Welcome!
Stress and Anxiety Management!

CAPISTRANO
UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
Presenters

Kasey Kessler
Kendall Hayward
Nichole Harris
Omero Corral
Rosalia Koba
Objectives

1. Discuss stress vs. anxiety
   - Provide data regarding why stress management is a need for our students
   - Identify the signs and symptoms of stress/anxiety
   - Offer Coping Strategies for dealing with stress
   - Provide resources
Biodots

- Body temperature changes under stress
- When you are stressed, blood flow is restricted to hands and feet
- Warms hands relaxed, cold hands tense
Bernice Ayer Middle School
714 Students Pre/Post (November, 2016)
Second Step- Coping with Stress Lesson

Bio Dot Assessment

- Violet: Relaxing
- Blue: Calm
- Turquoise
- Green
- Yellow
- Amber
- Black

Pre-Test | Post-Test
What is stress?

Mental and emotional strain resulting from demanding circumstances.
What is anxiety?

- A feeling of worry, nervousness, or unease
- Typically related to an imminent event or an event with an uncertain outcome
Nationwide Statistics

31% of teens reported an increase in stress in the last year.
23% of teens report missing a meal due to stress.
31% of teens feel overwhelmed.
30% of teens feel sad or depressed because of their stress levels.
36% report feeling ongoing fatigue.
42% of teens report not doing enough to cope with their stress.

(American Psychological Association, 2014)
Stress

- 57% of high school students that responded to the district-wide needs assessment identify that feeling stressed is their greatest personal concern.
- 37% of middle school students share the same concern of feeling stressed.
- 28% of Elementary School Staff identify Stress Management as a need for their school.
- To address these district-wide concerns, School Counselors teach Stress Management in grades K-8 with the use of the Second Step Curriculum, and High School Counselors teach students the signs and symptoms of stress as well as positive coping skills.
Anxiety

- 45% of our high school students reported anxiety as the second greatest personal concern.

- 21% of middle school students report that feeling anxious is a concern.
Stress Management

Part 1
● Is all stress bad?
● How stress affects your children’s body
● Signs and symptoms to look for in your child

Part 2
● Strategies for success when dealing with teen stress
Fight or Flight...
Parents

Think about some of the symptoms that your child exhibits when they are experiencing a stressful situation.
Symptoms of Stress

Physical

Behavioral

Emotional
Physical symptoms of stress

**Your Body**
- Headaches
- Nervous stomach
- Poor sleep
- Feeling tired
- Appetite changes
- Excessive sweating
- Rapid heart beat
- Getting sick easily
- Low Energy

**Effects of Stress on the Body**

- **Brain and Nerves:** Headaches, feelings of despair, lack of energy, sadness, nervousness, anger, irritability, trouble concentrating, memory problems, difficulty sleeping, mental health disorders (anxiety, panic attacks, depression, etc.)
- **Heart:** Faster heartbeat or palpitations, rise in blood pressure, increased risk of high cholesterol and heart attack
- **Stomach:** Nausea, stomach ache, heartburn, weight gain, increased or decreased appetite
- **Pancreas:** Increased risk of diabetes
- **Intestines:** Diarrhea, constipation and other digestive problems
- **Reproductive Organs:** For women, irregular or painful periods, reduced sexual desire. For men, impotence, low sperm production, reduced sexual desire
- **Other:** Acne and other skin problems, muscle aches and tension, increased risk for low bone density and weakened immune system (making it harder to fight or recover from illnesses)
Behavioral Symptoms of Stress

- Daydreaming
- Lack of interest in activities
- Having a hard time making decisions
- Difficulty concentrating
- Difficulty getting up in the morning
- Avoiding people or activities
- Criticizing yourself
- Crying easily
Emotional/Cognitive Symptoms of Stress

Constant worrying
Moodiness
Irritability or short temper
Agitation, inability to relax
Feeling overwhelmed
Sense of loneliness and Isolation
General unhappiness
Is stress always a bad thing?

- Yerkes-Dodson’s law
Stress! Stress! STRESS!

The diagram illustrates the relationship between arousal and performance. It shows that:

- **Strong** and **Low** arousal lead to low performance and diminishing interest.
- **Optimal arousal** for performance is achieved at a moderate level.
- **Impaired performance** occurs with high arousal due to strong anxiety.

Increasing attention and interest are observed as arousal increases from very low levels.
Anxiety Symptoms

- Symptoms can be behavioral, physical, or cognitive (emotional) across all age groups.
- Every child experiences anxiety differently and may present different symptoms.
What causes anxiety?

- There are multiple factors that can play a role in the development of an anxiety disorder
  - Genetics
  - Brain chemistry
  - Personality characteristics
  - Life events
- Other factors:
  - Lack of positive coping strategies
  - Lack of confidence
  - Lack of problem solving skills
Anxiety Symptoms - Elementary

1. Behavioral Symptoms
   a. Fearful
   b. Constant worrying
   c. Clinginess (to a parent or teacher)
   d. Guilt or shame (about their worries)
   e. Sharing/reenacting a traumatic event
   f. Trouble concentrating
   g. Difficulty sleeping
   h. Change in school performance
   i. Easily startled
Anxiety Symptoms - MS/HS

1. Behavioral Symptoms
   a. Feeling alone/different from others
   b. Avoidance behaviors (avoiding the anxiety inducing situation/experience)
   c. Discussion of traumatic events
   d. Self-harming/risk-taking behaviors
   e. Alcohol/drug use
   f. Sleep disturbances
   g. Numbness
Anxiety Symptoms (All Grades)

