

## Supporting Your Over-Stressed Child

Today's youth are experiencing an intense amount of stress with a constant need to measure up! Pressure from academics, social media, sports, and peers are leading middle school and high school students to high levels of anxiety, panic attacks, depression, and thoughts of suicide. Below are some tips on how you can help your children manage stress and find a healthier life balance.

### **Tip #1: The Basics**



Make sure your children are getting enough sleep (9+ hours per night). Fuel them up with a healthy, balanced diet. Breakfast is a must! Keep in mind stress can manifest itself in a variety of ways. *What may look like disrespect, withdrawal, or anger may actually be anxiety.* Ask questions and offer support. Consider how you handle your own stress. Set a good example, so they can learn from watching you!

### **Tip #2: Saying no**



Help your children manage their schedules, and encourage them to prioritize their tasks and set appropriate boundaries. Let them know it's okay to say "no." Observe how they are handling stress. If they seem overloaded, ask them what can be removed to lighten the burden.

### **Tip #3: Set up their study environment for success.**



Provide a quiet environment for homework and studying. Discuss with your children ways to remove distractions, including music and their cell phone.

### **Tip #4: Breaks**



Require breaks amidst busy schedules! Some kids are busier than adults, and they need downtime to function properly. During study and homework time, a 10-15 minute break every hour will help keep them alert and productive.

### **Tip #5: Make your home their sanctuary**



Your children encounter a variety of pressures each day. Make your home a place where they feel relaxed and safe. Offer words of encouragement. Make family dinners more peaceful and fun by saving serious conversations for designated times. Find ways to be more physically close – give more hugs or just sit at the same table for a few minutes while they're working.

### **Tip #6: Exercise**



One of the best stress relievers is exercise! Stress produces unhealthy chemicals in the body and exercise combats those chemicals. Encourage your children to find a physical activity they enjoy, and help them find the time to exercise each day. And don't be afraid to join them!

### **Tip #7: Family**



Never underestimate the power of YOUR influence! Time together is crucial for your children to unwind and unload stress. Tell them you are proud of them and love them. Knowing that you have their back and love them unconditionally can make all the difference in the world!

**For additional information and resources, visit our website at [www.teenesteem.org](http://www.teenesteem.org).**



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