress in our lives, we become more resilient.

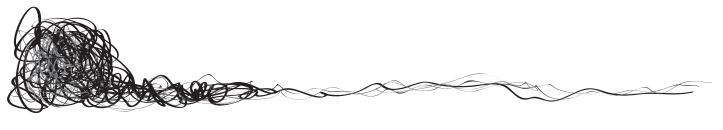
So, what is stress . . . and what is resilience?

Stress is:

...that tangled ball you feel in the pit of your stomach.

Resiliency is:

...the ability to adapt to and/or bounce back from life's changes and challenges.



Know your signs and coping coping thealthy coping stress strategies strategies

Know your Use your healthy coping stress









...a little more on stress



Stress is part of every day life. It is "a non-specific response of the body to any demand or challenge".



Stress can be anything that:

- threatens us
- challenges us
- scares us
- worries us
- thrills us



It can be real or imagined, healthy or unhealthy.



What stresses people out is different from one person to the next.



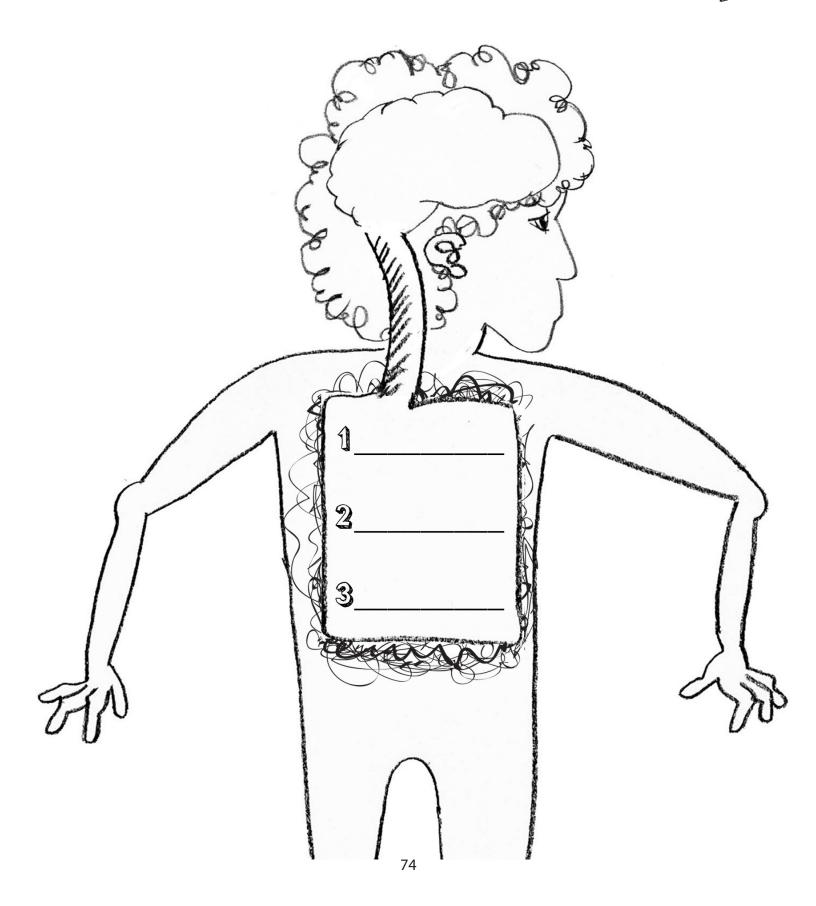
Some stress in our lives is necessary to feel alert and energized and helps us to perform better.







What stresses me out?



Write or draw on or around the ink blot
What are you feeling?
What are you thinking?
How are you behaving?

