

# Stress Management



## What is Managing Stress?

Managing stress means learning how to handle pressure or big emotions in healthy ways—like staying calm, problem-solving, and taking care of yourself.

Manage Stress  
Middle School

✓ For each situation below, check the type of stress you think it represents:

Situation	Positive Stress	Distress (Negative)	Chronic Stress
Arguing with the same friend every day			
Playing in a championship game			
Constantly worrying about grades			
Learning a challenging new skill			
Family conflict that doesn't resolve			
Being nervous before performing			

Notes (Optional):

# Personal Stress Awareness



Rate your current stress level in each area (1-10):

1 = Minimal Stress

10= Extreme Stress

Area	Rating
<b>Academic stress</b> (schoolwork, grades, tests)	
<b>Social stress</b> (friends, peers, social media)	
<b>Family stress</b> (responsibilities, relationships, expectations)	
<b>Activity stress</b> (sports, clubs, commitments)	
<b>Identity stress</b> (who you are, who you want to be)	
<b>Health stress</b> (body image, physical concerns)	
<b>Future stress</b> (high school, college, career thoughts)	

Which area creates the most stress for you right now? Why?

What specific situations in this area cause stress?

✓ Everyone experiences and responds to stress differently. Check what applies to you:

Physical Reactions	Emotional Reactions	Thought Patterns	Behavioral Changes
<div><input type="checkbox"/> Headaches</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Stomach issues</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Muscle tension</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Fatigue</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Racing heart</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Sleep problems</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Sweating</div>	<div><input type="checkbox"/> Irritability</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Anxiety</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Sadness</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Mood swings</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Overwhelm</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Frustration</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Feeling pressured</div>	<div><input type="checkbox"/> Racing thoughts</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Negative thinking</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Catastrophizing</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Self-criticism</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty focusing</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Forgetfulness</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Rumination</div>	<div><input type="checkbox"/> Procrastination</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Withdrawing socially</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Sleep changes</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Eating changes</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Arguing more</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Using screens more</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> restlessness</div>

Other reactions I notice:

My three most common stress reactions are:

1.

2.

3.



## 5-4-3-2-1 Grounding Technique

When stress feels overwhelming, try this in-the-moment technique to ground yourself:

- **5** things you can SEE around you
- **4** things you can TOUCH/FEEL
- **3** things you can HEAR
- **2** things you can SMELL (or like the smell of)
- **1** thing you can TASTE (or like the taste of)



Our thoughts strongly influence how we feel. Practice reframing these stress-producing thoughts:

"I'm going to fail this test no matter how much I study."

**Reframe:** \_\_\_\_\_

"Everyone is going to judge me if I speak up in class."

**Reframe:** \_\_\_\_\_

"I'll never be able to handle all of this homework."

**Reframe:** \_\_\_\_\_

"My friends don't really like me."

**Reframe:** \_\_\_\_\_

Write down a stressful thought you've had recently:

\_\_\_\_\_

How could you reframe this thought?

\_\_\_\_\_

# Stress Prevention & Resilience



The best way to manage stress is to prevent it from building up. Rate your current habits when it comes to preventing stress:

Lifestyle Factor	Current Rating (1-10)	One Improvement I Could Make
Sleep (8-10 hours)		
Nutrition		
Physical activity		
Downtime/relaxation		
Social connection		
Screen time balance		
Organization/planning		
Saying no when needed		



Having people to talk to about stress is important. List people you can reach out to:

At home:

At school:

Other trusted adults:

Friends who are good listeners:

One person I can talk to this week about a current stressor:

# Stress Management Action Plan



Choose one specific stressor you're currently facing:

Stressor:

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Stress level (1-10):

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Is this within my control?

- ☐ Heart beats faster
- ☐ Stomach feels funny
- ☐ Breathing gets faster
- ☐ Headache

If within my control, what steps can I take?

1. 

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2. 

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3. 

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If outside my control, how can I adjust my response?

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Based on what you've learned, create a personal stress management plan:

Daily practices I will implement:

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Weekly habits to develop:

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My go-to strategy when I feel overwhelmed:

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