

Helping Kids Manage Stress: One School Board's Experience in Building Resiliency Across a School District



Deanna Swift PhD, C.Psych, Chief Psychologist and Mental Health Lead, Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board

Leslie Walberg-Hegan RSW, Ed. D, School Board Counsellor, Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board

Catherine Willinsky MHSc, Program Consultant, The Psychology Foundation of Canada

Minds on STRESS: SNOWBALLS

- Using piece of paper on your table, write one thing that has caused you stress in the past two weeks
- Crumple up the paper and toss it away
- Open one of the papers that has come to you:
 - At your table share what is on the sheet
 - What is a strategy you might use to help alleviate the stress?

Session Goals

- ✓ Share practical strategies for system uptake of a social emotional learning tool
- ✓ Highlight the KidsHaveStressToo! Resources from the Psychology Foundation of Canada
- ✓ Share successes and lessons learned

The Psychology Foundation of Canada (PFC)

- National registered charity dedicated to supporting parents and strengthening families (founded in 1974)
- Led by senior psychologists
- Provides research-based current materials and resources
- Develops training opportunities for professionals
- Other PFC programs and resources available in addition to *Kids Have Stress Too!*® (KHST!) - e.g., *Parenting for Life* booklets, *Make The Connection*



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Our Mission

Confident Kids, Productive Adults

Practical, evidence-based programs spanning critical developmental stages



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Developing PFC's resources

- Resources and programs built on solid evidence base
- Developed in consultation with practitioners
- Vetted by expert advisors
- Pilot tested and evaluated



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Overview of school-based resources

- Easy to implement
- Curriculum-linked
- Grounded in CBT model
- Increase students' practical coping skills



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Highlights of Evaluation

PFC's programs have been evaluated in a range of settings and grade levels

- Teachers felt that they understood the program
- Program fit well with existing curriculum
- The program had a positive impact on students' wellbeing



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Stress Lessons help promote resiliency



A child's ability to cope with stress has consequences for physical and emotional health through out life.

- National Scientific Council on the Developing Child (2005)

Under Stress, Under Learning

Stress is a normal part of everyday life – but too much stress can:

- make it more difficult to concentrate, to learn and get along with others
- have a profound effect on health
- interfere with our ability to focus, think and learn
- have similar effects on adults working with children

