

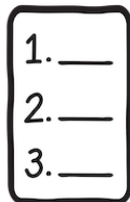


Stress is a part of life, no matter who we are.

We're used to hearing about stress happening from negative situations, such as illness, problems at work or school, deadlines and relationship issues. Did you know stress can happen even from *positive* changes or life experiences? For example, welcoming a new baby into the family or moving to a new home can make us feel stressed!

So, how can stress be helpful or harmful to our kids? Are there effective ways we can teach kids to cope with it?

3 things stress can help with:



1. Motivation

Stress can be the fuel that drives us to stick with a project or finish tasks. Without it, children would be more likely to quit or not care about engaging in school projects or after-school activities.



2. Resilience

Learning to cope with positive stressors can teach children to deal with bad stressors when they happen. Getting to know how our mind and body react to stress under good circumstances can help us create strategies for when we need strength.



3. Relationships

Going through stressful situations, whether good or bad, with others can strengthen bonds and allow people to feel closer to each other.


Prolonged and harmful stress


In the long term, too much stress can affect our physical and mental health with symptoms such as irritability, headaches, stomachaches, appetite and sleep changes, or focus problems.

How to help kids cope with stress


Let your child know some stress is normal and that learning to cope with it is a skill they will use throughout their life. Try these tips for coping:

- **Schedule quality time together** and make sure you listen to your child's fears and concerns. If needed, offer help problem-solving or coming up with ways to cope.
- When possible, help your child **prepare for stressful situations**, like a visit to the doctor or a test at school. This will increase feelings of control and can help decrease the feelings of stress.
- **Promote physical wellness** by making sure they eat healthy foods, get proper rest and do physical activity.

My Self-Care Activity 

 Cut out, or write out the suggestions below, and fold the pieces of paper in half. Put the pieces of paper in a jar and have your child take one out at random when they have had a stressful day. Do whatever activity they pull out to practice self-care and reduce stress.

| | | |
|------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| Cook together. | Watch a YouTube video that makes you smile. | Take a walk. |
| Journal. | Dance. | Meditate. |
| Color a picture. | Listen to music. | Have a family board game night. |
| Text a friend. | Watch a fun movie. | Play with your favorite toy. |

ON OUR SLEEVES The Movement for Children's Mental Health |  **Wolfson Children's Hospital**
www.OnOurSleeves.org

Download the **My Self-Care Activity** (available in **English** and **Spanish**) to help your kids when they are feeling stressed. Share what activities you're trying on social media, using **#OnOurSleevesJax** and **#OnOurSleeves** so we can see!

Don't forget to share how you're using *On Our Sleeves* resources! Hit the **reply button** to tell us your *On Our Sleeves* story.

Sincerely,
Wolfson Children's Hospital

The mission of *On Our Sleeves* is to provide every community in America access to free, evidence-informed educational resources necessary for breaking stigmas about child mental health and educating families and advocates. **For more information, visit [OnOurSleeves.org](https://www.OnOurSleeves.org).**

To access educational resources and revisit the mission of *On Our Sleeves*[®], visit **[wolfsonchildrens.com/onoursleeves](https://www.wolfsonchildrens.com/onoursleeves)**.

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