Safe Secure Kids- Managing Stress

1. Welcome

Visual Description:

It’s a beautiful spring day in the Town of Consent Community Park. The birds are out, flowers are blooming, and the sky is clear. Heart is standing in the grass near the entrance sign to the park. Heart is an illustrated heart with a face, legs, and arms. Heart has a speech bubble that changes with the narration. The text on the screen corresponds to audio.

Audio:

Hi, friend! Heart here.

If it’s ok with you, I want to talk about stress. There’s a lot going on in our world right now, and it can be hard to make sense of it all, even for adults.

Sometimes, uncertainty and confusion can cause us to feel nervous, anxious, or stressed-out. These feelings are completely normal, and everyone experiences them, even if we experience stress for different reasons.

Interactions:

None
2. All About Stress

Visual Description:
Heart beside a tree in the park. The tree has a squirrel and a bird in it. The text corresponds to audio.

Audio:
Today, I want to learn all about stress. I want to know more about what it is, what can cause it, and what feelings we might have when we’re stressed. I believe that the more we know, the better we will be at managing it when it happens.

Will you join me and we can learn together?

Maybe you know what stress is because you often feel worried or anxious. Or maybe this is a term that is new to you.

To help us understand more about stress and what it looks like, let’s take a quick visit over to our friend Jayden’s house.

Interactions:
None
3. Jayden

Visual Description:

Inside of Jayden’s bedroom. There are a bed and poster on the wall. There is also a dry erase board with “Jayden’s room” and a smiley face written on it. Jayden is holding a basketball and a candy bar and looks sad at first, but when his dog Max appears, he looks happier. Max is a medium-size dog with floppy ears. The text corresponds to audio.

Audio:

Jayden just got home from school. Normally, Jayden likes to play basketball with his friends or chat with his dad over a snack as he unwinds from his day. However, today Jayden just wants to be alone. He goes straight to his room and closes his door.

Sensing something was wrong, Jayden’s trusty dog, Max, noses his way into Jayden’s room. His playful eyes, perky ears, wagging tail, and warm snuggles cheer Jayden up almost right away. Now that he is feeling better, Jayden is able to identify that his change in attitude and wanting to be alone are because he had a stressful day at school.

Jayden knows that taking Max for a walk always makes him feel better, so he decides they should go to the park.

Interactions:

None
4. A Walk in the Park

Visual Description:

Heart in the park near a path and a small wooden “Trail 7” sign. The text corresponds to audio. Dog walking items appear with audio: 2 lace-up sneakers, a dog collar with a tag, tennis ball, 2 dog bone-shaped treats, and a leash.

Audio:

Jayden’s situation may feel familiar for some of us. Together, let’s learn more about stress and explore some different healthy and productive ways to deal with it. As we learn, there will be 5 different questions for us to answer. With each correct answer, you’ll earn an item Jayden needs to take Max for a walk.

Those items include:

Sneakers, a collar, a tennis ball, dog treats, and a leash.

Okay, now let’s get learning!

Interactions:

None
5. What is stress?

Visual Description:

Heart in Jayden’s room with Max. Max is on Jayden’s bed looking happy with Heart. The text corresponds to audio.

Audio:

To begin understanding stress, we first need to know what stress is. How would you define stress? Is stress:

What you feel when you are worried or uncomfortable with something or someone; the feeling of joy, excitement, or gratitude; or, when you feel deep interest or affection for something or someone.

Select the best response. Then select submit. Once you get the correct answer, select next to continue.

Interactions:

Question: How would you define stress? Is stress:

Answer choices:

a) What you feel when you are worried or uncomfortable with something or someone

b) The feeling of joy, excitement, or gratitude

c) Or, when you feel deep interest or affection for something or someone

Instructions: Select the best response and then select submit.
Each choice is selectable. When selected, the answer is highlighted, indicating selection. Submit button becomes available when the choice has been selected.

5.1 Answer (a) - Feedback

Visual Description:

Heart in Jayden’s room.

