



Stress: The Struggle Is Real

Feelings of stress or anxiety are a part of life. Some levels of stress can actually help us because they encourage growth and trying new things. Extended periods of stress or anxiety, however, can negatively impact our health and our day-to-day experiences. As Trimester 2 and the New England winter sets in, it's important to recognize our stress and anxiety levels so that we can develop effective management and coping skills.

What is Stress?

Stress is our body's reaction to feeling challenged or threatened. When feeling stressed, our body produces hormones that then cause physical responses such as faster breathing and heart rate, sweating, muscle tension, flushing, and "butterflies" in our stomach. This is called the "fight, flight, or freeze" response because our bodies are planning to either run away, stand ground and fight, or get "stuck."

What are the Types Of Stress?

The APA (American Psychological Association) identifies three main forms of stress:

- 1) **Acute Stress** — this is the most common form of stress and happens due to recent or expected stressors. Acute stress can be positive (waiting for vacation!) or negative (waiting for a test). This type of stress happens to all of us and passes.

- 2) **Episodic Stress** — this is acute stress that happens frequently and may follow a pattern. It could involve worry about things happening around and to you. An example would be worrying before tests or concern a project won't get done.
- 3) **Chronic Stress** — this is the form of stress that feels big and never ending. If you feel like there is no way out, this is chronic stress. Chronic stress can affect your health over time.

When is the Stress too Much?

Feeling stress and anxiety is normal but their affect is different for different people. For some students, it's time to seek help when feelings begin to have a negative impact on everyday life and relationships. For others, it is when these thoughts and feelings begin to be so distracting that students are unable to enjoy the important things in life and/or when their stress becomes the main focus.

5 Stress Management Tips

Everyone is going to feel stress at some point. Here are some easy tips to help reduce stress both at school and at home.

Get Plenty of Sleep

We all have busy lives, but getting the suggested 7-9 hours of sleep (even more for teenagers!) improves academic performance

and decreases stress. It also puts students in a better mindset to problem-solve when stress does happen.

Take Breaks — and Make the Most of Them!

Although stress makes you feel like you don't have time to spare, it is important to take breaks! Take time to breathe and visualize (think of something calming or peaceful) or spend time with a pet. A short walk can lead to a total mindset shift.

Enlist Help

Talking to someone who can help you problem-solve can go a long way! In fact, just talking problems through out loud has been shown to help humans in general calm down and identify solutions.

Have a Health Stress Outlet

Find a way to blow off steam so you don't let stress build and lose your temper. Having your friends and family upset with you just leads to more stress!

Stay Reasonable

No one is perfect. Mistakes are a sign of learning and an important part of the process! We all have certain standards we need to meet, but expecting perfection just sets up unneeded stress.

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What is the Difference between "Stress" and "Anxiety"?

"Stress" and "anxiety" can share some of the same physical responses (such as fast heart rate and sweating) and some people are more susceptible to them than others. Some students (and adults) stress when making day to day decisions while others are more productive with under pressure.

The words "stress" and "anxiety" are mostly used in the English language to mean the same thing but in fact *they are different experiences and you can have one without the other.* "Stressful" feelings include frustration and nervousness and "anxious" feelings include fear, unease and worry. The

main difference is that stress is a reaction to something that is happening now and is triggered by a specific situation. Anxiety is concern about something that may or may not happen in the future. Anxiety is also the stress that continues after the stressor is gone.

STRENGTHENING YOUR GROWTH MINDSET

Learning from Mistakes



Yup, mistakes...we all make them. Probably the hardest part about making mistakes is how this makes us feel....we may

feel angry, embarrassed, sad, or all of these things. But you know what? Life doesn't always go as planned. Making mistakes, feeling a little sad and uncomfortable, figuring out why we made those mistakes, and learning how not to make the same mistake again, actually strengthens our brains and makes us stronger learners. What's important is coming up with a game plan for what to do when you do make a mistake.

*Understand that making a mistake doesn't feel great, but you have the ability to fix it.

*Talk with your teachers, parents, and friends to help figure out why things didn't work out.

*Be open to constructive feedback – listen to other people's ideas.

*Ask for help to come up with a plan to fix it.

*Remember your mistakes....and remember what you learned in solving them! This will help make you a stronger person and better able to all that stuff that happens in life.

The Importance of Being in School

Research shows that students who miss just 5 percent of school days (9 days) have an increased risk for academic concerns. When you are not in school, you miss the teaching that goes on in your classes. This means you have make up work to do without having the necessary instruction that goes with it. While you can't always prevent illnesses, it's important to practice good habits to keep yourself healthy like:

Get enough sleep every night

Disconnect from social media, Netflix, YouTube, and snapchat before you go to bed.

Eat well

Proper nutrition is very important for brain growth and development, including breakfast every morning! Eating too much sugar, packaged snacks, and candy may lead to lost energy and focus during the school day.

Exercise

Make sure to have some kind of exercise during the day. This can be tough in the winter, but even indoor activities that get you up and moving like cleaning count as exercise!

Think Positively

Find something to look forward to every day. It could be going to a class you really like, an afterschool activity, plans you



Parent Corner: Helping Your Child Learn from Mistakes (AKA - The Hardest Thing You'll Ever Do!)



