

Teaching Stress Management

*Activities for Children and
Young Adults*

Nanette E. Tummers



TEACHING STRESS MANAGEMENT



Activities for Children and Young Adults

Nanette E. Tummers
Eastern Connecticut State University



Human Kinetics

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Tummers, Nanette.

Teaching stress management : activities for children and young adults / Nanette Tummers.
p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references.

ISBN-13: 978-0-7360-9336-1 (soft cover)

ISBN-10: 0-7360-9336-2 (soft cover)

1. Students--Mental health. 2. Stress in children. 3. Stress in youth. 4. Stress management--
Study and teaching. I. Title.

LB3430.T86 2011

155.9'042--dc22

2011009242

ISBN-10: 0-7360-9336-2 (print)

ISBN-13: 978-0-7360-9336-1 (print)

Copyright © 2011 by Nanette E. Tummers

All rights reserved. Except for use in a review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in any form or by any electronic, mechanical, or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying, and recording, and in any information storage and retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the publisher.

Notice: Permission to reproduce the following material is granted to instructors and agencies who have purchased *Teaching Stress Management*: pp. 199-236. The reproduction of other parts of this book is expressly forbidden by the above copyright notice. Persons or agencies who have not purchased *Teaching Stress Management* may not reproduce any material.

The web addresses cited in this text were current as of March 2011, unless otherwise noted.

Acquisitions Editor: Cheri Scott; **Developmental Editor:** Ragen E. Sanner; **Assistant Editors:** Anne Rumery and Derek Campbell; **Copyeditor:** Tom Tiller; **Permission Manager:** Dalene Reeder; **Graphic Designer:** Fred Starbird; **Graphic Artist:** Denise Lowry; **Cover Designer:** Keith Blomberg; **Photographer (cover):** Photodisc; **Photographer (interior):** Mountain photo used in design courtesy of Daniel W. Sanner; sunflower, clouds, and gosling photos used in design courtesy of Ragen E. Sanner; all others © Human Kinetics, unless otherwise noted; **Art Manager:** Kelly Hendren; **Associate Art Manager:** Alan L. Wilborn; **Illustrator:** © Human Kinetics; **Printer:** United Graphics

Printed in the United States of America 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

The paper in this book is certified under a sustainable forestry program.

Human Kinetics

Web site: www.HumanKinetics.com

United States: Human Kinetics, P.O. Box 5076, Champaign, IL 61825-5076

800-747-4457

e-mail: humank@hkusa.com

Canada: Human Kinetics, 475 Devonshire Road Unit 100, Windsor, ON N8Y 2L5

800-465-7301 (in Canada only)

e-mail: info@hkcanada.com

Europe: Human Kinetics, 107 Bradford Road, Stanningley, Leeds LS28 6AT, United Kingdom

+44 (0) 113 255 5665

e-mail: hk@hkeurope.com

Australia: Human Kinetics, 57A Price Avenue, Lower Mitcham, South Australia 5062

08 8372 0999

e-mail: info@hkaustralia.com

New Zealand: Human Kinetics, P.O. Box 80, Torrens Park, South Australia 5062

0800 222 062

e-mail: info@hknewzealand.com

This book is dedicated to my best
stress management tools: the girls
(Becky, Carol, Dorothy, Jane, Kathy, Lee, Leslie,
Lisa, Lucy, Lynda, Jackie, Jessica, Peggy, Sara,
Sarah, and Greg and Gus)!

Preface

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is a federal agency that provides the United States with information and tools intended to protect and enhance people's health. The CDC (2008a) has identified six critical categories of health risk behavior among U.S. students: injury and violence; inactivity; poor nutrition; tobacco use; use of alcohol and drugs; and sexual behavior that contributes to unplanned pregnancy, infection with HIV, or infection with other sexually transmitted diseases. Although stress is not currently listed among these leading categories of risk, we (as administrators, educators, parents, professionals, and others involved with students) know that stress is pervasive in students' lives and that it is entwined with many of the risk behaviors that students exhibit. Indeed, the CDC (2009a) identifies stress among youth as a quickly emerging risk factor that may contribute to many of the six listed categories of risky behavior.

