

## Level 1 Unit WB1: Stress Management

### 1.1. To help students understand what is meant by stress, introduce the concept and explain how it is a normal response to challenging or threatening situations.

Encourage students to share their own experiences of stress and how it affects them.

### 1.2. Explain the purpose of stress on the body and how it prepares us for action in difficult situations.

Discuss the physical and emotional symptoms of stress and how they can vary from person to person.

### 1.3. Discuss the different types of stress, including acute stress, chronic stress, and traumatic stress.

Help students understand the causes and effects of each type of stress, and how they can manage their stress levels.

Some activities to support these learning outcomes could include:

Encourage students to keep a stress diary for a week, where they record any stressful situations, they encounter and how they feel in response to them. This can help them identify patterns in their stress levels and triggers.

Have students create a mind map or brainstorm of different types of stress, and how they affect them physically and emotionally.

Show students videos or articles about the effects of stress on the body, and discuss what they learned.

Have students create posters or presentations on different stress management techniques, such as exercise, deep breathing, or mindfulness.

Encourage students to practice stress reduction techniques and share their experiences with the class. This could include activities like yoga, meditation, or going for a walk.

## 2 Know the effects of stress

### 2.1 Identify the short-term and long-term effects of stress on a person

Short-term effects of stress might include physical symptoms such as headaches, muscle tension, or stomach problems, as well as emotional symptoms such as anxiety, irritability, or difficulty concentrating.

Long-term effects of stress can be more serious, such as an increased risk of heart disease, high blood pressure, depression, or other mental health issues.

### 2.2 Identify why stress can be useful

Stress can be useful in small amounts because it can help motivate us to take action and achieve our goals.

In some situations, stress can even be enjoyable, such as when we feel excited or challenged by a new opportunity.

### 2.3 Identify why stress can be harmful

Stress can be harmful when it becomes chronic or overwhelming, leading to negative physical and emotional consequences.

Too much stress can interfere with our ability to function effectively, leading to problems at work, in

relationships, or in other areas of our lives.

### 2.4 Identify how prolonged stress can damage health and well-being

Prolonged stress can lead to a variety of negative health outcomes, such as high blood pressure, heart disease, obesity, or mental health issues such as anxiety or depression.

Chronic stress can also impair our ability to cope with future stressors, leading to a cycle of negative outcomes that can be difficult to break.

Some guidance for teaching these outcomes might include:

Start by helping students to understand what stress is and how it affects the body and mind.

Use real-life examples to help students identify short-term and long-term effects of stress, such as how stress might affect someone preparing for an important exam or dealing with a difficult family situation.

Discuss why stress can be helpful in certain situations, and help students to identify healthy coping mechanisms that can help manage stress in a positive way.

Talk about why stress can be harmful and how it can contribute to physical and mental health issues, and help students to identify warning signs that they might be experiencing chronic or overwhelming stress.

Encourage students to develop healthy coping strategies that can help them manage stress in a positive way, such as exercise, relaxation techniques, or seeking social support when needed.

### 3 Understand possible causes of stress

Describe a range of possible causes of stress: Students should be able to identify different factors that can cause stress, such as academic pressure, family issues, social situations, health concerns, and financial difficulties.

Identify how causes of stress can vary between different people: Students should understand that what may cause stress in one person may not cause stress in another. They should consider factors such as personality, coping skills, and life experiences that can affect how individuals respond to stress.

Give examples of situations that trigger own stress: Students should be encouraged to reflect on their own experiences and identify situations that trigger stress for them. This can help them develop self-awareness and identify strategies for coping with stress.

It may be helpful to provide students with examples of common stressors and ask them to identify others that are relevant to their own lives. Encourage open discussion and sharing of personal experiences while also emphasizing the importance of respecting each other's boundaries and privacy. Encourage students to identify healthy coping strategies and provide resources for additional support if needed.

#### 4.1 List the symptoms of stress

Provide students with a list of common physical, emotional, and behavioural symptoms of stress

Discuss how these symptoms can vary from person to person and how they can also change depending on the intensity and duration of stress

Encourage students to pay attention to their own body and emotions to recognise signs of stress

#### 4.2 Identify how people can respond to a stressful situation

Discuss different coping mechanisms that people can use to deal with stress, such as exercise, relaxation techniques, social support, and problem-solving skills

Encourage students to identify their own coping strategies and discuss which ones work best for them

Highlight the importance of seeking help from a trusted adult or professional if the stress becomes too overwhelming

#### 4.3 Give examples of how stress changes behaviour

Discuss how stress can affect people's behaviour, such as irritability, changes in appetite, difficulty

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sleeping, and decreased motivation

Encourage students to share their own experiences of how stress has affected their behaviour and discuss how this can impact their daily life and relationships

Highlight the importance of recognizing these changes in behaviour and seeking support if necessary

### **5.1 Identify a range of healthy strategies for preventing and reducing the effects of stress:**

Encourage students to identify healthy strategies such as exercise, relaxation techniques, mindfulness, talking to a trusted friend or family member, and taking breaks.

Discuss the importance of finding healthy outlets for stress and avoiding harmful coping mechanisms such as substance abuse.

### **5.2 Identify the benefits of using healthy strategies:**

Ask students to reflect on the benefits of using healthy strategies, such as improved physical and mental health, increased resilience, and better overall well-being.

### **5.3 Describe how using one healthy strategy has helped to prevent or reduce the effects of own stress:**

Encourage students to share personal experiences of how using a healthy strategy has helped them cope with stress.

Discuss the importance of self-care and taking proactive steps to manage stress.

### **5.4 Give examples of harmful strategies people may use to cope with stress:**

Discuss harmful coping mechanisms such as substance abuse, overeating, and avoidance.

Encourage students to identify the negative consequences of these harmful coping mechanisms.

### **5.5 Identify situations when people may need additional or professional support:**

Discuss situations where additional or professional support may be necessary, such as when stress becomes overwhelming or interferes with daily functioning.

Encourage students to seek support from trusted adults, such as teachers, counsellors, or healthcare professionals.

### **5.6 Identify support available to people experiencing stress:**

Discuss different types of support available to people experiencing stress, such as counselling, therapy, and support groups.

Encourage students to seek out support resources and to provide support to others who may be experiencing stress.

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