We all want our children to grow up to be strong, capable, and independent adults. This only happens when children are allowed to

experience adversity and work their way through it. This can be a scary proposition

for a parent. How much adversity is enough? How much is too much?

Watching your student struggle with an academic or social issue and watching them fail goes against our every protective instinct. By not allowing our children to feel and experience these life events, however, we deny them the chance to build their own coping skills and to feel that pride that comes with overcoming an obstacle.

What your student needs most is honesty and support. They need you to help them acknowledge and take responsibility for themselves and their mistakes. They need you to allow them to come up with a plan to deal with situations that occur and get your feedback along the way. Most of all, your student needs to know that you will be there as a resource as they handle these life situations.



Taking Ownership of Your Learning

You have the power to decide what kind of student you want to be.

It's true! Think about it....YOU are the one at school every day, going to classes, doing homework, talking with teachers. It just makes sense that you can have the most impact on how well you do. You are starting to learn what you like, what you are already good at, and what subjects may be challenging for you. So how do you take responsibility for your learning in school?

Self-advocate! When you self-advocate, you let others know what you need in a way that is respectful and productive. When we self-advocate, our teachers and



other students can better understand our point of view and help us in the best, most effective way possible. If you don't self-advocate, teachers might not know that you don't understand or that you need a different explanation or more practice. Self-advocating saves time and decreases stress!

So what does self-advocating look like in action?

- ***Speak up** for yourself
- ***Ask questions** when you are confused or don't understand
- ***Ask for help** when you need it
- *When things aren't going well, work with your teachers and to **come up with a plan** to improve things
- ***Set your own goal** for what you want to do in school
- ***Keep track** of your own progress
- ***Set your own schedule** for homework

What to Do When You Need Help

ARE YOU FEELING A LITTLE OVERWHELMED...

WITH YOUR ACADEMICS??

ARE YOU BEHIND WITH YOUR WORK??

DO YOU NEED HELP TO STUDY FOR THAT TEST??

DO YOU HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT HOMEWORK??

YOU HAVE BEEN ABSENT AND NEED TO MAKE UP WORK??

If this sounds familiar, if this is you.....start by taking advantage of all the help offered right here at school. Did you know that help is available...

During Opportunity Block

During Advisory

At Wednesday After-School Tutoring

From your teachers after school

All you have to do is let your teacher know you need help and make arrangements to take advantage of help during opportunity block, advisory and after school.

For tutoring, all you have to do is show up on Wednesdays right after school dismissal to room 1600 (the Math Enrichment room right across from the cafeteria). High School National Honor Society students will be there waiting to help you with any subject.



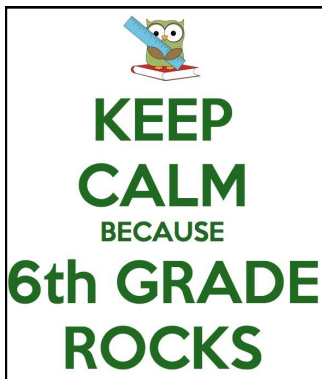


Transitions.....

6th GRADE

You have spent the first trimester learning all kinds of new things from locker combinations to ancient civilizations. You can follow a schedule now, use your Chromebook, look up your grades on PowerSchool and do work on google classroom. It feels like you've been in Middle School for much longer than just a trimester!

Now that you're used to Middle School, it's time to get better and better at these skills you've learned.



Doing your homework every night, passing in assignments on time, asking for help, studying for tests – these are all things that your teachers will be expecting you to do.

If you are having a hard time with any of these skills, now is the time to speak up and get a little help. Doing well in middle school is all about trying your best, challenging yourself, and working harder at the subjects that aren't easy for you.

7th GRADE



The first trimester is over and by now you realize that 7th grade is awesome – but also a lot of work! The skills that you

started developing last year in 6th grade, like taking notes, studying for tests, and asking for help are even

more important now! In particular, with block scheduling, keeping yourself organized and knowing when your homework and projects are due are key skills for success. Unlike 6th grade, most of the information you are learning in 7th grade is brand new. This can be really cool (Microscopes! Cells!) and feel like a lot to understand (Ancient Rome! Literary elements!).

Opportunity Blocks will be rotating and offer extra help as well as enrichment options for Science and Social

Studies. You might even get to be in a small group with Mrs. Huyler! As a 7th grader, it is important to use times such as Academic Advisory, Opportunity Block, lunch/recess, and after school as ways to get help and extra practice. The pace of second trimester will continue to pick up, so work hard and don't let yourself fall behind! There are several exciting events happening in the next trimesters to look forward to – be ready so you can enjoy them!

8th GRADE

It is already time to start talking about high school for our 8th grade students. Later this month, the School Counselors from the high school will be coming down to talk about all of the course offerings that the high school has for our students. After the course offering presentation, we will begin the course selection process for each student's 9th grade year. Students will work with their teachers, parents, and Mr. Champion to select their classes for next year.

