

✓ the road to RESILIENCE

You may have heard people say that your high school years will be some of the best years of your life.

However, what those people don't say is that those years also include a rapidly changing schedule, social pressures, and the added stress of planning for the future. Life frequently changes and it is important that you are prepared to cope with life stressors and learn how to adapt to your surroundings. Are you stressed? Try our quick tips to start feeling better fast.

Life Stressor Checklist	Action Steps
<input type="checkbox"/> Have you looked to a friend or a trusted adult and asked for help?	<input type="checkbox"/> Build a positive relationship with someone who can offer you support.
<input type="checkbox"/> Are you taking care of yourself physically and emotionally?	<input type="checkbox"/> Engage in healthy habits and hobbies. Include physical activity into your daily routine, get enough sleep, and eat a balanced diet.
<input type="checkbox"/> Are you being proactive?	<input type="checkbox"/> Don't ignore your problems. Recognize that there's an issue and begin taking action towards a solution.
<input type="checkbox"/> Are you maintaining a hopeful attitude?	<input type="checkbox"/> Try to visualize what you want rather than what you fear.
<input type="checkbox"/> Have you learned from your past experiences?	<input type="checkbox"/> Look back to another challenging time in your life and the helpful ways you coped with it. Use them as a guide for future solutions.

Dear SOS: My friend has been hurting himself on purpose. Is he trying to kill himself? What should I do?

-Mateo

Dear Mateo:

Self-injury is an unhealthy coping method that some teens use to deal with extreme and painful emotions, such as anxiety, anger, sadness, or shame. Self-injury is generally not a suicide attempt. Suicide is when someone intentionally ends his or her life, while self-injury is usually about managing strong feelings.

It is important to take this issue seriously. If you are concerned about yourself or a friend, ACT.

Dear SOS:

Is it possible to recover from self-injury?

-Emma

Dear Emma:

Absolutely! Most people can overcome self-injury through counseling. Developing self-soothing skills is also important: this may include talking with a trusted adult, exercising, listening to calming music, or creating art work.

If you or a friend is self-injuring, it is important to seek treatment right away. Remember: ACT!

helpful websites

» kidshealth.org/teen

» thecoolspot.gov

» toosmarttostart.samhsa.gov

» stopbullying.gov

» copecaredeal.org

get into the ACT®

Acknowledge, Care, Tell

High school is a challenging time for just about everybody. It's a time when you can make some great memories, but it's also easy to get stressed out. Your classes get more demanding, personal relationships can become more complicated, and maybe there's pressure from your parents to make a decision about your future. It's normal for things to get you down at times. But when someone feels this way for a couple weeks or more, it might be a sign of depression and time to ACT.

With help, depression can be treated. Go to a trusted adult and explain what's going on.

Some secrets need to be shared.



the dangers of drinking: **FACT AND FICTION**

Check out these common misunderstandings about alcohol.

fiction: Everyone is drinking alcohol; I need to drink to fit in.

fact: If you are trying to fit in, stay sober. **Most young people don't drink alcohol.** Research shows that more than 70 percent of youth aged 12 to 20 haven't had a drink in the past month.

fiction: Alcohol use is not as harmful as other drugs.

fact: Underage alcohol use is **more likely to kill young people** than all illegal drugs combined.

fiction: Drinking alcohol has not affected my academics, so it is not affecting me.

fact: Alcohol acts as a tranquilizer and alters you physically and mentally. It has an effect on your attention, your moods, your energy level, and even the way your body works.

fiction: I'm not hurting my body by drinking while I am young, I'm learning how to hold my liquor.

fact: Drinking now will affect you later. People who begin drinking before age 15 are **four times more likely to become addicted** to alcohol at some time in their lives, compared to those who have their first drink at age 20 or older.

fiction: I only had a few drinks; I am fine to drive.

fact: Having a drink and getting behind the wheel of a car **can be deadly.** Each year 5,000 people under age 21 die from alcohol-related car crashes.

For the full article, go to: National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism. *Rethinking Drinking: Alcohol and your health.* NIH Publication No. 10-3770. 2010. Accessed March 21st, 2013

5 things to think about before pressing

SEND

1. Don't assume that anything you send or post is going to remain private. *Your messages and images may get passed around, even if you think they won't.*
2. *There is no changing your mind in cyberspace.* Something you send or post that seems fun and flirty and is done on a whim will never truly go away.
3. *Don't give in to the pressure* to do something that makes you uncomfortable, even online.
4. *Consider the recipient's reaction.* Just because a message is meant to be fun doesn't mean the person who gets it will see it that way.
5. *Nothing is truly anonymous.* It is important to remember that even if someone only knows you by your screen name, online profile, phone number, or email address, they can probably find out who you are if they try hard enough.

For complete article, go to: http://www.thenationalcampaign.org/sextech/pdf/5_things.pdf

beyond the **BLUES**

Feeling sad, down, or discouraged are natural human emotions. They're natural reactions to the hassles and hurdles of life. Most of the time, people manage to deal with these feelings and get past them with a little time and care.

When people have depression, it affects their emotions and mood, and it twists their way of thinking.

Some symptoms of depression, lasting 2 weeks or more, are:

Negative feelings and mood.

- > Do you feel **unusually sad, discouraged, or defeated?**

Low energy and motivation.

- > Do you feel **exhausted and drained?**

Physical symptoms.

- > Are you experiencing an **upset stomach or changes in your weight?**

Negative thinking.

- > Do you feel that **nothing can improve the situation?**

Lack of concentration.

- > Are you having a hard time **paying attention or focusing in class?**

Social withdrawal.

- > Are you **pulling away from people** and activities you once enjoyed?

If you have seen a friend showing these signs and you are worried about them, share your concerns with a trusted adult.

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Full article available at: http://kidshealth.org/teen/your_mind/mental_health/depression.html

break the silence: **CYBERBULLYING**

According to DoSomething.org, 4 out of 10 teens experience cyberbullying but only one of them speaks out about it. And yet, turning to a trusted adult is one of the most effective ways of putting an end to bullying.

Did you know that victims **and** bullies are at an increased risk for suicide? That's twice as many people you can help protect by reporting what you see and hear. The good news is about 68 percent of teens agree that cyberbullying is a serious issue. So if you're one of them, think about what role you can play in stamping it out.

Here are some other useful tips:

- > **Don't fight back.** It's always best to ignore bullies.
- > **Use the block, flag, and ignore features** that appear on many social sites.
- > **Keep a record** of any bullying you see or experience online.
- > **Stick up for others** who are being bullied.
- > **Report bullying** to a trusted adult.

Whether it's in-person or online, if you're a witness to bullying, don't be a bystander. Break the silence and speak out.

Information for this article was drawn from the site DoSomething.org and the page www.dosomething.org/tipsandtools/11-facts-about-cyber-bullying

need to talk?

Call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. In addition to providing a listening ear, they have access to local resources. Get support for yourself or someone you love.

Call **1-800-273-TALK** today to help save a life.



Struggling with your sexuality?

Contact the Trevor Project's free hotline:

866.488.7386

This is a free, confidential phone service for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning youth. **You can call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.**

You can also visit the Trevor Project at their website for information and resources: www.thetrevorproject.org