Despite the urgent need to address the influence of stress in student's lives, the current literature does not cover stress management for students in a manner that is pedagogically sound, practical, and comprehensive. In order to fill that gap, this book provides a resource for understanding stress among today's young people. The book honors your willingness and passion to provide engaging, experiential stress management activities for students by means of student-centered learning endeavors and a belief in the importance of high-quality activities that support healthy and balanced living. This volume offers you numerous insights into the vital role that stress management can play in the lives of students from pre-K through the 12th grade in a developmentally sound fashion. The book speaks both to parents and to professionals who work

with students in a wide variety of school and nonschool settings (e.g., afterschool and high-risk programs). The main purpose of the book is to offer pragmatic methods for integrating stress management into any environment—for example, into an academic class as an activity or a short “stressless” break during recess.

Teaching Stress Management provides an effective and practical approach that is aligned with the National Health Education Standards (Joint Committee 2007). The information presented in part I of the book is based on applied research and on evidence from best practices in our schools. The activities described in part II can be used by schools at little or no cost to help students deal proactively with their stress. This book offers you the best research and practical application from the positive psychology movement, including the emerging focus areas of optimism, social support, resiliency, right-brain engagement, mindfulness, emotional intelligence, and the responsive classroom. These approaches can enhance our students' health and happiness by helping them develop the skills needed to meet NHES standard 7: “Students will demonstrate the ability to practice health-enhancing behaviors and avoid or reduce health risks” (Joint Committee 2007).

It is increasingly apparent that our students suffer mounting consequences from the stress they experience. As concerned teachers, parents, and community members, we must all commit to serve as advocates who teach our students how to reduce and manage their stress. The following chapters provide simple, cost-effective, and engaging tools to help our student learn to navigate and thrive in the stressful world in which they live and as they become productive citizens with the lifelong skillset of stress management.

Contents

Activity Finder vi

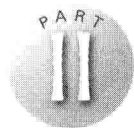
Preface xiv



INTRODUCTION TO STRESS AND STRESS MANAGEMENT

1

- CHAPTER 1 Stress in Our Schools Today 3
- CHAPTER 2 Scientific Foundation of Stress
and Stress Management 15
- CHAPTER 3 Advocating for Stress Management
in Schools 21



BEST PRACTICES:

Helping Students Deal With Stress 31

- CHAPTER 4 Fostering Positive Skills to Cope
With Stress 33
- CHAPTER 5 Stress Reduction Tools 97
- CHAPTER 6 Creative Ways to Build
Students' Stress Management Skills 167