Text on screen: Great Job! The definition of stress is: What you feel when you are worried or uncomfortable with something or someone. Jayden snatched up his sneakers in preparation for his walk. 5 boxes with the dog walking items (sneakers, collar, leash, treats, and ball). All are grayed out except the sneakers, indicating you have more questions to complete.

Audio:

Great job! This correct response helped Jayden snatch up his sneakers in preparation for his walk.

Interactions:

Continue button.
5.2 Answer (b) or (c) - Feedback

Visual Description:
Heart in Jayden’s room looking sad. The text corresponds to audio.

Audio:
Hmm...not quite. Take another look at the definitions and try again.

Interactions:
Try again button takes you back to the question.
6. Understanding Stress

Visual Description:

Close-up view of Jayden’s head. We can see inside his head at an illustration of his brain. His brain has a face and arms. At first, his brain looks happy, but changes to frightened when audio describes how the brain reacts to danger. The text corresponds to audio.

Audio:

Just like any other feeling or emotion, stress is completely normal, and we all experience it. In fact, stress is actually a natural instinct and our brain’s way of trying to protect us.

Without having to think about it, our brain is always working to keep our body-safe. When something happens that our brain perceives as a danger, a little alarm goes off, and in turn, we respond in 3 ways: we either freeze, fight, or take flight.

Let’s use Max as an example to help us understand these three different responses a little better.

Interactions:

None
7. Understanding Stress - Max

Visual Description:

Max three different ways in the park. Freeze- his ears are down, and he looks scared. Fight- he’s barking, and his teeth are showing. Flight- he’s running away.

Audio:

When Max feels threatened, he can freeze, fight, or take flight. Select each of these options to learn more about what they mean and what it could look like when it happens.

When you are done reviewing, select next to continue.

Interactions:

When Max feels threatened, he can...

Buttons: Freeze, Fight, Flight

Next button.
7.1 Freeze

**Visual Description:**

Max is standing still, looking frightened. The text corresponds to audio.

**Audio:**

When Max feels threatened, he can freeze, which we see when he cowes and puts his ears back.

When the “Freeze” response occurs to us, it might feel like our minds go blank or like we can’t move or talk. We might react by getting tense or holding our breath. We may even start daydreaming or letting our minds wander. These feelings and responses are our body’s way of trying to help us hide from whatever is dangerous.

**Interactions:**

Close button returns to the selection of Max’s responses to stress.
7.2 Fight

Visual Description:

Max is barking and showing his teeth. The text corresponds to audio.

Audio:

If Max would respond to stress in “fight” mode, he might bark at or attack whatever he feels threatened by. When you or I experience the “fight” response, our muscles tense up, and we begin to sweat. Since humans can’t bark, the fight response often looks like arguing, yelling or raising our voice, clenching our fists, or wanting to stomp, kick, or throw things.

Instinctually, it’s our body’s way of preparing to confront the threat head-on.

Interactions:

Close button returns to the selection of Max’s responses to stress.
Visual Description:

Max is running away. The text corresponds to audio.

Audio:

If Max sees something that scares him, he might turn and run the other way.

When humans respond with flight, that doesn’t always mean they’re turning and running in the opposite direction. We may feel restless and fidgety, or we may feel trapped. We might start breathing faster as we think about how we can get away from a stressful situation.

When we respond to a threat with “flight” that just means our body is preparing to run away to protect ourselves.

Interactions:

Close button returns to the selection of Max’s responses to stress.
8. Jayden’s Response

Visual Description:
Heart, Jayden, and Max are in Jayden’s room. Jayden is petting Max on his bed. They both look happy. Heart fades away is replaced by question text.

Audio:
Now that we know a little more about the ways we can react in stressful situations, let’s take another look at Jayden.

When Jayden decided to spend time alone in his room, do you think he was reacting in a fight, freeze, or flight manner?

Select the response that you think fits best, then select submit to check your answer.

Interactions:

Question: Do you think Jayden was reacting in a fight, freeze, or flight manner?