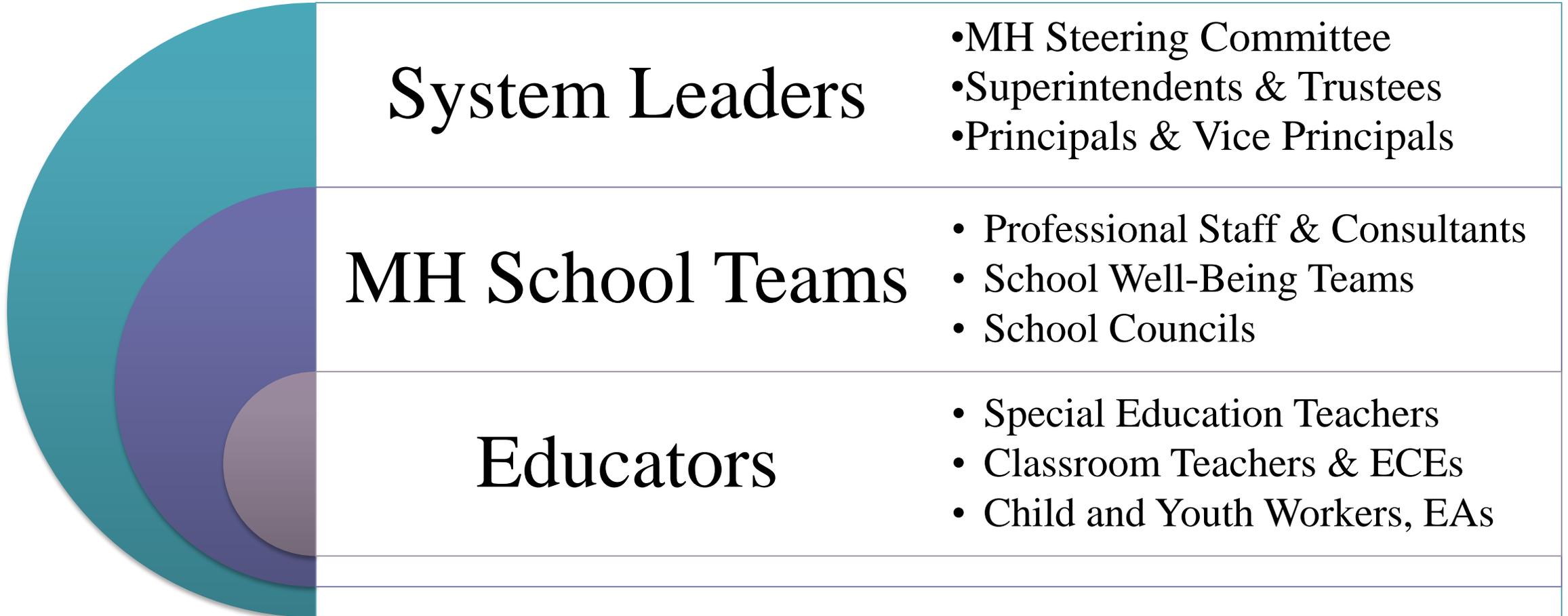
Strategic Implementation Strategies

District wide-organizational conditions from *Leading Mentally Healthy Schools*-School Mental Health ASSIST

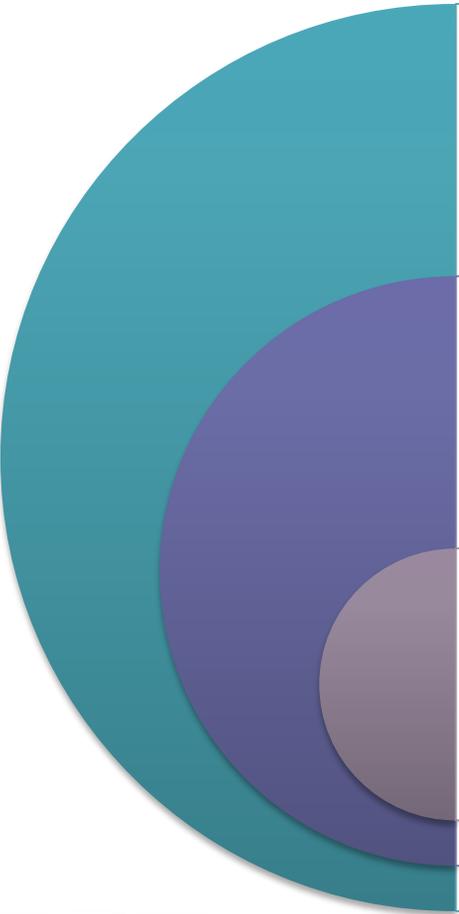
- ✓ Systematic Professional Learning
- ✓ Mental Health Strategy and Action Plan –promoting mentally healthy classrooms, KHST part of a menu of Social Emotional Learning programs and PD plan

Video: System Uptake of Stress Lessons

Cascade of Professional Development



Implementation Strategies



System Leaders

- SO and P meeting about staff and student Stress with resources and staff meeting package
- SEAC, PIC presentations
- Board Mental Health Webpage
- Connect with Human Resources

MH School Teams

- Workshop for Prof Staff & Consultants
- Promoting Mentally Healthy Schools project
- Link to School Improvement Plans
- Newsletter resources and links to PFC
- Parent counsel and conference presentations

Educators

- Copies to Consultant teams
- Professional Development Workshops
- Staff meetings
- After school learning cafes

The **Green Folder** for System Leaders

To Lead a Staff Meeting Session on Stress Strategies

To support Staff Stress

Minds on Activity to recognize their own stress-snowball activity from Stress Lessons

