

Juggling Stress

NHES Standard 7 Students will demonstrate the ability to practice health-enhancing behaviors and avoid or reduce risks.

Teaching Objectives

- Analyze how stress impacts health.
- Identify effective stress management techniques.

Teaching Strategies

- You will need six tennis balls for this activity.
- Provide each student with three large index cards. Have students do steps 1 and 2 of the activity.
- When students have completed the first two steps, stand in the front of the room and hold six tennis balls in your hands. Explain that each tennis ball represents a stressor. Have one student come to the front of the class and identify one stressor teens might have. With each stressor, toss a tennis ball so the student can catch it. Continue until all six tennis balls are caught. Discuss how this activity demonstrates the importance of stress management techniques.
- Retrieve all six tennis balls and toss them all at once toward the student. Discuss what happens and how it relates to managing stress.

Assessment

Using a rubric, student work should provide comprehensive evidence of the following criteria to achieve the highest score:

- ✓ Clearly identifies stressors
- ✓ Demonstrates techniques to help manage and reduce stress
- ✓ Implements a plan for managing stress

Hands-On **HEALTH**

Activity Juggling Stress

Do you sometimes feel overwhelmed and exhausted trying to juggle everything in your life—school, homework, activities, family and household responsibilities—all at once? This activity will help you identify your stressors and find ways to manage stress.

What You'll Need

- 3 large index cards
- pen or pencil

What You'll Do

Step 1

In the middle of each index card, draw a 1-inch circle. Write one stressor that is currently affecting your life.

Step 2

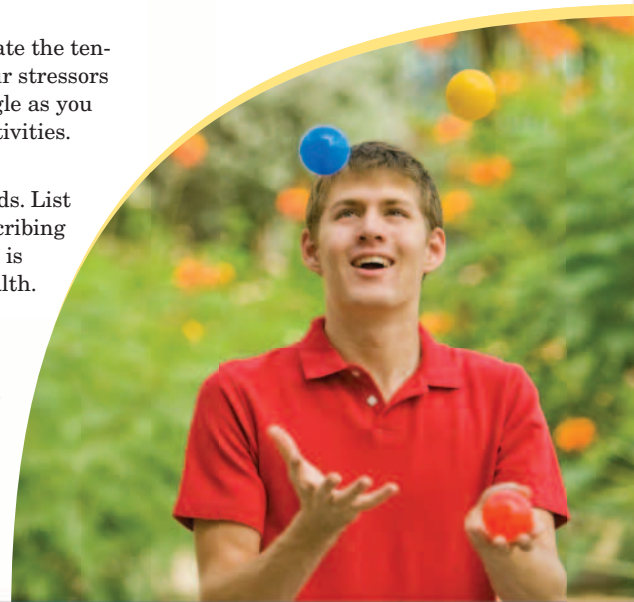
Your teacher will demonstrate the tennis ball activity. Each of your stressors is like a tennis ball you juggle as you try to balance your daily activities.

Step 3

Select one of your index cards. List four signs or symptoms describing how this particular stressor is currently affecting your health.

Apply and Conclude

Think about the stressors that you identified. List stress-management techniques that you can practice to reduce or manage the stressful situations you identified. Implement your plan and evaluate its effectiveness.



Checklist: Stress-Management Skills

- ✓ Identification of situations that cause stress
- ✓ Techniques you can use to avoid stressful situations
- ✓ Ways to manage stress
- ✓ Evaluate the effectiveness of the techniques you use to manage stress

Health Literacy

Health Information Most illnesses have psychological and physical components. The relationship between the mind and body, or emotions and physical reactions, is described in commonly used expressions such as *gut wrenching* and *worried sick*. Anxiety and emotional stress can increase the likelihood of physical health problems. An illness is suspected to be a psychosomatic response when

the presence of a disease is eliminated by a thorough medical examination, and there is evidence of a psychological problem. It is confirmed when resolution of the problem causes the physical symptoms to disappear. Headaches, abdominal pain, fatigue, and chest pain are common psychosomatic complaints among teens.