



# Managing stress

We all feel stressed sometimes,  
but what is stress, and how do we deal with it?

## what is stress?

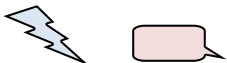
### Stress is...



Feeling **under pressure**



Feeling **unable to cope**



Feeling like **everything is too much**



Feeling **stretched** in lots of directions at once

When we're stressed sometimes **our bodies feel bad too**. We might feel **tired**, or **sick**, or our stomachs might **feel funny**. It can be **hard to concentrate**, and we might **not sleep** very well.

# why do we feel stressed?

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We might feel stressed because....

- we have **too much to do**, or **too many things to think about**
- someone is asking us to do things that are **too hard** for us, or asking us to do things that **aren't okay**
- someone is trying to get us to do something **we don't want** to do
- we feel like we have **no control** over a situation

## how can we identify stress?

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If you don't know why you're stressed you could use a **diary** or an app like **Daylio** to keep track of when you feel bad. You might find patterns appear.

**e.g.** Maybe you often get stressed after spending time with a friend who often pushes you to do things you aren't sure you want to do.

If you know why you're stressed, you might be able to **change** the situation that's making you feel bad.

**e.g.** you could be **assertive** with your friend and ask them to stop pushing you into things, or spend less time with them and more time with friends who listen when you say **no**.

Is there something you're stressed about right now?

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# what can help?



## talk to someone

It can be really helpful to **talk to friends and family** about your feelings. Together you can try to come up with solutions to your problems. Just talking about how you feel can make you **feel better**.

**BUT** be careful not to just moan and complain all the time – that can make you feel worse! Try to **stay positive** and look for solutions.

**Who could you talk to about how you feel?**

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## stay active



Exercise won't make your problems go away, but it can make you **feel better**, and make it easier to **focus** and find a way to fix your problems.

Everyone enjoys different kinds of exercise – find a way to move your body that feels good and works for **you**.

**What kind of exercise do you enjoy?**

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## try new things

Doing new things helps us learn more and become more **confident** and **resilient**. Resilience means we are able to deal with difficult situations and feelings without becoming overwhelmed.

**What new thing do you want to try?** .....

## help other people



When we help other people, it can make **our problems feel smaller**, and it **feels good** to help others. It can remind us that we have the **power** to fix problems too.

**How could you help someone?** .....

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## avoid unhelpful or unhealthy habits

Sometimes when people are stressed they do things like **smoke**, drink **alcohol** or **energy drinks**, or use **drugs**. These can seem like ways to feel better, but they **don't actually fix the problem**, and usually give you other – often much worse – problems as well.

Another unhealthy habit is to **find excuses** to avoid whatever is making us feel stressed. This might seem like a good idea, but it can mean the problem just gets bigger and bigger, and is worse when we finally have to face it.

**Can you think of excuses you make to avoid facing your problems?**

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## look on the bright side



If you only notice your problems, then everything may seem much worse than it is. Try writing down **three good things** that happened to you, or that you're **grateful** for, every day.

**Can you think of something you're grateful for?**

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## have fun

Make sure you spend some time every day doing **something that makes you happy**, just for fun. Sing, dance, draw something, play a game, make something...

**What do you like doing?** .....

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See our website for more factsheets and details about our **Amazing Futures** project for young people with SEND: [amazesussex.org.uk](http://amazesussex.org.uk)