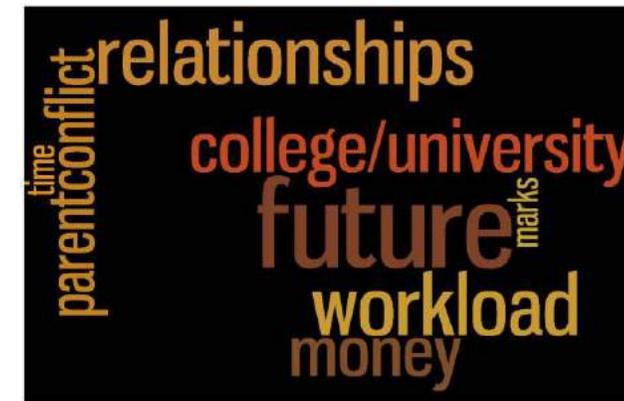
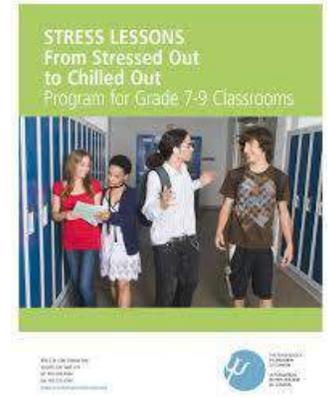
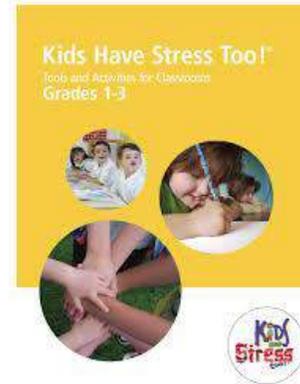
Teacher Tip Sheet # form KHST resources

Personal Resiliency Info Sheet

Employee Assistance Plan resources-info sheets, counselling information

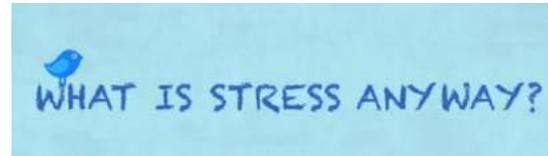
How to talk with staff who are stressed-tips from Human Resources

To Support Student Stress



In the “Green Folder” you will find ...

- Video Links



Kelly McGonigal: How to make stress your friend

- Lesson Plans and Activities



- Resources

Straight Talk About Teens
Realistic ideas and advice for parents of older teenagers



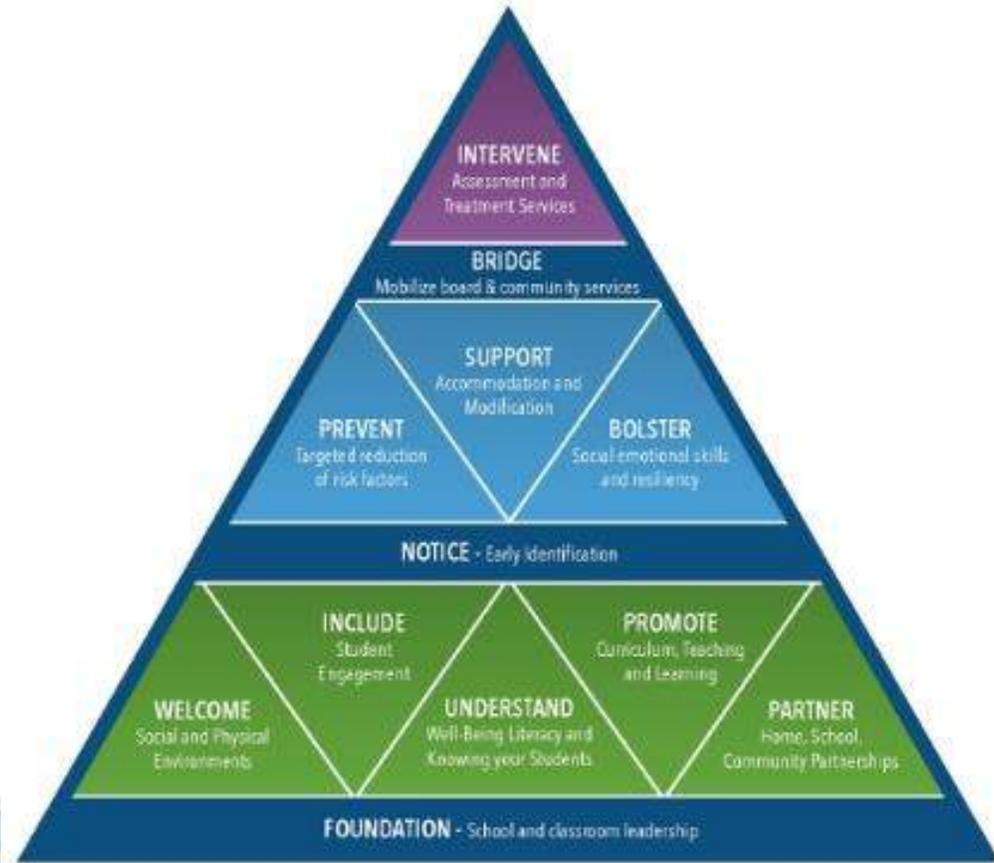
help
There are ways that you can help.

