

## STRESS AWARENESS

RESOURCE TOOLKIT



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# STRESS AWARENESS

#### INTRO

April is Stress Awareness Month, a time dedicated to raising awareness about the importance of managing stress for a healthier lifestyle. Understanding the distinction between positive and negative stress, as well as learning effective stress management techniques, can significantly enhance our overall well-being—both mentally and physically!

This month's Free Your Feels mental health toolkit is designed to support both youth and the adults in their lives by providing comprehensive resources and practical strategies for managing stress. You'll find information on recognizing the signs of stress and anxiety, as well as tips for creating a supportive environment to help manage and/or cope with stress, all to help you navigate the challenges of stress in a healthy and constructive way. By equipping yourself with these tools, you can build positive mental well-being for yourself and those around you!



### FOR EVERYONE

Did you know there's good stress and bad stress? It's important to recognize the differences between the two so that you can better manage stressful situations. Good stress is short-term and can motivate you to achieve goals, feel energized, and overcome challenges. It often occurs in exciting situations, like: Going on a first date; Riding a rollercoaster; Anticipating an upcoming exam; Preparing for an important presentation or speech. Bad stress, on the other hand, is typically not short-term, and can be overwhelming and anxiety-inducing, making it difficult to focus or complete tasks. It can have negative effects on both physical and mental health. Examples of bad stress include: Ending a relationship (platonic or romantic); Death of someone you love; Abuse or neglect; Financial challenges. Chronic, bad stress can lead to serious issues.

Managing stress involves identifying stressors and adopting healthy coping strategies.





### FOR YOUTH

Teens juggle various commitments, including academics, social interactions, and physical changes, which can often result in stress and burnout. While effective stress management requires patience and practice, it offers long-term benefits by regulating emotions, fostering personal growth, and strengthening relationships. Sometimes, the number of commitments on your plate can make it difficult to manage them all realistically. Organizing your commitments for the school year can help prevent burnout and unnecessary mental fatigue.



### ACTIONS:

The <u>Commitment Planner template</u> from NAMI is a tool designed to help students manage their school, work, and personal time, promoting mental well-being. Everyone's commitments are unique, so feel free to customize it to fit your specific needs.

	nt Planner		fill every hour o eve a buffer for		r commitments rik about settin r hanging out
		1	THURSDAY	FROM	SATURDAY
then entering the new school year, there is a rush of excitemer a many things we want to do that we forget how to apply ourse	t for all the things we want to accomplish. Sometimes there are need to what we can manage.	4	3 hours		
his guide will help you lay out all the commitments you want a nd unnecessary mental exhaustion. In this template, we consid			1 hour		
promitments. Everyone's commitments are different, so feel the	e to add or reduce as you need.	ı	Thour		2 hours
Academic Commitments The first thing you may think about is the classes you're	Family Each family has their own traditions, events and expectations.	- 1	Thour	3 hours	
king this year. Once you receive your syllabus and test. hedule, you'll be able to see how much time you'll need to	Some families may expect the eldest sibling to take care of their younger siblings. Some families may expect everyone to	u	Shour	1 hour	Thour
esignate to each cless.	get together for game nights every week. Talk with your family about any plans to help put together your commitments.		30 min.	30 min.	3 hours
ach week may be different, so play around with how much me you need to set aside to complete. To help you stay concert, you can be interest for the time you wink on your otherwisk so you can take short reflecther breaks. Seelying as homework, this will most likely vary depending on	Extraouniculars  Note that you've laid out your academics, self-care and family time, it's time to get to your extraouniculars' Extraouniculars are one of the most exciting times in high school, whether you join attivitics or participate in a club, this is a great place to build your community and close themships. When	l	3.5 hours THURSDAY	45 hours	6 hours
pcoming tests or concepts you need to take more time on, a ensure you have time, by to schedule a set amount of time ach week and spread the time over different days.	considering your options, be sure to reflect on your capacity and set your boundaries on how much time you want to gut toward this category.	I			
elf-Care effore you begin to fill up your time with extracumoulars.		н			_
sake a commitment to yourself For some, their extra uniquiary can be their self-care, but it's still important to	4111111	н			_
octor in time for you to unwind, rest and reset for your week, lot making time for self-care can often lead to increased		П			
tress and anxiety. Try to commit at least 15 to 30 minutes a sy to a self-care activity, for example: journaling, meditation,		ı,			
orking-out, drawing, crafting or any other activity that sets our mind at ease. Additionally, self-care could also look like		ı,			
iking breaks as needed from your other commitments.		H			
	5	d N	EleyURCCO TXIA with the time all or each week.	lotment. If it's h	

Change to Chill offers free teen-specific online mental health resources designed to help you learn how to relax and integrate healthy habits into your lifestyle. Explore mindfulness guides and stress relief activities for teens to help yourself and others soothe their minds and "Change to Chill".

#### **Change To Chill**

Feeling overwhelmed, anxious or stressed? Change to Chill offers free online mental health resources for teens designed to help them learn how to relax an...

changetochill.org



# FOR PARENTS & CAREGIVERS



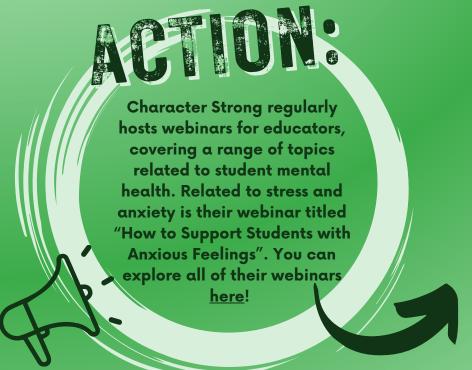
Are you concerned that your teen is struggling but unsure how to support them or where to start with helping? Change to Chill offers free online mental health resources and valuable tips on effectively communicating with your teen about the importance of prioritizing their mental health. You'll also find practical strategies to help them manage stress and anxiety.





# FOR EDUCATORS & PROFESSIONALS

The pressures of academic performance, social relationships, and extracurricular activities can create a high-stress environment for teens. This stress can manifest as anxiety, causing symptoms like irritability and difficulty concentrating. Educators play a crucial role in supporting teens by creating a supportive and understanding classroom environment. They can implement stress-reducing activities, such as mindfulness exercises, and provide resources for mental health support. Additionally, fostering open communication and encouraging students to express their feelings can help alleviate anxiety and promote a healthier school experience.







#### **QUESTIONS? CONTACT**

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