1. Physical Symptoms
   a. Low energy
   b. Headaches
   c. Upset stomach
   d. Aches, pains, tense muscles
   e. Frequent colds/infections
   f. Nervousness (sweaty palms, ringing ears)
   g. Dry mouth
Parent Challenges & Expectations

- Our society today often views being involved in many activities and being constantly on the go as normal.
- As parents – you want your children to be prepared for a fast-moving world that is constantly changing.
- Spending time doing nothing or engaging in self-care can be viewed as ‘lazy’ or ‘indulgent’.
Strategies For Parents

- Help your children identify things/situations/experiences that may cause anxiety
- Help children to identify positive coping strategies for when they experience stress/anxiety
- Get organized
  - Help your children to have plans, avoid procrastination, & to have a routine
  - Schedule time to engage in activities & leisure time
- Encourage children to engage in self-care activities
  - Ex. Journaling, listening to music, playing outside, etc.
More Strategies For Parents

- Modeling
  - Model for your children how to make mistakes and cope with it
  - Model for your children how to put their feelings into words
- Practice deep breathing
- Engage in mindfulness with your child
- Encourage positive coping strategies
When To Seek Professional Help

- There comes a time when parents need to seek an outside consultant
  - Perfectionism, highly critical of self
  - Excessive avoidance behaviors
  - Disruption of functioning
  - Constant headaches, stomachaches, etc.
  - Anticipatory anxiety (worrying far ahead of events)
The Capistrano School District has a total of 52 school counselors.
Counselor Role

- Individual and small group counseling
- Individual/family/school crisis intervention
- Peer Conflict Mediation
- Coping strategies
- Peer relationships and effective social skills
- Education in understanding self and others
- Communication, problem-solving, decision-making and conflict resolution
- Counselor’s maintain confidentiality
Preventing stress in the first place

- Time management
- Set limits
- Have a dedicated study time
- Write things down
- Get up earlier
- Declutter your workspace/living space
- Eat!
Negative coping skills

Examples:
✓ Anxious avoidance: when you avoid the anxiety provoking situation (this is the most common strategy)
✓ Using drugs or alcohol
✓ Self-mutilation
✓ Ignoring or storing hurt feelings
✓ Denying that you have a problem
✓ Safety Coping: when you become dependent of something or someone to ease your anxious feelings
Positive Coping Strategies

Positive coping skills are things that you can do that will make you feel better. Some examples include:

- Seeking **social** support from others
- Finding **meaning** in the experience
- Exercise
- Humor
- **Proactive coping:** anticipating problems and preparing for them
Mindfulness

What is it?

“Mindful awareness can be defined as paying attention to present moment experiences with openness, curiosity, and a willingness to be with what is. It is an excellent antidote to the stresses of modern times. It invites us to stop, breathe, observe, and connect with one's inner experience.”
Benefits of Mindfulness

- Increases well-being
- Reduces stress and anxiety
- Boosts immune system
- Increases attention
- Reduces blood pressure.

(UCLA MARC, 2016)
Centered Breathing

1. Stop
2. Take a deep breath through your nose
3. Fill your diaphragm with air
4. Expand your stomach and breathe out
5. Repeat slowly 3 to 6 times
6. Repeat a Positive Self-Talk phrase
Gratitude

— What is it?
Gratitude is the quality of being thankful and the readiness to show appreciation for and to return kindness.
Benefits of Gratitude

- Has been linked with better grades
- Makes you a better friend
- Better sleep
- Good for team spirit
- Helps prevent illness
- Boosts overall well-being
Re-focus

When you are stressed, refocus on your surroundings.
Look around and find...
5 things you can see
4 things you can touch
3 things you can hear
2 things you can smell
1 thing you can taste
50 ways to take a break when you are stressed

1. quick walk
2. listen to soft music
3. hug a pet
4. talk with a friend
5. write down what you’re feeling
...and 20 other ways to calm down on handout!
Helpful apps. that can help you de-stress

- Relax Melodies
- Breathe2Relax
- Headspace
- Gratitude Journal $
- The Worry Box
Breathe2Relax

Personalize:
- Set Inhale Length (6.3 seconds)
- Set Exhale Length (7.0 seconds)

Tip:
- Let the air out of your lungs as much as possible by pushing as much air out of your lungs as possible by pushing your stomach. Then, inhaling, press and slowly bring the air back down. Try to make a deep breath by pushing your stomach out. Relax only when you start hearing the timer going off.

Demonstration Video:
- Show Me How

Rate Your Stress:
- How do you feel now?
- Press Start When Ready
- Use the slider below to rate your current level of stress. You can do this at any time during the breathing exercise to keep track of how breathing affects your stress.

Results:
- Relaxed
- Stressed

Options:
- Shorten Inhale
- Shorten Exhale
- Lengthen Inhale
- Lengthen Exhale
- Do Not Show Again

Finish
Resources – Handouts

1. Signs of stress in adolescent students
2. The top 5 apps to help with stress
3. 50 ways to take a break
4. Mindfulness
5. Re-focus
Re-Cap

- Positive coping strategies
- Avoid stress in the first place
- Mindfulness
- Deep breathing
- Gratitude
- Re-focusing on surroundings
- Download the Apps
Thank you for coming!