Answer choices:

a) Fight
b) Freeze
c) Flight

Instructions: Select the best response and then select submit.

Each choice is selectable. When selected, the answer is highlighted, indicating selection. Submit button becomes available when the choice has been selected.
8.1 Answer (a) or (b) - Feedback

Visual Description:
Heart in Jayden’s room looking sad. Text on screen: Not Quite. Hmm...not quite. Let’s try again.

Audio:
Good guess, but not quite. Let’s try again!

Interactions:
Try again button takes you back to the question.

8.2 Answer (c) - Feedback
**Visual Description:**

Heart in Jayden’s room. The text corresponds to audio. 5 boxes with the dog walking items (sneakers, collar, leash, treats, and ball). All are grayed out except the sneakers and collar, indicating you have more questions to complete.

**Audio:**

By choosing to spend time alone in his room while avoiding other people, Jayden was reacting in a flight response, meaning he might have been running away from his bad day and the things he enjoys. Maybe Jayden knew he needed some time by himself to reflect on his day and gather his thoughts and emotions, so it’s not necessarily a bad reaction. Choosing this response has earned you Max’s collar! Great job, let’s keep going!

**Interactions:**

Continue button.

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**9. Identifying Stress**

**Visual Description:**

Jayden is sweating and looks sad. He is in his room with Max. Max is wearing his collar. The text corresponds to audio.
Audio:

Sometimes it can be tricky to tell if we are in fight, flight, or freeze mode – and that’s okay.

What’s more important is to understand how our bodies and minds react when we’re feeling stressed.

Stress can show up in 3 different ways: physically, mentally, and emotionally

Being able to identify feelings, thoughts, or emotions that happen as a result of stress allows us to react in ways that are positive and productive.

Select each to learn more about what stress can look like when we react in a physical, mental, or emotional way.

Interactions:

Stress can show up in three different ways. Select each to learn more.

Buttons: Physically, Mentally, Emotionally

Next button.

9.1 Physically

Visual Description:

Jayden is sweating and looks sad. He is in his room with Max. The text corresponds to audio.
Audio:

When you’re stressed, your body might react in a physical way. For instance, you might get a headache or bellyache. You might have trouble falling asleep or staying awake. You may not feel as hungry, or you may find that you’re eating more than usual. It’s also possible to get sweaty hands or feel butterflies in your stomach.

In general, if you notice something unusual happening with your body, like the examples we just listed, it might mean that you’re feeling stressed.

Interactions:

Close button.

9.2 Mentally

Visual Description:

Jayden is sweating and looks sad. He is in his room with Max. The text corresponds to audio.

Audio:

When our mind responds to stress, we might have trouble paying attention, focusing, or remembering things.
Interactions:

Close button.
9.3 Emotionally

Visual Description:

Jayden is sweating and looks sad. He is in his room with Max. The text corresponds to audio.

Audio:

It is common for stress to affect our emotions. It can make us feel angry, frustrated, scared, afraid, or cranky.

Interactions:

Closed button.
10. Everyone is Different

Visual Description:

Heart beside a pond with 2 adult mallard ducks and 3 ducklings. The text corresponds to audio.

Audio:

It’s important to note that everyone is different, so the way our bodies, minds, and hearts react to stress is going to be different.

Remember that there is no right or wrong way to experience stress. Let’s take a moment to think about how you experience it.

Interactions:

None
11. Your Stress

Visual Description:

Max at the park, looking a little stressed. There are 2 park benches under a gazebo in the background.

Audio:

There are many things or events that can cause us to “stress out,” which just means that we’re reacting to the stress in a physical, mental, or emotional way. These things or events are referred to as “stressors.”

Can you name some of your stressors, or things that cause you to feel stressed? Type your response into the box and hit submit.

Interactions:

Instructions: Name some of your stressors or things that cause you to feel stressed. Type them below.

Blank field with space to type answer.

Submit button.
11.1 Your Stress - Feedback

Visual Description:

Heart at the park. The text corresponds to audio. 5 boxes with the dog walking items (sneakers, collar, leash, treats, and ball). Sneakers, collar, and leash are full color; treats and ball are grayed out, indicating you have more questions to complete.