Over the course of the rest of the school year, 8th grade students will have the opportunity to take part in a number of transition activities to prepare them for high school. Current freshmen students will come into 8th grade classes and answer any questions students may have about high school and the transition to high school. There will be an assembly in the spring when high school seniors will come down and talk about their experiences at TRHS and the 8th grade students will get the opportunity to ask questions. There will also be a Parent Information Night at the high school in late January. Over the sum-



mer, students and parents will be invited to Freshmen Orientation Night. Freshmen Orientation allows for students and parents to walk through the students schedule and meet their teachers prior to starting the school year.

If you or your student have any questions regarding the course selection process or transitioning to the high school, please reach out to Mr. Champion.



8th Grade Naviance Program

Earlier in the school year, Mr. Champion went into 8th grade classes during Opportunity Block and did presentation on Future and Career Planning. We discussed the many course selection options students have in high school and a number of post-secondary education options as well. During these presentations, students had many great questions about high school and beyond.

During this time, we explored a program called Naviance that helps students with goal setting, future and career planning, and applying to college. Over the next month, we will begin to dive into Naviance



even more. Students will have the opportunity to take a Learning Styles Inventory that will help match their strengths to certain careers that fit them best. Students will be able to view video interviews by professionals in the certain careers they are interested in and/or matched their learning styles. Over the course of the rest of the school year and in high school, students will continue to explore Naviance and keep building towards their future with their school counselor.

Timberlane to Attend NH Teen Institute's Leaders in Prevention Program in February!



Since 1983, NH Teen Institute has offered comprehensive, dynamic, leadership training programs for middle and

high school students to help them thrive in the midst of the pressure of growing up. The weekend Leaders In Prevention (LIP) program brings together a team of eight middle school students and two advisors (Ms. Binette & Ms. O'Sullivan) for a weekend of activities and discussion with other teams from across New Hampshire. Schools identify students with leadership potential who are capable of working as part of a team and are willing to bring new skills back to their community.

While at LIP, the students participate in

an array of learning opportunities to foster personal growth, leadership skills, and an understanding of the importance of community. They learn about bullying prevention, substance misuse prevention, diversity and other topics. Each team will learn how to create an action plan of their own and will leave LIP with a strategy for improving the climate of their school or community. Students work hard during the weekend, but have a great time while they are doing it!

Snow Days, Blizzard Bag Days, and Block Scheduling

Happy Winter! As the weather turns colder and snow moves in, this is the first time that TRMS tackles Blizzard Bag and Snow Days with our new block scheduling. Here are some handy FYIs for both students and their families:

- 1) If we have a Snow Day, the day we come back to school is the *next* day in the block sequence. For instance, if the snow day was planned to be an "A" day, when school resumes, students will come back to a "B" day.
- 2) If we have more than one Snow Day in a row, the same sequence applies. For example, if we have two snow days and the first was scheduled to be an "A" day and the second a "B" day, it will be "A" day again when students return.
- 3) If it is a Blizzard Bag Day, students are *only responsible for the two Core classes they would have attended that day* and their UAs. Unlike previous Blizzard Bags, students now only need to complete work for that day's sequence.
- 4) If we have a Delayed Opening, there is a shortened block schedule and the day ("A" or "B") stays as planned.
- 5) Sometimes teaching teams decide to run shorter blocks for all 4 classes after missed days or before/after vacations. Teachers will let students know this is happening and post schedules so that everyone can adjust accordingly.
- 6) As always, if you have any questions, don't hesitate to contact teachers and School Counseling staff!



Important Dates to Remember for Trimester 2

Progress Reports Posted Friday, January 26th

Winter Vacation February 26th through March 2nd

Report Cards Grades Close Friday, March 16th

Report Cards Posted Friday, March 23rd



How to Fight The Winter Blahs

It's that time again in New England. Snow! Sleet! Cold temperatures! Winter in New Hampshire can make us feel like staying under the covers and curling up with a good book by the fire. But unfortunately we have school to do! Here are some easy tips to try in order to manage those winter "blahs."

1) Keep active!

Research has shown that a daily one-hour walk in the middle of the day could be as helpful as light treatment for raising mood.

2) Get outside!

Go outdoors in the natural daylight as much as possible, especially in the afternoon and on brighter days.

3) Keep warm

Let's face it — feeling cold makes you feel more blah! Wear warm clothes and shoes appropriate for the weather. Eating hot food and drinking warm liquids helps too.

4) Eat Healthy

They are called "comfort foods" for a reason! When we feel blah, we want to eat foods that have a lot of carbs, such as pasta and potatoes, and fat, such as chocolate and processed snacks. Balance those out with fruits and vegetables.

5) Try Light Therapy

Less sunlight during the winter months can lead to a decrease in Vitamin D, which can negatively impact mood. One way to get more Vitamin D is light therapy at home. Light boxes give out very bright light at least 10 times stronger than ordinary home and office lighting. Sitting in front of a light box for up to two hours a day can be helpful for some people.

6) Take Up a New Hobby

Keeping your mind active can help fight back against the blahs by keeping you focused and concentrating. Give yourself something interesting to look forward to.

7) See Friends and Family

Humans are social animals and interacting with other helps improve our mood. Rather than staying in the house, go hang out with a friend or two!