Appendix A: Reproducibles 198

Appendix B: Additional Yoga Poses 237

References and Resources 244

About the Author 249

Activity Finder

Activity	Page	Concept	Early childhood	Elementary	Middle school	Young adult	Reproducible available in appendix A
CHAPTER 4							
Mindful Sitting	35	Mindfulness	x	x	x	x	Mindful Work Habits, page 199 RU Listening Script, page 200
Peaceful Inside	35	Mindfulness		x	x	x	
Shift Meditation	36	Mindfulness		x	x	x	
Singing Bowl	36	Mindfulness	x	x	x	x	
Mindful Path Walking	37	Mindfulness		x	x	x	
Take a Walk!	38	Mindfulness	x	x			
Mystery Box: A Touchy-Feely Activity	38	Mindfulness	x	x			
Pumping Up: The Remember Muscle Workout	39	Mindfulness	x	x	x		
Mindfulness in Nature	40	Mindfulness	x	x	x	x	
I Spy With My Mindful Eye	40	Mindfulness	x	x			
Space Out Concentration	41	Mindfulness	x	x	x		
Eating a Raisin	41	Mindfulness		x	x	x	
Tune In	42	Mindfulness		x	x	x	
Remember When?	43	Mindfulness	x	x			
Pigs Fly	43	Mindfulness	x	x			
How Do I Feel?	44	Mindfulness	x	x	x	x	
Talking Stick	44	Mindfulness	x	x	x	x	
Telephone Game	45	Mindfulness	x	x	x		
Building a Story	46	Mindfulness		x	x		
Mindful Log	46	Mindfulness		x	x	x	
Mindful Work Habits	47	Mindfulness			x	x	
RU Listening?	48	Mindfulness	x	x			
Quiet Time	49	Mindfulness	x	x	x	x	
What's in My Backpack?	50	Resiliency		x	x	x	
Booster Shots	50	Resiliency		x	x	x	
Changing the Perception of Me and My Friends	51	Resiliency			x	x	
Strengths Survey of Significant Family Member or Other Adult	52	Resiliency			x	x	

Activity	Page	Concept	Early childhood	Elementary	Middle school	Young adult	Reproducible available in appendix A
CHAPTER 4 (continued)							
Hardiness Discussion and Writing Exercises	53	Hardiness			x	x	Hardiness Discussion and Writing Exercises, page 201
What Habits Do Successful Students Practice?	53	Hardiness			x	x	
Stress Detective	55	Social and Emotional Learning		x	x	x	Stress Detective Log, page 202
Wellness Brainstorm	55	Social and Emotional Learning			x	x	Wellness Brainstorm, page 203
Wellness Magazine	56	Social and Emotional Learning			x	x	
Gratitude Journal	57	Social and Emotional Learning	x	x	x	x	Gratitude Journal, page 205
Scaffold Meditations	58	Social and Emotional Learning		x	x	x	
Loving Kindness	58	Social and Emotional Learning		x	x	x	
A Beam of Kindness	59	Social and Emotional Learning	x	x	x	x	
Practicing Random Acts of Kindness	60	Social and Emotional Learning	x	x	x	x	
Wise Owl Speaks	61	Social and Emotional Learning		x	x		Wise Owl Checklist, page 206
What Pushes Your Angry Buttons?	62	Social and Emotional Learning		x	x	x	What Pushes Your Angry Buttons?, page 207
Dealing With Difficult Situations	62	Social and Emotional Learning		x	x	x	Dealing With Difficult Situations, page 208
Count to 10	63	Social and Emotional Learning	x	x	x	x	
Talking About Feelings	64	Social and Emotional Learning	x	x	x		
Understanding Strong Feelings	64	Facing Fierce Feelings	x	x	x		
Stop, Drop, and Be Calm Tool	65	Facing Fierce Feelings	x	x	x		Stop, Drop, and Be Calm, page 209
Stop, Breathe, and Act Smart Tool	66	Facing Fierce Feelings	x	x			Stop, Breathe, and Act Smart, page 210
Facing Feelings Step-by-Step Tool	67	Facing Fierce Feelings			x	x	
Logging Strong Feelings	68	Facing Fierce Feelings	x	x	x	x	Strong Feelings Log, page 211
Problem Diary	68	Facing Fierce Feelings		x	x	x	Problem Diary, page 212

(continued)

