

- Irritability or unusual emotionality.
- Sleep difficulty or nightmares.
- Inability to concentrate.
- Drop in grades or other functioning.
- Toileting or eating concerns.
- Headaches or stomachaches.
- Unexplained fears or increased anxiety (that also can take the form of clinging).
- Regression to earlier developmental levels.
- Isolation from family activities or peer relationships.
- Drug or alcohol experimentation.

Factors That Help Prevent Stress

- Positive problem solving and coping skills.
- Close, supportive relationships at home and school, with peers and adults.
- Clear expectations.
- Permission and ability to learn from mistakes.
- Developing competencies (academic, social, extracurricular, and life skills).
- Consistent, positive discipline.
- Ability to express feelings appropriately.
- Feeling physically and emotionally safe.
- Good nutrition and exercise.
- Time to relax or do recreational activities.

How Parents Can Help

- Be aware of your child's behaviors and emotions.
- Build trust with your child.
- Be available and open to talk with your child when they are ready.
- Encourage the expression of feelings/ Encourage them to tell you if they feel overwhelmed.
- Teach and model good emotional responses.
- Encourage healthy and diverse friendships.
- Encourage physical activity, good nutrition, and rest.
- Teach your child to problem solve.
- Use encouragement and natural consequences when poor decisions are made.
- Help your child select appropriate extracurricular activities and limit over-scheduling.
- Keep your child aware of anticipated family changes.
- Help your child feel a part of decision-making when appropriate.
- Monitor television programs that could worry your child and pay attention to the use of computer games, movies, and the Internet.
- Make children aware of the harmful effects of drugs and alcohol before experimentation begins.
- Monitor your own stress level. Take care of yourself.
- Contact your child's teacher with any concerns and make them part of the team available to assist your child.
- Seek the assistance of a physician, school psychologist, or school counselor if stress continues to be a concern.

Referenced from the National Association of School Psychologists

Adapted from: "Stress in Children: Strategies for Parents and Educators," Ellis P. Copeland, *Helping Children at Home and School II: Handouts for Families and Educators*, NASP, 2004. The full handout is available online at <http://www.nasponline.org/families>.