GRADE 4

Objective: Students will be able to:
• Identify personal stressors at home, with friends, in school and the community, and in the environment.
• List physical and emotional reactions to stressful situations.
• Identify positive and negative ways of dealing with stress.

Kindness Definition: Kindness means being friendly, generous or considerate to ourselves and others through our words and actions.

Kindness Concepts: Perseverance, Self-Care

LESSON ACTIVITIES

What is Stress Anyway? Visual Response, p. 3-4 (25 to 30 minutes)

What Causes Stress Activity, pp. 5-8 (30 minutes)

Responding to Stress, pp. 9-10 (25 to 30 minutes)

What Makes You Anxious? Activity, pp. 11-13 (60 minutes)

Home Extension Activity, pp. 14-15

LESSON MATERIALS

• Clip about Stress from morethanmedication.ca: http://bit.ly/1jyuTID (Click on Educators, then Lesson 1 video)
• RAK Journals

• Create signs that say “Just a Little Stressed” and “Very Stressed” and post the signs on opposite walls
• Stressed or Not Stressed Pictures (provided), cut apart before class
• RAK Journals

• RAK Journals

• Manila envelopes, one for each student
• Materials to decorate envelopes, such as stickers, markers, etc.
• What Makes You Anxious? worksheet, one for each student

• Take Home Activity, one sheet per student
LESSON NOTES

- The activities in this lesson focus on a central theme and connect to different curriculum areas. Lesson activities use a variety of modalities to address different learning styles and build on each other.
- Each activity includes evaluation questions to help determine how well students have internalized the lesson objective. You can discuss the questions as a class, have students work with a partner or a small group, or have students write responses in their RAK journals.
- The activities also incorporate key Kindness Concepts, which can be introduced before teaching the lesson or as the concepts are discussed in the lesson. Consider displaying the Kindness Concept Posters during the unit. See the RAK Teacher Guide for information about using Kindness Concepts to create a healthy classroom environment and help students develop pro-social behaviors.
- Each activity includes tips for how to adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of diverse learners.
- The Kindness Tool Kit is another way to meet the needs of diverse learners. See the RAK Teacher Guide for how to create and use this tool kit.
- RAK also has developed Focusing Strategies and Problem-Solving Strategies to help students better regulate their emotions, think through challenging situations, and build healthy relationships, friendships and community. See the RAK Teacher Guide for more information about incorporating those strategies into the lesson.
- Regularly revisiting the topics or questions raised during discussions will expand student understanding of the concepts. Scripted explanations are provided, but feel free to use language that feels natural for you.
- This lesson includes a home extension activity, which could be sent home at any point during the unit.
- The Common Core and Colorado P-12 Academic Standards met are listed after the activity title. Key is provided on pages 16 and 17.

SUGGESTED INTRODUCTION TO UNIT

Teacher says: “For the next few days, we are going to talk about stress and how we can cope with stress in our lives. What does it mean to be stressed out?” Allow time for students to respond and discuss, either as a class or in small groups. You can also use this time to introduce Kindness Concepts (perseverance, self-care) and create community definitions for these concepts or share the definitions listed below. Consider using the Kindness Concept Posters for perseverance and self-care as a way to reinforce learning.

VOCABULARY WORDS FOR UNIT

Perseverance: Keep trying even when something is hard.
Self-Care: Learning how to take care of yourself. Using nice words when you think or talk about yourself.
WHAT IS STRESS ANYWAY? VISUAL RESPONSE (25 to 30 minutes)

LESSON MATERIALS
• Clip about Stress from morethanmedication.ca: http://bit.ly/1iyuhTD (Click on Educators, then on the Lesson 1 video)
• RAK Journals
• Kindness Concept Poster for Self-Care

STANDARDS MET
Common Core: CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.4.1, 2
Colorado: Comprehensive Health S.3, GLE.2, EO.a,b,c; Reading, Writing and Communicating S.1, GLE.1, EO.a,b

DESCRIPTION

1. Before watching the clip about stress, explain: “We are going to watch a clip that explains stress. Before we do that, write the following questions in your RAK journal: What is stress? What causes stress? How can stress impact your mind and body? What can you do to manage stress and take care of yourself? As you watch, answer the questions on your sheet.”