- If you think your kids are feeling stressed – ask them.
- First they will need to calm down so that they can think more clearly. Taking a few deep breaths will help them to relax.
- Ask them how they feel, and why they think they feel that way.
- Next ask them how big the problem is. Listen carefully to what they have to say.
- Help them choose what to do next. Later you can ask if it helped.



The Importance of Stress Lessons for the Promotion of Mental Health and Resiliency

Aligned and Integration Model (AIM) for School Mental Health and Well-Being



Tier 1: Good for ALL Students

UNDERSTAND- KHST lessons help the teacher and student identify individual stressors and how each child responds to stress and ways to calm and cope

PROMOTE- #SEL: self-awareness/ understanding of feelings, stressors; problem-solving: coping strategies and resiliency in difficult situations

PARTNER- parent tips sheets / Public Health Nurses

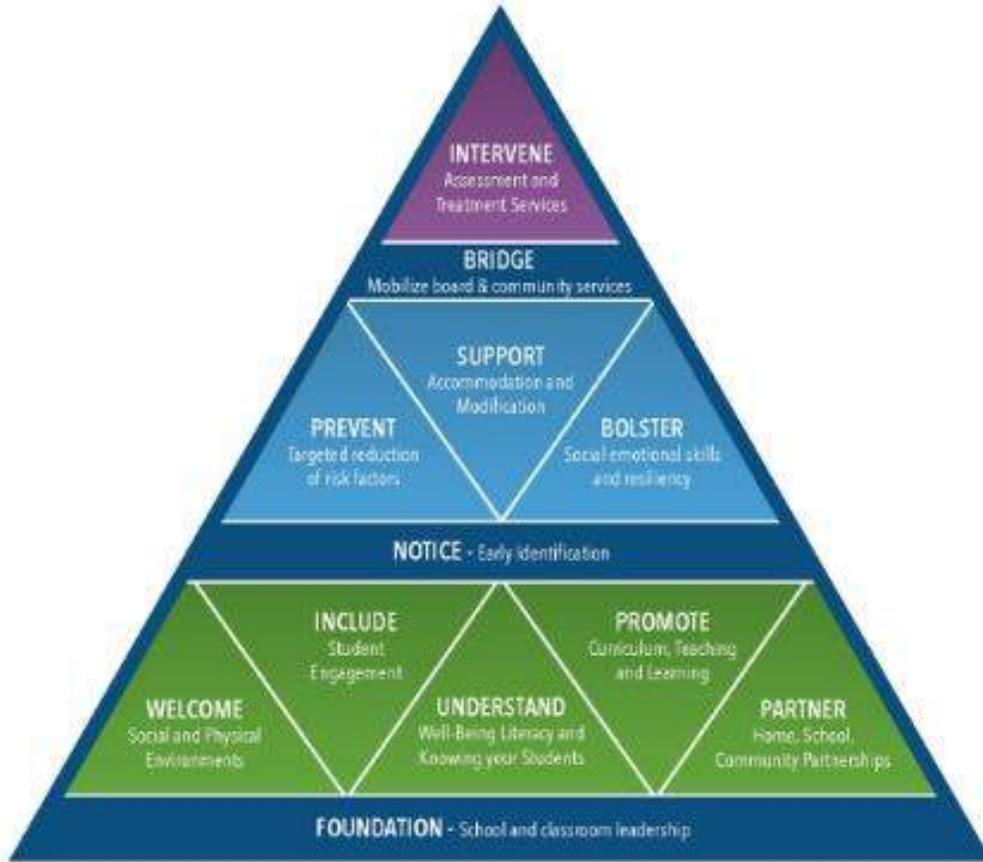
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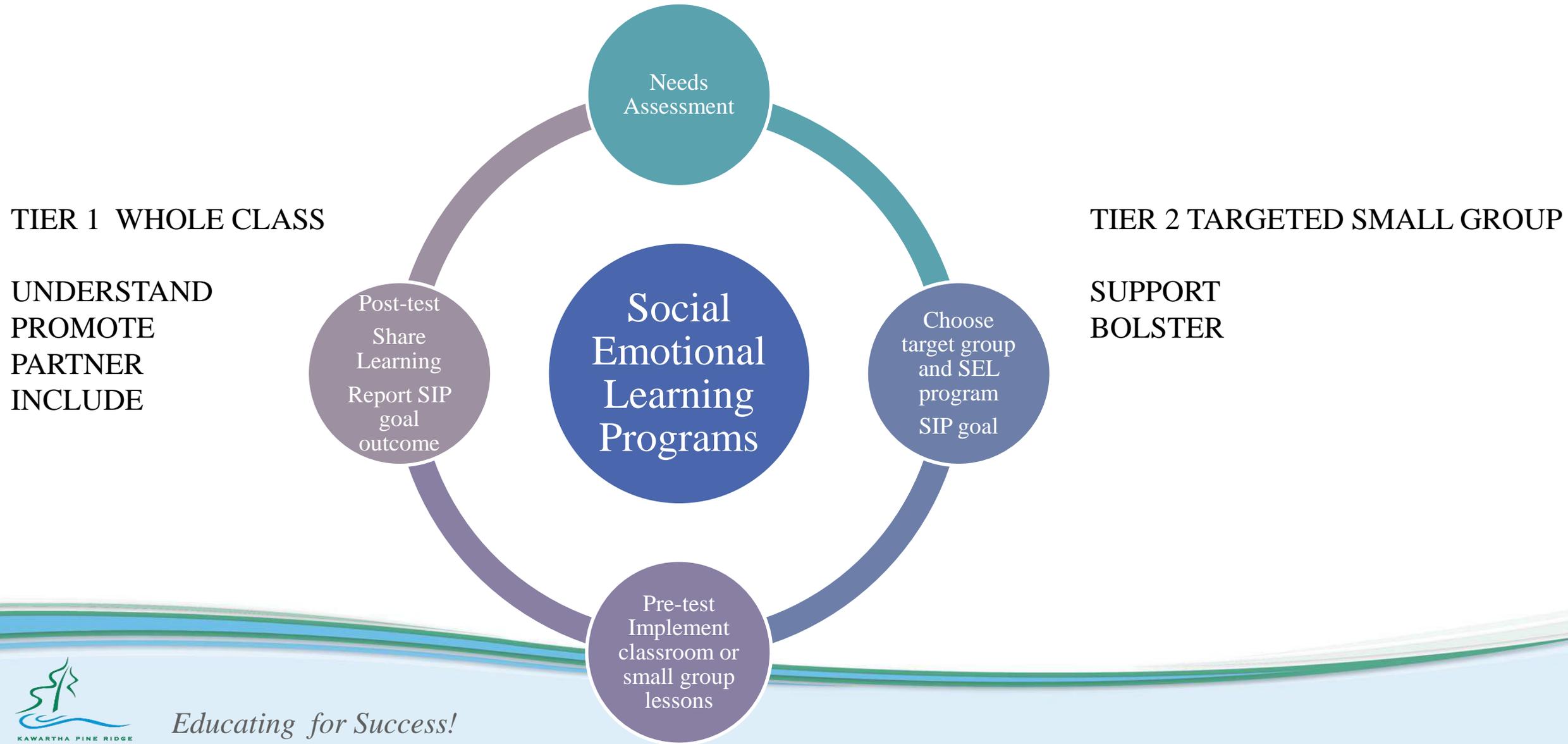
Tier 2: Necessary for SOME

SUPPORT- individual stress strategies can be developed into a coping plan for the student and accommodations can be put in place

BOLSTER- #SEL skills and resiliency- target small groups of students who need extra support and reinforcement-goals and strategies can be added to I.E.P.



Promoting Mentally Healthy Schools



Kids Have Stress Too!



Promoting Mentally Healthy Schools Report

April 2017

Social Emotional Learning Skills

- ◆ Awareness and knowledge about good and bad stress
- ◆ Skills and age appropriate tools to manage stress effectively
- ◆ Problem solving skills
- ◆ Resiliency skills

Kids Have Stress Too! Programs

- ◆ Can be downloaded free from the Psychology Foundation of Canada
- ◆ Easy to follow activities
- ◆ In English and French
- ◆ Developed by educators and psychologists
- ◆ Programs for students Kindergarten to High School



"I hear evidence of the Kids Have Stress Too program regularly, for example, when parents comment on their children using 'stress-buster' strategies at home, and when I hear students are solving small problems in the yard using strategies that they've been taught."

