

Stress Management



CHECK LIST

- 40-60 minutes
- Note paper and/or flip chart paper

ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION

Everyone experiences a variety of stress in their day-to-day lives and can sometimes face stress that feels unsurmountable. Stress can be a trigger for drug use. Drugs can sometimes make us feel less stress in the moment, and it can be tempting to relieve the stress through chemicals. But drugs are not a long-term or safe coping mechanism. We have our own instinctive coping strategies and can learn new ones. The idea behind this activity is to actively identify what you naturally tend to do when you are stressed or facing a challenge, and determine if it's an effective strategy for you. You can also learn about the coping strategies of others and may find new and healthy strategies to try.

THE STEPS

- 1. SMALL GROUP WORK**
Take a moment to think about stress you experience in your day-to-day life. What are you nervous about? What do you worry about? Is there anything out of the normal routine that has you worried even more than usual?
- 2.** Now take a moment to think about how you generally cope with stress. Many of us cope in different ways and often it depends on the severity of the stress. Do the ways you cope settle your nerves or do you find your stress never goes away?
- 3.** Generate a list of your current coping mechanisms, noting which ones work best and when you use certain ones.
- 4.** Discuss in your small group and see if you can add some new ideas to your list. You could do this as a larger group gallery walk activity where students list their strategies on flip chart paper around the room and add to each other's' ideas. Find a local resource or resources you can call, text, or email to share with kids if the stress does become larger than you can handle.

Share your list of coping mechanisms with a friend, family member, and/or someone on your support team. Talk to them about how they cope with stress and try using a new strategy from your list if you experience stress over the next week.

The Outcome: Develop a list of effective strategies that you find work well and keep an open mind to new strategies. Sharing this work with members of your support team can help you reinforce using them in your more vulnerable moments.



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