Activity	Page	Concept	Early childhood	Elementary	Middle school	Young adult	Reproducible available in appendix A
CHAPTER 4 (continued)							
Noticing Feelings in Others	69	Facing Fierce Feelings	x	x	x		
Acting Out Feelings	70	Facing Fierce Feelings		x	x	x	
Finding the Calm in the Middle of the Brainstorm	70	Facing Fierce Feelings		x	x		Finding the Calm, page 213
Temperature Rising and Chilling Out	71	Facing Fierce Feelings		x	x	x	Temperature Rising and Chilling Out, page 215
Worry Meetup	72	Facing Fierce Feelings	x	x	x	x	
Act Out Emotions	73	Facing Fierce Feelings		x	x	x	
If My ____ Could Talk, It Would Say . . .	73	Facing Fierce Feelings		x	x		
Active Listening	74	Facing Fierce Feelings		x	x	x	Active Listening Topics, page 216
Using Feeling Sentences	75	Facing Fierce Feelings	x	x			
Rewrites!	76	Facing Fierce Feelings		x	x		The Straight-Talk Building Blocks, page 217
Compliment Central	76	Facing Fierce Feelings		x	x		Compliment Categories, page 218
Pats on the Back	77	Facing Fierce Feelings		x	x		
Assertive Bill of Rights	77	Facing Fierce Feelings		x	x	x	
Recognizing the Players in Conflict Resolution	78	Facing Fierce Feelings		x	x		
The Rules of Fighting Fair	79	Facing Fierce Feelings		x	x	x	
Finding a Resolution: Role-Playing Negotiation	80	Facing Fierce Feelings		x	x	x	
Case Studies	81	Facing Fierce Feelings			x	x	
Decision Making	82	Time Management		x	x	x	Good Decision Checklist, page 219
File It	83	Time Management		x	x	x	
Goal Setting	84	Goal Setting		x	x	x	Formula for Goal Setting, page 220
Put It Up for Debate	85	Learned Optimism and Locus of Control			x	x	Steps for Disputation, page 221
Debbie Downer or Polly Positive	86	Learned Optimism and Locus of Control		x	x	x	Debbie Downer or Polly Positive Scenarios, page 222
Writing an Affirmation	87	Affirmations		x	x	x	
Making the Shift	87	Affirmations		x	x	x	
Slow Down Turtle	88	Affirmations		x	x		

Activity	Page	Concept	Early childhood	Elementary	Middle school	Young adult	Reproducible available in appendix A
CHAPTER 4 (continued)							
Hitting the Pause Button	89	Heart Smart		x	x	x	Mind Map, page 223
This Is My Happy Place	90	Happiness	x	x	x	x	
It's Raining Healthy Habits!	91	Healthy Lifestyle		x	x	x	
Better Sleep Habits Checklist	92	Healthy Lifestyle		x	x	x	
Physical Activity Challenge	93	Physical Activity	x	x	x	x	
Repeat to Delete Stress	94	Physical Activity		x	x	x	Physical Activity Challenge Calendar, page 224
Eat for the Health of It	95	Healthy Eating		x	x	x	
Sizing Up the Ads	96	Healthy Eating		x	x	x	
CHAPTER 5							
Belly Breaths	99	Breathing Tools	x	x	x	x	
Open-the-Throat Breath	99	Breathing Tools	x	x	x	x	
"My Name Is . . ."	100	Breathing Tools	x	x			
Wild Kingdom Breath	101	Breathing Tools	x	x			
Stretching Out the Breath	101	Breathing Tools		x	x	x	
Mask Breath	102	Breathing Tools	x	x	x		
Breathe In, Breathe Out	102	Breathing Tools		x	x	x	
ABC Breath	103	Breathing Tools	x	x			
Whole-Body Breathing	103	Breathing Tools		x	x	x	
Quiet Down	104	Breathing Tools		x	x	x	
Breathing In Cool Air, Breathing Out Warm Air	105	Meditation		x	x	x	
Sign of Peace	106	Meditation		x	x	x	
My Favorite Things	107	Meditation		x	x	x	
Taking a Test	108	Meditation		x	x	x	
Blueprint	108	Meditation		x	x	x	
Shake It Up!	109	Meditation		x	x		
Spirit, Mind, and Body Scan	110	Meditation			x	x	
Sound Meditation	111	Meditation	x	x	x	x	
Walking Meditation	112	Meditation		x	x	x	
Outdoor Walking Meditation	112	Meditation		x	x	x	
Neck Stretch	113	Stretching		x	x	x	
Save That Pose!	114	Yoga Movement	x	x			
Freeze It!	115	Yoga Movement	x	x	x		