~Principal, Warsaw PS

Kids Have Stress Too!

Classroom resources

Educator Resources

Parent Tip Sheets

Students who received the program

1,758

Kids Have Stress Too! Programs

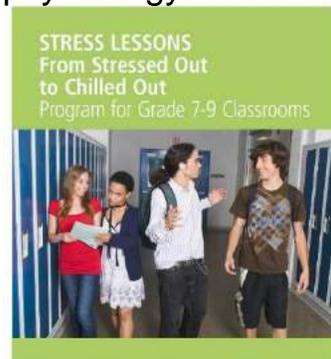
Kids Have Stress Too! Preschool and Kindergarten Provides a comprehensive introduction to key aspects of early childhood and brain development, as well as the crucial role caregivers and educators play in helping children learn effective stress-management strategies. Designed to meet the needs of early childhood educators and kindergarten teachers, the program contains evidence-based strategies to help young children learn how to become aware of and manage stress.

Kids Have Stress Too! Tools and Activities for the Classroom Grades 1 to 3: Provides educators with strategies to help create an emotionally-healthy environment in their classroom by promoting self-regulation and effective stress-management skills and strategies.

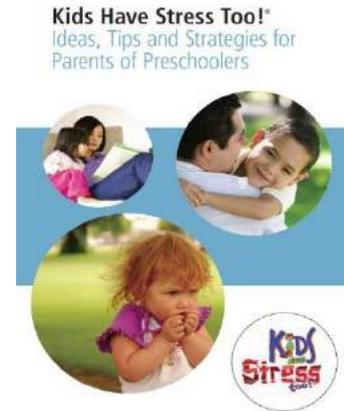
Stress Lessons for Grades 4 to 6: Provides educators with practical, developmentally appropriate, engaging activities for students aged 9 to 12.

Stress Lessons From Stressed Out to Chilled Out for Grades 7 to 9: Provides educators with a student-centred inquiry-based approach to teach stress-management strategies and skills and build emotional resiliency in their students and themselves.

