

GRADE LEVEL: Elementary

CATEGORY: Understanding Emotions

SKILLS: Relaxation/Stress Management (Coping Skills)

GOAL: To understand what stress is and utilize strategies to appropriately cope with situations that make student feel stressful or anxious, such as, learning relaxation strategies.

MATERIALS:

- Curriculum from Life Skills Activities for Special Needs Kids, stress management for students grades 3-6;
- “When My Worries Get Too Big” for grades K-2; “Boy and a Bear,” which uses visual cues to teach relaxation.

STEPS/STRATEGIES:

1. Introduce the concepts of “stress”- What emotions do you feel? (angry, frustrated, anxious) or for younger students: Being mad or angry and what happens with your body.
2. Teach strategies to allow students to implement on their own (i.e. relaxation techniques: 3 deep breaths, 3 hand squeezes, count to 5).
3. Have students role-play stress management strategies, and practice relaxation strategies on regular basis so they become “over learned”.
4. Use visual cue cards to call student’s attention to an exhibition of signs of stress and then allow the student time to use a learned strategy.

REFERENCES:

Mannix, Darlene. Life Skills Activities for Special Needs Kids. The Center for Applied Behavior Research, 1992.

Lite, Lori. A Boy and a Bear: The Children’s Relaxation Book. Florida: Specialty Press, Inc. 1996.

Dunn-Buron, Kari. “When My Worries Get Too Big”.