(continued)

Activity	Page	Concept	Early childhood	Elementary	Middle school	Young adult	Reproducible available in appendix A
CHAPTER 5 (continued)							
Tree and Leaf Game	116	Yoga Movement	x	x	x		
Sun Salutations	117	Yoga Movement		x	x	x	
Diamond Breath	119	Qigong		x	x	x	
Playing With Energy	119	Qigong		x	x	x	
Birds in Flight	121	Guided Creative Imagination		x	x	x	
Floating Bubbles	122	Guided Creative Imagination		x	x	x	
Kick It to the Curb	122	Guided Creative Imagination		x	x	x	
Glitter Jars	123	Guided Creative Imagination		x	x		
Paint a Picture	124	Guided Creative Imagination		x	x		
A Few of My Favorite Things	124	Guided Creative Imagination	x	x			
Brain Scan	125	Guided Creative Imagination		x	x	x	
Spring Cleaning	126	Guided Creative Imagination			x	x	
Superhero	128	Guided Creative Imagination	x	x			
Rainbow Adventure	128	Guided Creative Imagination	x	x			
Energizing With the Colors of the Rainbow	129	Guided Creative Imagination			x	x	
Flower Power Shower	130	Guided Creative Imagination		x	x		
Wise Sage	131	Guided Creative Imagination		x	x	x	
Ordering a Pizza	131	Guided Creative Imagination		x	x		
Take a Hike in Soothing Nature	132	Guided Creative Imagination			x	x	
Progressive Relaxation Short Script	133	Relaxation	x	x	x		
Pay Attention to Me!	135	Relaxation	x	x	x		
Autogenics	136	Relaxation	x	x	x	x	
Quick Minute of Autogenics	137	Relaxation	x	x	x	x	
Ball of Warmth	137	Relaxation		x	x	x	
Using Stress Balls	138	Relaxation		x	x	x	

Activity	Page	Concept	Early childhood	Elementary	Middle school	Young adult	Reproducible available in appendix A
CHAPTER 5 (continued)							
Three-Minute Checkup	138	Relaxation		x	x	x	
Beach Wave	139	Relaxation		x	x	x	
Nature's Colors	140	Relaxation		x	x		
Relaxation With Beanie Babies	140	Relaxation	x	x			
Starfish	141	Relaxation	x	x			
Magic Freeze Wand	142	Relaxation	x	x			
Bat Ears	142	Music Therapy	x	x	x	x	
Copycat	143	Music Therapy	x	x	x	x	
Drumming	144	Music Therapy	x	x	x	x	
Puppets	145	Expressive Art Therapy	x	x	x		
Jewelry	146	Expressive Art Therapy		x	x	x	
Dealer's Choice	146	Expressive Art Therapy		x	x	x	
This Is My Life!	147	Journaling		x	x	x	
Unsent Letters	148	Journaling		x	x	x	
My Dreams	148	Journaling		x	x	x	
Fill in the Blank!	149	Journaling		x	x	x	Fill in the Blank!, page 225
My Accomplishments	150	Journaling		x	x	x	My Accomplishments, page 226
A Reflection on the Serenity Prayer	150	Journaling		x	x	x	My Reflection on the Serenity Prayer, page 227
An Expansion of the Serenity Prayer	151	Journaling			x	x	
Sharing My Stress Strategies	152	Journaling		x	x	x	Sharing My Stress Strategies, page 228
My Favorite Ways to De-Stress	152	Journaling		x	x	x	
Brief Grief	153	Journaling		x	x	x	Steps for Goal Setting, page 229
Retelling a Story From a New Perspective	154	Storytelling		x	x	x	
Stress Management Heroes	155	Storytelling		x	x	x	
Humor Scrapbook	156	Humor		x	x	x	Tickle My Funny Bone, page 230
Joke of the Day or Week	156	Humor		x	x	x	
Stand Up for Humor	157	Humor		x	x	x	
A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to . . .	157	Humor		x	x	x	
Silly Movie Fest	158	Humor		x	x	x	