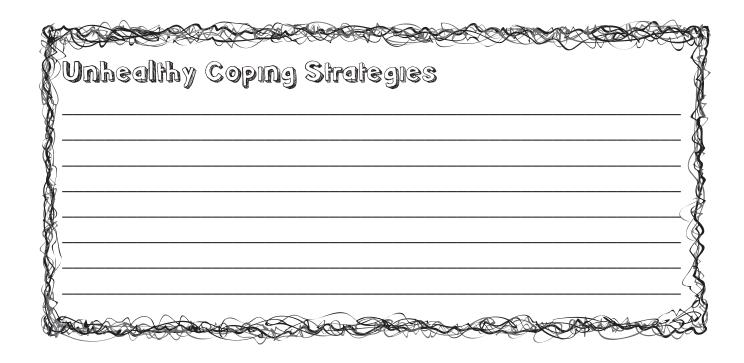


Physical

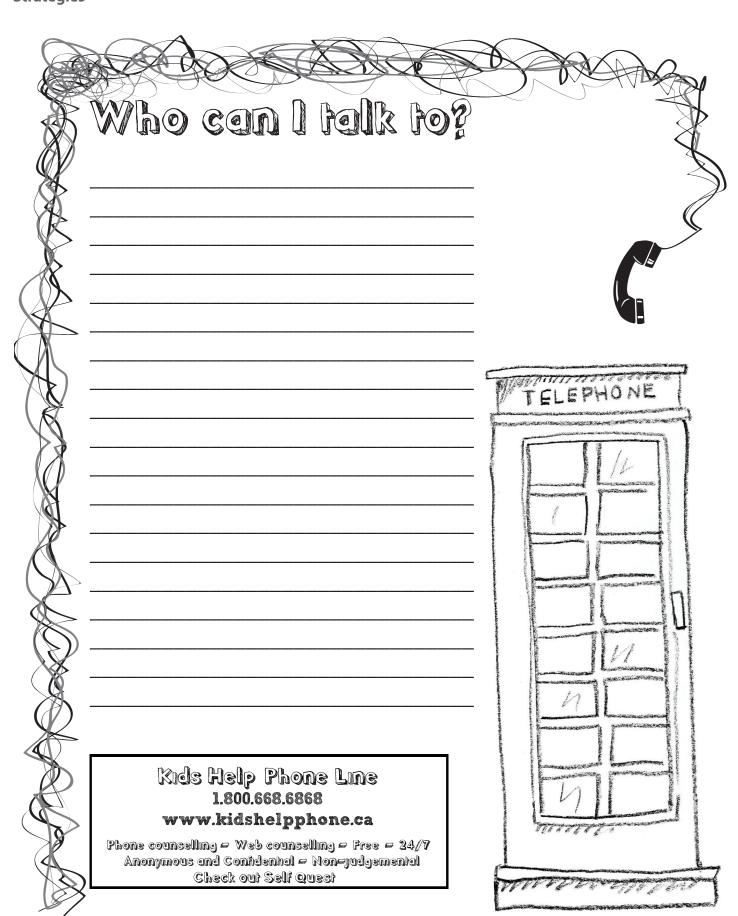
Stress affects each of us in different ways.
So how do you react when you feel stressed?
Stress goes way back to the caveman days when we needed to react quickly in order to avoid being eaten by predators. This is what we call the "fight or flight" response. It gets your body ready to do battle or run like the wind at the first sign of danger. In other words, it gets you all fired up. The problem is that when you feel threatened, your body still responds like the caveman and you're instantly ready to physically and emotionally fight or flee. You may not always be able to control your physical reactions, but you can decide how you will cope with your stress.

Emotional/Behavioural

 Coping	 	 	







Checkpoint: How am I Doing?

Name t	wo thi	ngs you c	lo well k	୬ ୧୯୮୬	with you	r shess _i	,	
Pick on	e new	shahegy	you cou	ld try to	beller	hw sqoo	h your s	ìress _o



Personal Reflection

It's good to check back regularly on how you deal with your stress.

Did you try your strategy?
Did it work for you?
How often did you try it?
If it worked well, will you continue to do it?
If it didn ⁹ t work well, what could you do instead?

[&]quot;If you can dream it, you can do it."
- Walt Disney

				Journal
				
Know your stressors	Know your signs and symptoms	Know your coping strategies	Use your healthy coping strategies	Detangle your stress
FUEL	PL	/ /	CHILL	CHAT

"...it is about bouncing back from problems and stuff with more power and more smarts."

- "Sean" (15-year-old high school student)

From Resiliency In Schools: Making It Happen for Students and Educators

by Nan Henderson and Mike Milstein



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Can You Feel IF?

Coping Strategies Props List

Note: Please use props/strategies that are age/grade appropriate and comply with School Board policy."

