



Welcome to our Monthly Newsletter

This month we focus on stress management. For most children and teens, the summer months mean an end to tests, homework and school in general. This is a time for them to relax, have fun and spend time with friends and family. However, for some parents, summer can be a stressful time as children and teens can quickly tire and get bored. Parents are left to make arrangements for childcare during the summer months, arrange for sport activities or camps or prepare for vacations and trips. We hope this newsletter helps to give parents, children and teens some ideas to cope with stressful times in a healthier manner.

Yours and your family's Mental Health Matters!

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SYMPTOMS OF STRESS

Are you stressed? Is your body trying to tell you something? These are some physical symptoms you may experience when you are feeling stressed.

- ✦ Difficulty sleeping
- ✦ Fatigue
- ✦ Changes in eating habits
- ✦ Tense muscles or muscle soreness
- ✦ Trouble concentrating or getting things done
- ✦ Irritable
- ✦ Anxious
- ✦ Grinding teeth

If you notice some of these symptoms it may be time for you to look at what may be causing stress in your life. Take a look at areas in your life that may be causing you some stress and make a plan to deal with it.

Taken from: Alberta Mental Health Board. www.amhb.ab.ca



TIP OF THE MONTH

Stress is a normal part of life and some situations are more stressful than others. It's what you do about it that makes a difference to your well-being.

Taken from: Alberta Mental Health Board.

www.amhb.ab.ca



Coping vs. Stress Management

Taken from: *A Leader's Guide to Fighting Invisible Tigers. A stress management guide for teens.* By Connie C. Schmitz, PH. D with Earl Hipp. 1995

What is the difference between coping and stress management? Connie Schmitz (1995) defines "coping" as adopting whatever short-term strategies or solutions we can to help distract or avoid us from feeling any pain or stress. Distractions (reading, doing dishes, watching television), Avoidance (procrastination, excessive sleeping) and Escapist behaviors (skipping school, drug or alcohol use) are some types of coping strategies individuals may use to help them through the situation. Connie Schmitz (1995) cautions individuals against using "coping" strategies because of their short-term effectiveness and because they really don't help individuals to resolve their stress. Stress management techniques focus on finding ways to take action with your stress. This may mean breaking your problem down into smaller, manageable steps, taking time to exercise more (walking, bike rides) and improving your eating and sleep habits. When stress management techniques are used consistently and appropriately, their effectiveness is more long-term and your stress becomes more manageable.

Six Coping Styles of Teens in Stress

Taken from: *A Leader's Guide to Fighting Invisible Tigers. A stress management guide for teens.* By Connie C. Schmitz, PH. D with Earl Hipp. 1995

1. **Anxious:** excessive worrying about situations or avoiding situations that may be worrisome or stressful.
2. **Conforming:** going along with others (friends, teachers, coaches, co-workers) in an attempt to fit in and belong, regardless of whether they agree with it or not.
3. **Self-punishing:** discounting any achievements or positives about oneself.
4. **Obsessively Competitive:** doing just about anything to win or prove someone wrong.
5. **Angry:** looking for an argument or fight by provoking or responding to others in an aggressive manner.
6. **Fearful:** worried about making mistakes, disappointing someone or not being able to prevent something bad from happening.

10 Ways to Manage Your Stress

Taken from: Alberta Mental Health Board. www.amhb.ab.ca and www.lifelongmentalhealth.com Teen Stress Busters.

1. Exercise (play at the park, go swimming, or walk the dog)
2. Relax and Have fun (when is the last time you did something you truly enjoyed?)
3. Stay positive and realistic (stress is a normal part of life. Find ways to manage it)
4. Find your supports (friends, family, teachers, co-workers)
5. Keep an eye out for stress (watch for potentially stressful situations and plan ahead)
6. Breathe and relax (breathing and relaxation exercises can help reduce some of your physical symptoms)
7. Develop Skills (assertiveness, studying skills, conflict resolution)
8. Change your Thinking (try to find the positive in your situation, don't assume the worse or that things won't get better)
9. Find a balance in your life (try to spend time at work, school, with friends or family members)
10. Get some help. Child and Youth Counsellors can help you and your children find healthy ways to manage stress.

Book Review



Don't Pop Your Cork on Mondays.

By
Adolph Moser, Ed. D

Children will benefit from reading this book to help them learn more about stress. The book educates children on what is stress, how other children and adults react when they are stressed, and healthy ways to manage their stress. The book shares different examples with illustrations to help children learn these techniques. These can be practiced together with parents and their children. The book encourages its readers to take it one day at a time (starting with Mondays) and work towards managing stress on a daily basis in a healthy manner.

High "5"

Personalized Plates



Taken from: Alanna Jones. (1998). *104 Activities that build: Self-esteem, Teamwork Communication, Anger Management, Self-Discovery and Coping Skills*. Rec Room Publishing, Richland.

"When traveling, it is always fun to look at the different license plates from different states. Each one is unique and different so that it can stand out from the others as it represents its home state. Just as license plates are different so are people. Creating your own license plate can set you apart from others as unique and special." (Page 104).

