

SEPTEMBER 2022

HOW TO TALK WITH YOUR KIDS ABOUT STRESS

COUNSELING PARTNERS OF LOS ANGELES

NEW YEAR, NEW STRESS?

AS KIDS HEAD BACK TO SCHOOL AND CLASSES COMMENCE, CHILDREN AND ADULTS ALIKE MAY BE COMING BACK WITH FEELINGS OF STRESS AND ANXIETY. ACADEMIC PRESSURE, SOCIAL CONCERNS, AND READJUSTING TO SCHOOL LIFE ARE JUST A FEW ISSUES CHILDREN CAN FACE.

IT'S IMPORTANT TO UNDERSTAND THAT STRESS CAN BE BOTH POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE. IN THIS ISSUE, WE WILL EXAMINE THE TYPES OF STRESS, HOW TO TALK WITH YOUR CHILDREN ABOUT STRESS, AND HOW TO PREVENT STRESS.

CPLA'S MISSION

The mission of Counseling Partners of Los Angeles is to support at-risk and under-served students living in Los Angeles by providing a low-cost, school-based program that delivers essential counseling and support services students need in order to grow toward their full potential emotionally, intellectually, morally and socially.

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INTERESTED IN COUNSELING FOR YOUR CHILD?

CPLA's counseling services are **FREE** to all students attending one of our partner schools! Reach out to the school principal or your child's teacher or request a CPLA referral form from the school.

Follow CPLA on Instagram for more helpful posts
 [@counseling_partners_of_la](https://www.instagram.com/counseling_partners_of_la)

TYPES OF STRESS

POSITIVE STRESS

POSITIVE STRESS IS BRIEF STRESS THAT MAY BE EXPERIENCED WHEN FACING A CHALLENGE. IT OFTEN MOTIVATES KIDS TO TRY NEW THINGS, ACCOMPLISH GOALS, AND GET THINGS DONE. AFTER THE CHALLENGE, THE STRESS GOES AWAY. SOME EXAMPLES INCLUDE PREPARING FOR AN EXAM, PRACTICING FOR A BIG GAME, OR AUDITIONING FOR A RECITAL.

CHRONIC STRESS AND TRAUMATIC STRESS

STRESS THAT LASTS FOR WEEKS AND MAY NEGATIVELY IMPACT CHILDREN IS CALLED CHRONIC STRESS. THIS TYPE OF STRESS MAY BE HARD ON KIDS WHO HAVE LITTLE SUPPORT OR LACK APPROPRIATE COPING SKILLS. SOME EXAMPLES INCLUDE HAVING A CHRONIC HEALTH CONDITION, LOSING A PARENT, OR HAVING PARENTS WHO ARE GOING THROUGH A DIVORCE. TRAUMATIC STRESS IS A RESULT OF AN ACUTE EVENT THAT IS SERIOUS AND SUDDEN. EVENTS LIKE ABUSE AND VIOLENCE FALL INTO THIS CATEGORY.

[HTTPS://KIDSHALTH.ORG/EN/PARENTS/STRESS.HTML](https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/stress.html)

HOW TO TALK WITH YOUR KIDS ABOUT STRESS

QUESTIONS TO ASK:

- WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF WE WERE TOTALLY STRESS-FREE?
- WHAT CAUSES YOU TO STRESS OUT?
- HOW DO YOU KNOW THAT YOUR STRESS LEVEL IS HIGH? WHAT ARE YOUR PERSONAL STRESS SIGNS?
- IF YOU COULD TALK TO YOUR STRESS...WHAT WOULD YOU TELL IT ABOUT WHAT YOU LIKE AND DON'T LIKE ABOUT IT?
- WHAT IS A HEALTHY WAY YOU DEAL WITH STRESS?
- WHAT ARE UNHEALTHY COPING CHOICES YOU SEE IN YOURSELF OR OTHER PEOPLE?
- SHARE A TIME WHEN YOU HELPED SOMEONE ELSE WHO WAS STRESSED-OUT. WHAT DID YOU LEARN FROM THAT EXPERIENCE ABOUT YOURSELF AND OTHERS?
- SOMETIMES IT TAKES COURAGE TO COPE THROUGH LIFE'S CHALLENGES. IMAGINE THAT COURAGE WAS A COLOR. WHAT COLOR WOULD YOUR COURAGE BE?

Asking these questions can open up the conversation about stress and show children that stress can actually be a good thing in some situations.



How to Prevent Excessive Stress

1. RECOGNIZE THE SIGNS OF STRESS

ACCORDING TO THE AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION, THE SIGNS OF STRESS IN CHILDREN CAN MANIFEST IN THESE WAYS:

- **Irritability and anger:** Children sometimes find it hard to express how they feel. Kids and teens facing a lot of stress may be argumentative or short-tempered.
- **Changes in behavior:** Sudden changes like a previously social teenager not going out or a child who was a good listener but who now misbehaves may be a sign of stress.
- **Trouble sleeping:** Excessive stress may affect children's sleeping routines and ability to get the rest they need.
- **Neglecting responsibilities:** If a young person neglects homework and social responsibilities, it may be a sign that they are stressed.
- **Eating changes:** Eating too much or eating too little may indicate stress levels are high.
- **Getting sick more often:** Stress often manifests as physical symptoms. Stressed children may report stomachaches or headaches and make frequent trips to the school nurse.

<https://www.apa.org/topics/child-development/stress>

2. PROMOTE STRESS MANAGEMENT

- Make sure kids get enough sleep.
 - 6 to 12 year-olds need 10-12 hours a night and teens need 8-10 hours a night.
- Embrace the upside of stress as a motivator for action (see videos below)
- Exercise
- Talk about it!
- Combat negative thinking
- Model health coping as parents
- Encourage mindfulness

If you think your child could benefit from talking to a counselor, please reach out to your school's principal, child's teacher, or request a referral form from the office.

<https://www.apa.org/topics/child-development/stress>



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RcGyVTaoXEU>

**Good stress vs.
Bad Stress in Kids**



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kHpD2ypobuE>