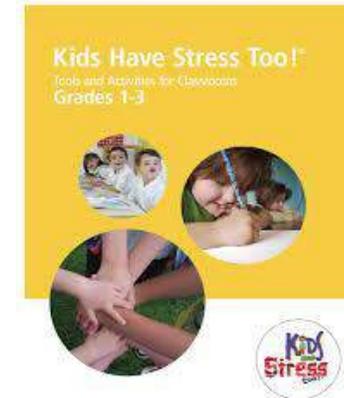
www.psychologyfoundation.org



Grades 7 to 9



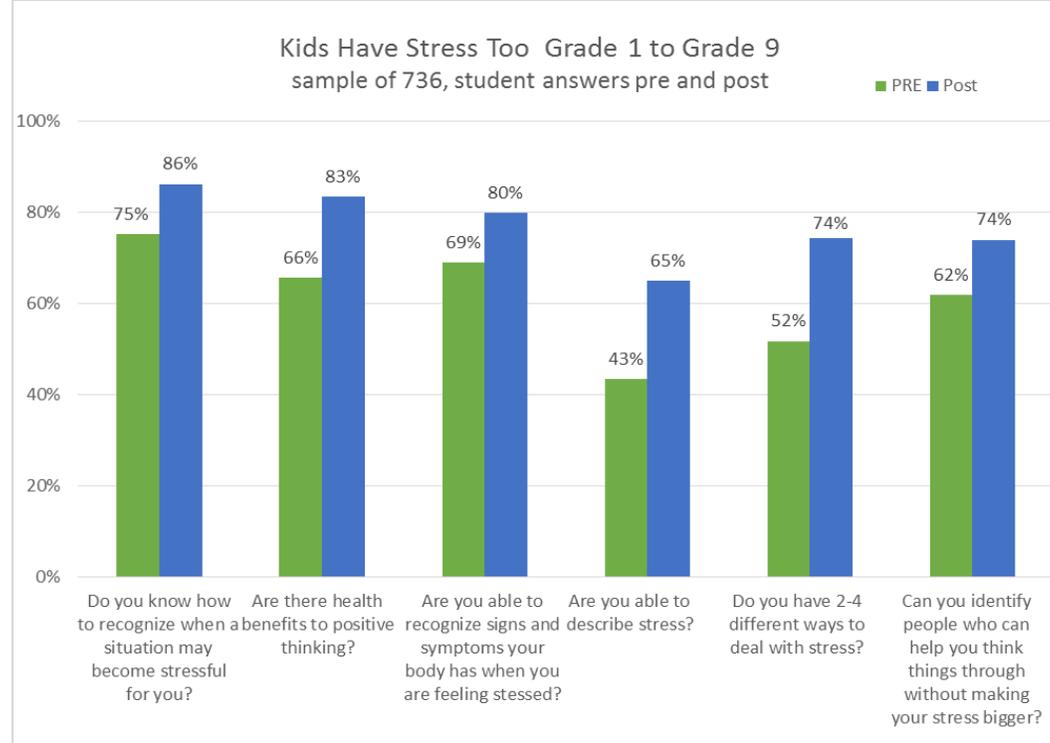
Preschool to Kindergarten



Grades 1 to 3



Grades 4 to 6



Promoting Mentally Healthy Schools

Data Collection Sample

736 students

23 schools
Grades 1 to 9

Whole Class * Small Group

Total number of students who received the program term 1

1,758 students

241 Grades 1-3
527 Grades 4-6
966 Grades 7-9

What do our results say?

- ◆ Overall students' knowledge about stress increased
- ◆ Overall students' learned more ways to handle their stress

Recognizing situations	- 11% increase
Understanding the health benefits	- almost 18% increase
Ability to recognize physical symptoms	- 11% increase
Ability to describe stress or worry	- 22% increase
Developing 2,3 or 4 different ways to handle stress	- 22% increase
Having supportive people to talk to	- 12% increase

What are Educators Saying about Kids Have Stress Too!?

This program ties well to several areas of the Health curriculum as we encourage children to self-identify stressors in their life and create a plan to effectively deal with it.

My students loved using “9 To Feel Fine” during the program and during regular class time

Students used relaxation strategies from a list we generated during the program then posted in our classroom

Students were able to connect with a mental health support in the school environment-(The Promoting Mentally Healthy Schools CYW) They were able to learn coping strategies and techniques to reduce stress and anxiety.

We regularly use the relaxation techniques and strategies throughout our day.

It has increased student awareness of the impact of stress on the body .

Students self-identified positive experiences/activities that help them reduce stress or deal with stress.”

How easy is the program to prep and teach?

Teachers rated this program 10/10 for ease of preparing and teaching the lessons

100% of teachers and CYWs indicated they would use Kids Have Stress Too program again.



For more information about Kids Have Stress Too! visit

www.psychologyfoundation.org

For more information about Promoting Mentally Healthy Schools Project contact us at
Heather_Thompson@kprdsb.ca
Heather_Cunningham@kprdsb.ca
Leslie_Walberghegan@kprdsb.ca
Deanna_Swift@kprdsb.ca

Successes and Lessons Learned

- ✓ Target all levels of school board-Leadership, Wellness Teams, Whole School and Classroom
- ✓ Target all stakeholders: Trustees, Superintendents, Principals, Professional Staff, Consultants, Teachers, Support Staff, Parents and Students, Partners
- ✓ Educators have stress too! Acknowledge adult stress and resources to support them. Work with Human Resources to highlight EAP benefits and share the Psychology Foundation Stress Strategies resources.
- ✓ Put the resources K-12 into the hands of educators with minds-on activities.

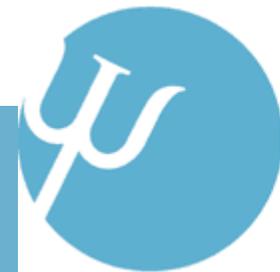
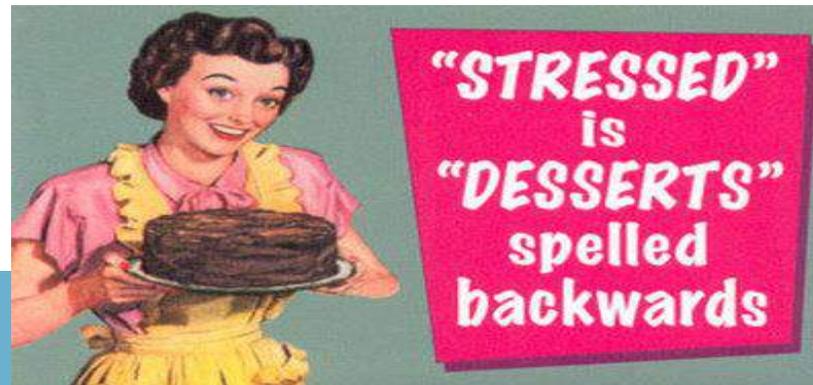
Successes and Lessons Learned