Take a piece of paper and have each family member create their "own special license plate". It can be decorated with words, pictures, slogans or anything that represents that individual. Once completed, have each family member take turns talking about his or her "license plate".

Play Time!

Bored? Looking for a way to get some exercise? Want something for the kids to do? Here are some events taking place in the surrounding communities that parents, children or teens may be interested in.

- Souris Valley Aquatic Leisure Center-634-1880 (Estevan)
- Weyburn Leisure Centre at 848-3280 (Weyburn)
- Mobile Playground: local communities
- Local playparks have different daily or weekly activities and swimming
- Check with your local libraries for their summer programming
- Contact your local church for children's camps and activities
- Community Art Centers
- Kipling parks and recreations runs a summer-long Children's Summer Program at no cost to participants, ages 5-12 years. The program runs Monday to Friday, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. We have a summer full of fun and a variety of activities for the kids! The program is a great way for kids to meet others and try new activities in a supervised setting.
- Check your local newspapers for more ideas!

Arcola Mental Health

Arcola Health Centre
P.O. Box 419
Arcola SK S0C 0G0
Ph: (306)455-2159

Kipling Mental Health

Kipling Memorial Health Centre
Box 420
Kipling SK S0G 2S0
Ph: (306)736-2638

Weyburn Mental Health

Community Health Services
Building
P.O. Box 2003
Weyburn SK S4H 2Z9
Ph: (306)842-8665 or
Toll Free 1-800-216-7689

Child and Youth Services Offers:

- Counseling Services for parents, children and youth under 18 years of age. This may include assessment or treatment for a wide range of behavioral, emotional or developmental difficulties.
- Individual, family or group counseling
- Psychological Assessments
- Community Education & Consultation Services

Accessing Services

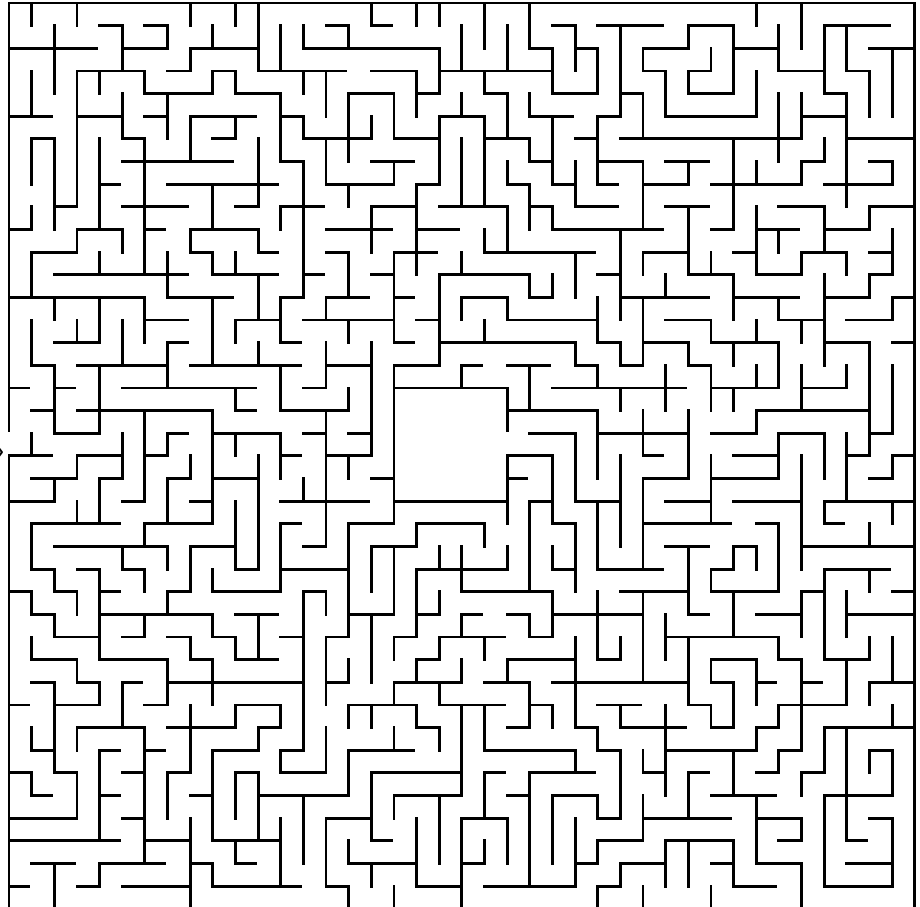
Parents, adolescents or helping professionals may request services by calling:

Child and Youth Services
Intake Worker
1-800-216-7689 Or
306-842-8665

There is no fee for services.

This Month's Activity

Stressful Maze: Can you make it through?



Do You Have a Question or An Idea About a Topic?

Feel free to share your ideas and question with us!
We are always striving to provide information,
resources and activities to help you and your family.

What to Watch for Next Month!

Getting ready for Back to School!
Tips and ideas to make the transition smoother.