

Counselor Lesson

Coping Mechanisms for Stress and Self-Care

Message for Parents:

Last week, the lesson focused on regulating our emotions using coping skills. Once children are able to recognize their emotions and begin to self-regulate their emotions, they are more likely to maintain control and thrive independently. Though, this takes time and practice. This week, we will refine some of those coping skills as they relate to stress and the importance of self-care. These are essential for success. Research has shown that we have to ensure that a student is socially and emotionally prepared to tackle academics. Therefore, putting focus on these coping skills and self-care is the predecessor to academic success. If you need additional support beyond these lessons, please visit the Bryant Counselor's Website by clicking [here](#).

Guidance Lesson

PreK-2nd: Coping Skills to Handle Stress



Sometimes feelings can seem to “spill out” of us because we can have so many of them at one time. Having to stay at home so much might be making you have lots of different feelings. Taking care of our emotions and bodies is a great way to help us feel better. When we feel good, we are able to learn and get along with others better.

Cup of feelings

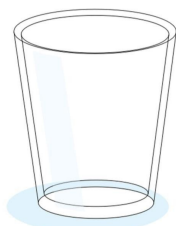
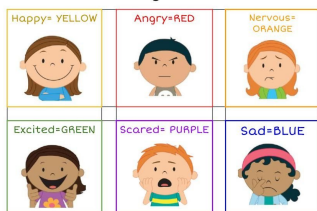
Are you happy to get to stay home? Do you feel sad if you think about your friends and teachers? Are you excited that you have more time to ride bikes and play with your family? Maybe you feel worried about when we will get back to school or what if your school work is too hard?

It's helpful to think about how “big” each of those feelings are and how much of that feeling you have. Then you can start to manage how you feel a little bit better.

Activity:

On a piece of paper, draw a picture of a cup, then use colors to show how much of each feeling you have inside. You can add your own feelings and give them your own colors, too.

Feelings Chart



3rd-5th: Self-Care to Handle Stress



Self-care is essential to maintain wellness. Wellness matters. It matters because everything we do and every emotion we feel relates to our well-being. Our well-being directly affects our actions and emotions. It is an ongoing cycle. It is important for everyone to have wellness in order to reduce stress, reduce the risk of illness, and ensure positive relationships.

Stress Buster Pizza

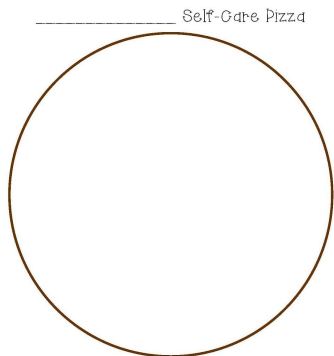
In order to increase well-being, we participate in activities that include self-care. These activities are personal and unique to each person because we all need different needs. This is like the pizza we like. We all like different toppings on pizza and there are so many different combinations of pizza. In this lesson, we will build our own self-care, stress busting pizza.

Activity:

1. Get a piece of paper and draw a large circle that fills the page.
2. You can either create an entire pizza for yourself OR you can cut enough slices for your entire family (three slices for a family of three, six slices for a family of six, etc.)
3. Create your individual pizza (or pizza slice). Put on toppings (see topping choice below) that would help you reduce stress in your life and help you to take care of your wellness and individual needs.

Talk to your grown up about the feelings and what makes you feel like this. You and your grown up can talk about what you can do if things start to “spill out” and things feel like they are too much.

When our feelings start to spill out, you can..



Toppings

Sauce: Journal/Drew things you are grateful for	Pepperoni: Watch TV/playing video games
Cheese: Take a walk/exercise	Dill apple: Listen to uplifting music
Onion: Being with family	Anchovies: Doing a hobby
Tomato: Talking to your friend	Bell Pepper: Clean up/des clutter
Mushroom: Reading a book	Olives: Create your own

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- Once finished, keep this pizza as a reminder to take time to take care of yourself (especially in times where you can feel stress is building). If you did this as a family, compare your slices.

Remember we all feel stressed at times, so stop and take a break if you are feeling overwhelmed. Use some of the ideas you learned about in this lesson to help yourself calm down, so you can feel better.

Additional Resources

PreK-2	3-5
<p>Calming Techniques Reflection Journal:</p> <p>Reflection Sheet and Calming Techniques</p> <p>Color Me Calm Activity (Stephane Lerner, 2019)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fold a paper in half- color one side with your favorite color, color the other side with your least favorite color 2. Point to your favorite color and breathe in, imagining it filling you up 3. Point to your least favorite color and breathe out, imagining bad thoughts leaving your body in a cloud of the bad color 	<p>Self Care Activities: click here</p> <p>Problem-Solving Steps</p>