- ✓ Coach Educators to build capacity and guide implementation
- ✓ Provide access to the resources in multiple ways- Mental Health website information; links to Psychology Foundation of Canada website; professional learning; resource library; newsletters
- ✓ Provide resources in both English and French
- ✓ Provide links to curriculum
- ✓ Include parent resources and links in school newsletters
- ✓ Connect with your Public Health Nurses to support schools

Stress “101”

- Stress can be beneficial, tolerable or harmful
- Stress can be harmful or toxic if it overwhelms our ability to cope – a consistent, caring adult can make all the difference!
- The way we respond to stress is not fixed; our response can be influenced by learning stress-management and coping strategies
- **What creates stress is not so much the event that occurs, but the way in which we react to the event**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s93ywqFa6CM>



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Resources K to 12

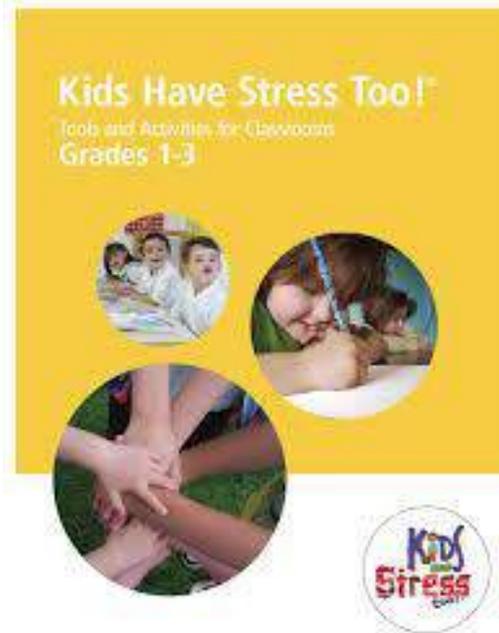


Kids Have Stress Too!
Ideas, Tips and Strategies for
Parents of Preschoolers



Preschool and Kindergarten

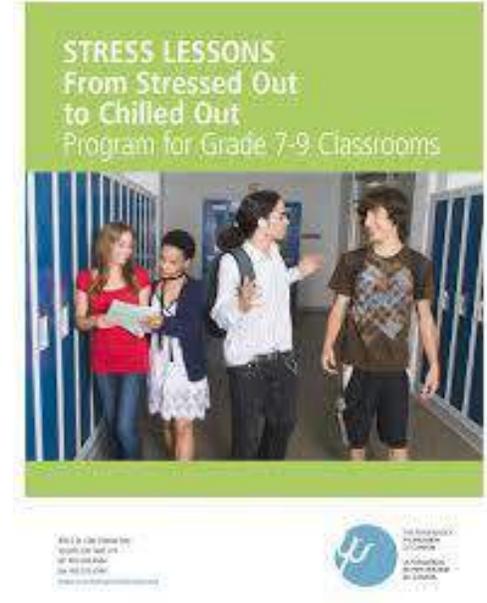
Kids Have Stress Too!
Tools and Activities for Classrooms
Grades 1-3



Grades 1, 2 and 3



Grades 4, 5 and 6



Grades 7, 8 and 9

All downloadable, in French and English, at
www.psychologyfoundation.org



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Teens Have Stress Too: What do they have to say about Stress Lessons?

Announcing our newest addition ...



NEW Stress Lessons: Tools for Resiliency (Grades 9-12)

Helping students thrive!

Stress Lessons: Tools for Resiliency is a resource package full of psychologically sound methods and strategies designed to help teens develop resilience. With components for teachers, educational partners, parents and caregivers, it provides a comprehensive approach to supporting the development of positive stress management, problem solving and coping techniques in teens.

Visit psychologyfoundation.org to access and download resources.



Getting to Know Stress Lessons Jigsaw Activity

10 minutes to prepare activity

2-3 minutes to present the activity

2 minutes for Observations and Discussion

- How and when do you think you would use this in your classroom?
- What changes, if any, would you make?

Chill Space Video

Feeling Stressed? You're not alone!