2. Watch the clip. If you can’t play the clip, read the following instead, and have students answer the questions on their sheet while you read. Consider writing key words on the board as you read: “What is Stress? It’s something we need a little of, but not too much. Like the strings of an instrument, too much will make us break! Stress is a feeling and reaction to something that is happening, which makes us alert and ready to solve a problem. It can feel like butterflies in your stomach or give you a feeling of worry, make you cranky or angry, or make it hard to concentrate. It is in our thoughts, but also in our bodies. The hypothalamus in our brains sends a signal that we need to be alert, which tells our adrenal glands (on top of our kidneys) to give off hormones called adrenaline and cortisol. These make your heart beat faster, raise your blood pressure, give you more energy and release sugars into your blood. It’s called the stress response. These are helpful if we need to get out of the way of danger. When they are in a milder form, they can even help you perform better at sports, on a test or at a recital. Sometimes, our bodies don’t know how to reset after the stress response and over time, it can be bad for us. But, if we know what makes us stressed and know how to make ourselves feel better, we can make a plan for when stress is too much. Things that help are sleep, for letting your body and brain recharge, listening or playing music or laughing, which resets our stress receptors. You can also ask a trusted adult for help, do relaxation exercises, or exercise your body. You will feel better because this lets out hormones that make us feel good. If you can master your stress and learn how to relax, you can feel more relaxed, have less headaches or pains, be able to concentrate better and be healthier overall. Experiment and find out what works best for you!”

3. Divide students into small groups. Write the following questions on the board or project using a document camera and have students discuss in their small groups. Then discuss as a group, and write their responses on the board or on chart paper so they can be used in other activities.

1) What did you think of the clip (or the information I just read to you)?
2) What can cause stress for people? (Arguing, bullying, fighting, tests, too much to do, friend problems, etc.)
3) What can stress feel like? What does it feel like to you? (Butterflies in stomach, worry, grumpy, headache, hard to concentrate, jumpy)
4) How does stress impact the human body and mind?
5) What can you do to manage stress as part of your self-care plan, so that you keep it under control and in balance? (Sleep, listening or playing music, laughing, asking for help, relaxation, exercise/stay active)
6) How can managing stress make a difference? (Concentrate better, less stomach aches, tests easier to take, healthier, better mood)
7) Can stress ever be a positive thing?

EVALUATION

Discuss (or have students write responses in their RAK journals): “Do you ever feel stressed? How do you feel and how do you respond? What are some of the ways your classmates have dealt (negatively or positively) with stress?”

TIPS FOR DIVERSE LEARNERS

Students might benefit from:

1. Referencing the Kindness Tool Kit for self-care during the discussion.
2. Utilizing an outline of a human body labeled “What Stress Does to the Body.” During the class discussion, students could come to the front and label how stress impacts the mind and body in different ways.
WHAT CAUSES STRESS ACTIVITY (30 minutes)

LESSON MATERIALS
- Create signs that say “Just a Little Stressed” and “Very Stressed,” post signs on opposite walls
- Stressed or Not Stressed pictures, cut apart before class
- RAK Journals
- Kindness Concept Poster for Self-Care

STANDARDS MET
Common Core: CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.4.1, 4; CCSS.Math.Content.4.MD.B.4
Colorado: Comprehensive Health S.3, GLE.2, EO.a,b,c; Reading, Writing and Communicating S.1, GLE.1, EO.a,d; Mathematics S.3, GLE.1, EO.a, IQ.1,2

DESCRIPTION
1. Before class, post the signs on the walls. Move chairs out of the way so that students can easily walk to the signs during the activity.
2. Explain: “Not everyone gets stressed out by the same things. It is helpful to figure out what makes you feel stressed, so you can cope with everyday stressful situations, come up with ways to take care of yourself, and be kind to yourself. For the next activity, I will show you a series of pictures and you are going to decide how stressed the situation makes you feel...just a little stressed, very stressed, or somewhere in between. Once you decide, go stand either by a sign or somewhere between the signs.”
3. Show each image, one at a time. If there are a lot of variations in how students feel about a particular image, discuss why students have that particular opinion about the situation.
4. After students complete the activity, ask the following questions:
   1) Not everyone gets stressed by the same things. What situations make you feel stressed out?
   2) How do you feel when you get stressed out? (Heart races, get angry, stutter, get a headache, feel like screaming, bite nails, can’t eat, eat too much, feel like fighting, get quiet, grind teeth)
   3) What are some ways you can respond when feel stressed? (Breathe, relax, visualize a safe place, talk to someone, listen to music, exercise, pace, positive thoughts, play with a pet, etc.)
5. Optional Math Activity: Have students keep track of how many people found which situations very stressful. Create a graph that shows which situations are most stressful for your class. Students could interview other fourth graders to determine the top stressors in those classes. Have students present findings to the class.