FUEL

Healthy Eating, Body Image/Self-Esteem

Healthy

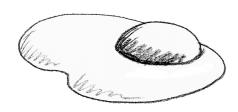
- Canada's Food Guide (rainbow)
- Plastic food model (fruit, vegetable)
- Milk carton
- Water bottle
- Juice box

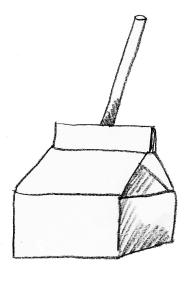
In moderation

- Soft drink
- Samples of junk food (pizza, poutine, donuts, chips)

- Too much of the moderation list
- Coffee (caffeine content found in coffee is relatively high for growing youth, consumed in moderation by adults)
- Energy drink
- Diet pills bottle/protein powder
- Scale (poor body image, self-esteem, disordered eating)
- Small mirror (poor body image, self-esteem)
- Barbie
- Fashion magazine









Healthy

- Tiny plastic or stuffed sport toy (running shoe, baseball, soccer ball, hockey stick, ballerina)
- Pedometer (walking)
- Small stuffed dog
- Workout headband or wristband
- Gym membership card
- Dyna-band (exercise)
- Skipping rope
- Kite
- Gardening tools
- Frisbee

In moderation

- Wii
- Gym membership (obsession with body image)

- Too much of the moderation list
- Helmet (if not wearing)



CHILL

Relaxation/Breathing, Unplugging, LOL, Science of Sleep, Substance Use, Tobacco

Healthy

- Artificial flower, pine cone (nature walk)
- Sand/sea shells (relaxing on the beach, sound of ocean)
- Rubber duck, bubble bath (bath)
- Candle (Aromatherapy, lavender...)
- Fake nails / nail file / face mask / massage oil (spa)
- Brown paper bag / puffer (breathing, relaxing exercise)
- Yoga tape (yoga, meditation exercise)
- Watch/calendar/hourglass (take time for yourself, time management)
- Bookmark (reading)
- iPod case / earphone (listening to music)
- Harmonica/tambourine/guitar (playing musical instrument)
- Video case (movie), video games
- TV remote (TV)
- Computer mouse (computer games)
- Deck of cards / dice (unplugging, family time)
- Scissors (hobbies, crafts)
- Eye cover / plastic sheep toy / tiny pillow (sleep)
- Stuffed dog / cat (pet therapy)
- Whistle(somebody whistling-good humour) / joke book (LOL) / cartoons section in the paper
- Stress ball / tangle

In moderation

- TV remote (TV)
- Video(movie), video games
- Computer mouse (computer games)
- iPod/instrument playing (isolating themselves)
- Deck of cards / dice (gambling)

- Too much of the moderation list
- Empty pack of cigarettes
- Mini liquor bottle (rape, car accident)
- Prescription drug empty container (sleeping pills, antidepressant, oxycontin)
- Plastic pistol/water gun (violence, suicide)
- Pregnancy test (due to substance use, date rape)
- Wrine bottle (unprotected sex STI test)
- Scissors (self-harm, cutting)
- TV remote / computer mouse (pornography)



CHAT

Communication, Healthy Relationships, Healthy Sexuality

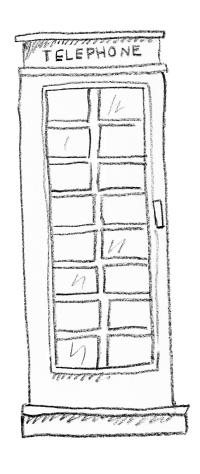
Healthy

- Cell phone
- Talking stick (taking turns to talk—listening skills)
- Writing pad/pencil
- Diary/small locket/key (journaling)
- Family picture
- Friendship bracelet
- Angel (guardian angel—trusting person)
- Stuffed toy pet (unconditional love)
- Small pillow (punch)
- Kleenex (emotions)
- Kids Help Phone wallet card
- Condom (safe sex, healthy relationship)
- Ruler www.sexualityandu.ca (resources)

In moderation

- Computer mouse (MSN, Facebook, cyberbullying)
- Cell phone (texting —poor face to face communication skills)
- Earphones (isolating themselves)

