

you are not alone Feeling Stressed

I'm stressed. I am having trouble at school and no one seems to care or be able to help. I want to talk to someone but my family and friends are so far away. No one here seems to understand!!

Are you having trouble finding your way around town?

Are you missing your family and friends at home?

Are you struggling to understand what is required at school?

Are you finding it hard to fit into the different ways they do things with your host family?

Then maybe stress is an issue for you!. Don't panic, you can do something about it!

What is stress?

Stress can be hard to understand. There can be good and bad stress,

Good stress – excitement and nervousness of coming to New Zealand

Bad stress – struggling with transition, struggling to adapt to New Zealand

It can make our daily life miserable and it can also affect our health, sometimes drastically. Stress is the way you react physically and emotionally to just about everything good and bad that happens to you and around you. While stress is a natural and necessary part of living, too much of it can lead to 'distress'. People deal with stress differently, some people enjoy the pressure of stress to get work completed and others struggle with little amounts of stress

It is ok to feel experience hassles especially when you are on a journey/transition from your home to New Zealand.

Why do I feel stressed?– Events or circumstances which may lead to the perception that physical or psychological demands are about to be exceeded are called stressors–

Causes of stress

- School and the teachers and culture here
- Missing Family and family rituals and celebrations
- Fitting into another family and the different ways they do things
- New life
- Meeting new people
- Miscommunication
- discrimination

How do we react to stress? Our stress response is the combination of actions, feelings, body responses and thoughts in reaction to a stressor – that is the way that we react to a stressor

Reactions to stress

- sadness -anger
- sickness -sleeping or eating problems
- concentration -thinking
- behaviours -feelings

What are the warning signs of too much stress or distress?

- Losing your zest for life, losing interest in family friends or work
- Changes in your sleeping patterns
- Indigestion, stomach upsets
- Sore Shoulders, stiff muscles
- Feeling anxious and tense for no reason
- Confused
- Feeling like everyone is bugging you
- Feeling impatient or irritable
- Losing confidence
- Tearful

There are lots of things that are a hassles but sometimes these turn into burdens. At either stage it is important to know that there are people/things that can help

Tips to prevent or reduce unwanted stress

- Talk with someone you trust
- Think about the situation in another way
- Ask questions if you are unsure , e.g. host parents
- Set goals
- Make time to exercise
- Do something creative; paint or write
- Put fun and laughter in your life, learn from your mistakes
- Watch a funny movie with a friend
- Take time out and email your friends
- Listen to music
- Do something nice for yourself e.g. food music, play game, shopping
- Have balance in your life
- Know your boundaries/limitations and look after yourself
- Don't let small things grow
- Relax
- Get enough sleep
- Eat fresh and healthy food
- Try and attend cultural events/festivals etc

What else can we do to look after ourselves?

To look after yourself means recognising what hassles you and trying to prevent it becoming a burden

Where can I go to for help?

- Support people at your school or college
- Pastor or Minister at your church
- Call Youthline 0800376633
- Chinese Lifeline 0800-888-880 (National Toll Free)

What do I do if I am concerned about a friend that is stressed?

- Talk to your friends and see how you can help
- Spend time with your friend
- Do some of the stress tips together
- If your friend seems really stressed out, encourage them to get help from someone, but if you're really worried about them, ask someone you trust for advice. (e.g. school counsellor or Chinese lifeline)

“I felt really awkward to seek help from the school counsellor but I spoke to her. She was really helpful and gave me lots of suggestions and options. I still miss home and friends but feel like I can cope now .Its nice to know I’m not alone!!”

For more information,
contact the Mental Health Foundation of New Zealand -
www.mentalhealth.org.nz

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