(continued)

Activity	Page	Concept	Early childhood	Elementary	Middle school	Young adult	Reproducible available in appendix A
CHAPTER 5 (continued)							
Writing Funny Greeting Cards	158	Humor		x	x	x	
Silly Word Games	159	Humor		x			
Face Massage	160	Massage	x	x	x	x	
Tennis Ball Massage	161	Massage		x	x	x	
A Little Pressure Can Be Good!	161	Acupressure		x	x	x	
Smelling Fans	163	Aromatherapy	x	x	x	x	
Making Your Own Sand Garden Sanctuary	163	Sand Garden	x	x	x	x	
Exploring the Nature Table	165	Nature Table	x	x	x		
CHAPTER 6							
Think, Pair, Share: Let's Talk About Stress	171	Learning About Stress		x	x	x	
Wellness Checkup	172	Learning About Stress		x	x	x	Wellness Checkup, page 231
Partner Case Studies	173	Learning About Stress		x	x	x	Partner Case Studies, page 233
Stand Up for Stress Management	173	Learning About Stress		x	x	x	Protective Factors for Stress Management, page 234
Stress Management Bingo	174	Learning About Stress		x	x	x	Stress Management Bingo, page 235
Are You Someone Who . . . ?	175	Learning About Stress		x	x	x	Protective Factors for Stress Management, page 234
Techno Logs	176	Learning About Stress		x	x	x	
Positive Eggs	177	Stress Management Project		x	x		
Scavenger Hunt	178	Stress Management Project			x	x	
Stress Management Brochure	178	Stress Management Project		x	x	x	
Nature Connection Space	179	Stress Management Project		x	x	x	
Stress Management Toolbox	180	Stress Management Project		x	x	x	
Healthy and Happy Learning Community Meeting	181	Curriculum Infusion	x	x	x	x	
Suggestion Box	182	Curriculum Infusion	x	x	x	x	
I Have a Question Box	182	Curriculum Infusion	x	x	x	x	


Activity	Page	Concept	Early childhood	Elementary	Middle school	Young adult	Reproducible available in appendix A
CHAPTER 6 (continued)							
Genevieve's Happy Teachers Retreat Day	183	Curriculum Infusion	x	x	x	x	Dear Little Sibling, page 236
Tokens of Appreciation	184	Curriculum Infusion	x	x	x		
Circle of Respect	184	Curriculum Infusion		x	x	x	
Zany Scavenger Hunt	185	Team Building			x	x	
Making a Cup of Hot Chocolate	186	Team Building		x	x	x	
Color Me Awesome	186	Team Building	x	x	x	x	
Team Architects	187	Team Building		x	x	x	
Supreme Team Challenge	187	Team Building		x	x	x	
Air Traffic Control	188	Team Building	x	x			
Dream Team Newspaper or Web Page	188	Team Building		x	x	x	
News 24-7	189	Team Building			x	x	
Team Video	189	Team Building			x	x	
Meaningful Mobiles	190	Team Building		x	x	x	
Take Your Little Brother or Sister to School Day	191	Mentoring		x	x	x	
Dear Little Sibling	191	Mentoring				x	
Peer Problem Solving	192	Peer Mentoring		x	x	x	
Service Project for Stress Management	194	Service Learning				x	
Greeting to Know Each Other	195	After-School Program	x	x	x	x	

PART

I



INTRODUCTION TO STRESS AND STRESS MANAGEMENT





© Photodisc

Stress in Our Schools Today

HAL: I honestly think you ought to calm down; take
a stress pill and think things over.

2001: A Space Odyssey