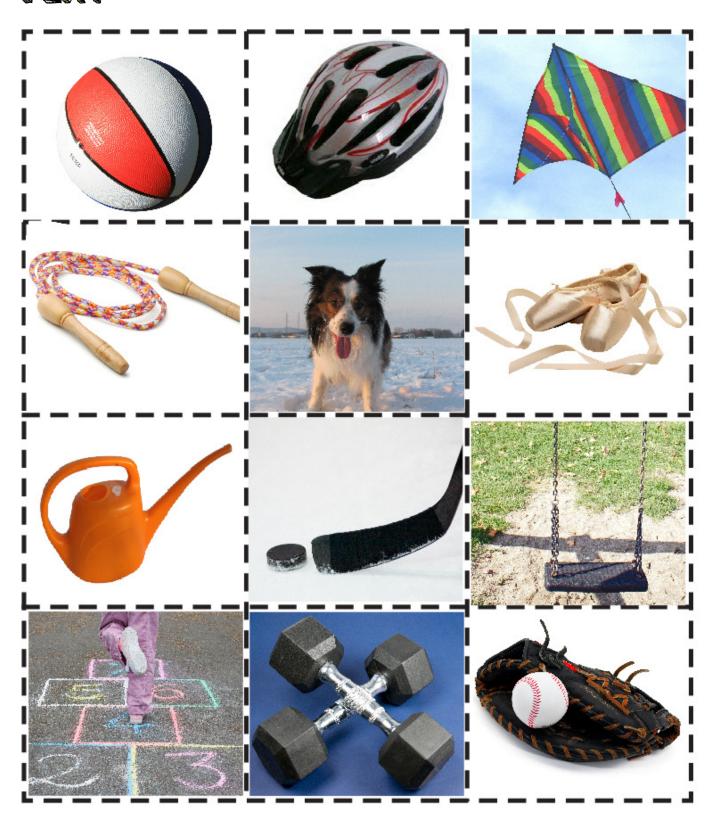
- Too much of the moderation list
- Ear plugs (poor listening skills)
- Small cage / mouse trap (feels trapped—nowhere to go or nobody to turn to)
- Pregnancy test (unprotected sex, rape, peer pressure)
- Wrine bottle (unprotected sex—STI)
- Band-aid (abusive relationship)



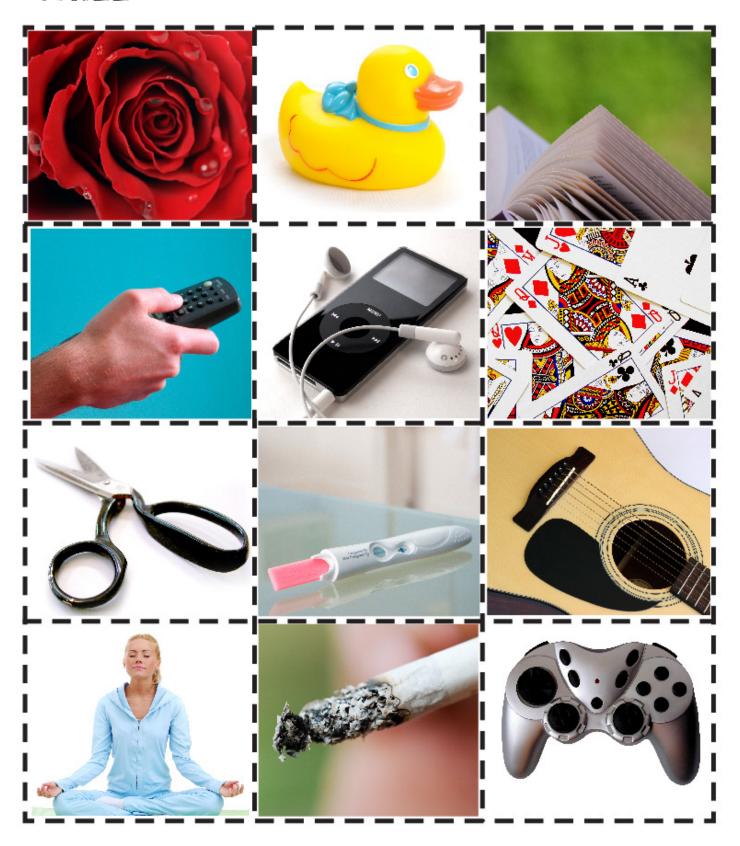
FUEL



PLAY



CHILL



CHILL



CHAT





Healthy Schools Program
Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit

Telephone: 705-721-7520 or 1-877-721-7520

Fax: 705-721-1495

Website: www.smdhu.org/HealthySchools.

A consultation with a Healthy Schools public health nurse is available to provide teachers with additional resources and materials to assist with meeting the expectaitons of the curriculum.