Audio:

Great job reflecting on your own stress. That’s not an easy exercise. Taking the time to think through that earned you Max’s leash! We’re one step closer to being able to take him for a walk in the park. Now, let’s learn more about common things or events that may stress us out.

Interactions:

Continue button.
12. Common Stressors

Visual Description:
Heart at the park next to a tree with a squirrel and bird. The text corresponds to audio.

Audio:
Just like the way we feel, and experience stress is different for everyone, the reasons we stress out are going to be different too.
However, there are some common stressors, including:
Not sleeping well; tests or homework; a fight with a friend, sibling, or loved one; someone making fun of you; a new activity such as the first day of school; moving; a new family member such as a new baby or step-parent; giving a presentation, or wanting to do well on your sports team.

Interactions:
None
13. Changing Stressors

Visual Description:

Heart at the park next to a tree with a squirrel and bird. The text corresponds to audio.

Audio:

Those are just a few examples of some common stressors. The things that stress you out can change over time. What stresses you out this week might not bother you next week. For example, maybe you were stressed about a math test last week, but you’re not this week because you studied more and feel more confident about the materials.

Stressors can also be different for everyone.

Maybe you’re stressed about the math test, but you might have a friend who never stresses out over tests! Remember, we’re all different!

Interactions:

None
14. Coping Strategy

Visual Description:

Jayden and Max in Jayden’s room. They both look stressed. Max is sweating and looks worried. Max’s ears are down, and is frowning.

Audio:

Think about a time when you were feeling stressed. How did you react? How do you typically react when you feel stressed out? Take a moment to think about it. Then, share your answer here by typing in the box.

Once you are done, select submit.

Interactions:

Question: How do you react when you’re feeling stressed? When I’m feeling stressed, I react by:
Blank field with space to type answer.
Submit button.
14.1 Coping Strategy - Feedback

Visual Description:
Heart in Jayden’s room. The text corresponds to audio. 5 boxes with the dog walking items (sneakers, collar, leash, treats, and ball). Sneakers, collar, leash, and treats are full color; ball is grayed out, indicating you have one more question to complete.

Audio:
Great job thinking through that and sharing your answer! It’s important for each of us to be able to recognize how we deal with stress.
Your careful reflection helped you gather the dog treats for your walk!

Interactions:
None
15. Coping

Visual Description:

Split-screen. Jayden and Max in the room on the left. Heart with a journal in the park on the right. The text corresponds to audio.

Audio:

When we do things that could help us feel better or relieve our stress, that’s called coping. Coping is when we use our actions or words to help us manage, control, or reduce our stress.

Just like each of us feels stressed out by different things, we cope in different ways as well. For example, Jayden coped by spending time alone. I like to write in my journal when I’ve had a stressful day. You probably have your own way of coping.

There are both positive and negative ways that we can cope. The key to healthy coping is all about balance and moderation.

Interactions:

None
16. Healthy & Unhealthy Coping Strategies

**Visual Description:**

Pond with 2 adult mallards and 3 ducklings. The text corresponds to audio.

**Audio:**

Let's look at some healthy and unhealthy coping strategies.

Healthy coping strategies can include listening to music, talking to a trusted adult or friend, journaling, playing outside, going on a bike ride, walking the dog, or doing a breathing exercise.

Unhealthy coping strategies can include not talking about your feelings, throwing things, hitting someone, slamming doors, or losing your temper.

Sometimes we try to cope by distracting ourselves with something like playing video games or watching TV. But if we do too much one of thing, it can become unhealthy. Coping this way might be okay to do sometimes, but we don’t want to make it habit.

**Interactions:**

None
17. More about Unhealthy Coping

Visual Description:

Split-screen. Jayden in his room, looking stressed on the left. Jayden is holding a basketball in the park, smiling on the right.