EVALUATION
Have students write responses in their RAK journals to the following prompt: “Write down three things that cause you stress and what you can do to respond.”

TIPS FOR DIVERSE LEARNERS
Students might benefit from:
1. Referencing the written responses from the “What is Stress Anyway? Visual Response” activity.
2. Referencing the Focusing Strategies and discussing how stress can impact our feelings and actions.
3. Doing a follow-up calming activity. Create signs that say “Somewhat Calming” and “Very Calming,” show images of situations that calm people, and do the activity in the way described above.
FIGHTING WITH BROTHERS AND SISTERS

NOT UNDERSTANDING SOMETHING AT SCHOOL

ARGUING IN YOUR HOME
NO MONEY

NOT GETTING ALONG WITH FRIENDS

BEING LEFT OUT

TAKING TESTS
LATE FOR SCHOOL!

TOO MUCH TO DO

CAN'T SLEEP

YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW IS SICK
RESPONDING TO STRESS (25 to 30 minutes)

LESSON MATERIALS

- RAK Journals
- Kindness Concept Poster for Perseverance, Self-Care

STANDARDS MET

Common Core: CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.4.1
Colorado: Comprehensive Health S.3, GLE.2, EO.a,b,c;
Reading, Writing and Communicating S.1, GLE.1, EO.a

RESOURCES

Activity adapted with permission from materials created by Colorado UpLift, Denver.

DESCRIPTION

1. Teacher says: “We have been talking about what causes stress for us. All of us feel stressed out at different times...our bodies might react by tensing up or getting headaches, we might react with our emotions, by feeling sad or upset, or our brains might react with anxious thoughts. We can’t always control our immediate reactions. But we can learn to recognize some negative and positive ways of thinking and feeling when we are stressed. First, let’s brainstorm some negative ways we think and feel when we are stressed.”

2. Allow students to respond and write their responses on the board. Suggest the following if students get stuck: Heart races, get angry, stutter, get a headache, feel like screaming, bite nails, can’t eat, eat too much, feel like fighting, get quiet, grind teeth, ignore everything.

3. After they finish, say: “Now let’s brainstorm some ways to persevere and learn to handle our negative reactions to a stressful situation in a positive way. If you feel stressed in a situation or are reacting in a negative way, what could you do that would be helpful for you?”

4. Allow students to respond and write their responses on the board. Then add the following if they get stuck:
   1) Exercise or find a sport you like to do.
   2) Find a hobby or something that you like to do.
   3) Talk to a friend, family member or trusted adult.
   4) Play with a pet.
   5) Take a walk.
   6) Find a quiet place like your room or a space in your home.
   7) Laugh. Watch a funny movie.
   8) Play music or listen to music.

5. Then say: “For some of us, exercise helps. For other people, talking to someone helps. Now we are going to learn some steps to help us handle our stress. It’s called Breathe, Think, Do. These steps can help us if we practice them each time we feel stress beginning to build.”
6. Write the words Breathe, Think, Do on the board as you read the following information:
   1) **Breathe:** Take slow, deep breaths. This helps our bodies and minds relax so that we can think clearly and stay calm.
   2) **Think:** Think about the situation. Once we are calm, we can think about what is causing the stress.
   3) **Do:** Do it now! Ask: What can we do about the situation? Who can we talk to? How can we solve the problem in a positive way?

7. Explain: “Now I want you to think about a stressful situation you are facing. Close your eyes. Take slow, deep breaths. (Pause). OK, now think about the stressful situation. (Pause). NOW think about what it is that you want to do. Do you think you can solve the stress or the problem? Do you need to relax and be calm first? Do you need to exercise? Do you want to talk to someone?”

**EVALUATION**

Discuss (or have students write responses in their RAK journals): “Do you think this way of handling stress could be helpful for you? Why or why not?”