Audio:

Our goal is to cope with stress in healthy, positive ways, but that’s not always what happens. Instead of reacting in the unhealthy ways we just mentioned, we should try to figure out what’s really causing our stress and find a way to fix it, because unhealthy coping strategies can make our stress worse and affect us long-term.

If you do react in an unhealthy way, that’s ok and completely normal! Your feelings are still valid; you just need to find healthier ways to express them. Be sure to own up to any unhealthy coping strategies. If your actions, like losing your temper or hitting, negatively affected someone else, make sure you apologize. Finally, learn from this and try to communicate or manage your feelings in a healthier way next time.

Talk to a trusted adult if you’re having trouble naming what it is you’re feeling or why you’re stressed. Your trusted adult can help you and talking through things can be a great coping strategy.

Interactions:

None
18. Motivating vs. Hindering Stress

Visual Description:

Jayden and Max in Jayden’s room. They both look stressed. The text corresponds to audio.

Audio:

Being or feeling stressed is often seen as a bad thing since it can make us feel anxious or frustrated, or hurt us physically. However, other stress can excite and motivate us.

Remember when we talked about our 3 instinctual responses to stress? The fight, freeze, or flight response? That is how our brain and body get ready to solve problems and tackle challenges. When we overcome problems, our brain “feels good” and remembers our successes. Sounds pretty positive to me!

Interactions:

None
19. Math Test

Visual Description:

Jayden in his room. Calculator, paper with “Math test” written on front and pencil appear beside Jayden. The text corresponds to audio.

Audio:

Remember that math test you were stressing over? When you think about the test, you might feel your heart rate rise, and you realize that next time you might need to study a little bit longer, ask the teacher for help, or study with a friend. This is an instance where reacting to our stress in a positive way can help us do better in the future.

Interactions:

None
20. Roller Coaster

Visual Description:

Jayden in his room. Math test items are replaced with 2 tickets with a roller coaster on them. The text corresponds to audio.

Audio:

Another example might be trying something new – like the big roller coaster you’ve wanted to go on! You might have butterflies in your stomach and sweaty palms while you are waiting in line, but you end up having fun on the ride. Next time, you will likely feel more relaxed when you go on another roller coaster because your body learned that it was fun!

Interactions:

None
21. My Healthy Plan

Visual Description:

Heart and Max in Jayden's room. The text corresponds to audio.

Audio:

Before we wrap up this lesson, take time to think about how you can react in a healthy way the next time you're feeling stressed. Here are the healthy coping mechanisms we learned about. You could try one of these or something unique to you the next time you're feeling stressed.

Choose which healthy coping mechanism you will use to help you respond to stress in a way that is productive and helps you feel better. If you choose other, type-in your answer. Once you have made a decision, select submit.

Interactions:

Question: Think about how you can react in a healthy way the next time you're feeling stressed. Healthy coping mechanisms:

Answer choices:

• Listening to music
• Talking to a trusted adult or friend
• Journaling
• Playing outside
• A bike ride
• Walking the dog
• Doing a breathing exercise
• Other: ________

Submit button.

Each choice is selectable. When selected, the answer(s) text color changes, indicating selection. Submit button becomes available when the choice has been selected.

21.1 My Healthy Plan - Feedback

Visual Description:

Heart in Jayden’s room. The text corresponds to audio. 5 boxes with the dog walking items (sneakers, collar, leash, treats, and ball). All items are in full color, indicating you have completed all the questions.

Audio:

Great idea! The things that cause us stress can be outside of our control, but with a plan in place, we can choose how we react to stress! With this answer, you earned the final item needed to take Max on a walk...a tennis ball!

Interactions:

Continue button.
22. Everyone is Different

Visual Description:

Heart in the foreground with speech bubble. Jayden in the background playing ball with Max. Max has the leash and collar, and Jayden is wearing his sneakers. The text corresponds to audio.

Audio:

Thanks for hanging out with me today and talking about this important topic. If you’re ever not sure who you can talk to about feelings, check out our lesson on trusted adults! You and a trusted adult can also explore some other topics on safesecurekids.org.

Interactions:

None