**TIPS FOR DIVERSE LEARNERS**

Students might benefit from:

1. Seeing the Breathe, Think, Do information posted on the board or displayed with the document camera throughout the activity; you may want to consider creating images for these concepts for your visual learners.

2. Having their own Breathe, Think, Do sheet; have students write positive choices for what they can do on the back and then laminate it to keep as a personal resource.

3. Using items from the Kindness Tool Kits for perseverance and self-care to reinforce the concepts in this lesson.

4. Being guided carefully through the activity, particularly if they tend to be stressed or get worried easily. For example, you may want to have the students write down their worries.

5. Reviewing Focusing Strategies after doing this activity so that they don’t leave class stressed.
WHAT MAKES YOU ANXIOUS? ACTIVITY (60 minutes)

LESSON MATERIALS
- Manila envelope, one for each student
- Materials to decorate envelopes, such as stickers, markers, etc.
- What Makes You Anxious? worksheet (p. 13), one for each student
- Kindness Concept Poster for Self-Care

STANDARDS MET
Common Core: CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.4.1; CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.1, 3
Colorado: Comprehensive Health S.3, GLE.2, EO.a,b,c; Reading, Writing and Communicating S.1, GLE.1, EO.a; S.3, GLE.1, EO.a,b,c

DESCRIPTION
1. Teacher says: “Today we are going to talk about our worries and our fears and what we can do to respond. We all worry about things, but the goal is not to let those worries or fears become too much to handle. We are going to start by creating a Worry Envelope, which is a private, safe place to “park” your fears and worries until you are ready to talk about them and work through them with a trusted adult. If it’s hard for you to talk about fears and worries, you can even share your envelope and the information inside, to get the conversation started.”

2. Hand out envelopes and allow 10 to 15 minutes for students to decorate.

3. After they finish, hand out the What Makes You Anxious? worksheet and explain: “Fears and worries can drag you down – but the good news is that you can manage some fears and worries through using focusing and problem-solving strategies. Sometimes, you know exactly what you’re worried about. Other times, you might not know what’s bothering you. So take a few minutes to complete the questions on the sheet about one of your fears or worries. By identifying and talking about your worries, you may be able to think through ways to help you feel less worried and start feeling better. Once you’ve identified your fears and worries and written about them, you’re ready to put them into your envelope for safekeeping. This activity may be challenging for you. If your worries seem too big for you to handle, please talk to me, another teacher, your parent, or another trusted adult about them.”

4. Have students complete the worksheet independently.

5. Divide the students into groups of three and ask them to respectfully share some fears and worries with each other and discuss ways to feel less worried. Be careful to group students with those who will be sensitive listeners. Let the students know about the importance of active listening during this exercise.

6. Then have students write a creative response describing how they are going to handle their fear, which they turn in or also keep in their envelope. They can write a short essay, a story, a poem, a song, or some other creative response.
EVALUATION

Discuss (or have students write responses in their RAK journals): “Did this activity help you identify your worries and figure out what you can and can’t do about it?”

TIPS FOR DIVERSE LEARNERS

Students might benefit from:

1. Working with a partner to complete the worksheet.
2. Referencing the written responses from the “What is Stress Anyway? Visual Response” activity.
3. Creating four cartoon frames that answer the worksheet questions.
4. Being guided carefully through the activity, particularly if they tend to be anxious or get worried easily. They may need to use Focusing Strategies after doing this activity so that they don’t leave class worried and upset.
ACTIVITY

WHAT MAKES YOU ANXIOUS?

Directions: Complete the questions below about something that worries you or makes you anxious. Identifying and talking about your worries often can help you think through what you can do to help you feel less worried and start feeling better. Once you’ve identified your fears and worries, you’re ready to put them into your worry envelope for safekeeping. If you want, you can write about another worry on the back of this sheet.

• What is making me anxious or worried?

• Why is this stressful for me?

• Is there anything I can do about this situation?

• How does this worry make me feel or think?

• What are some things that I can do to help myself when I feel worried about this? (Think about some of the strategies we have discussed.)

• Who can I ask for help?
HOME EXTENSION ACTIVITY

MATERIALS
Take Home Activity (p. 15), one sheet per student

DESCRIPTION
1. This activity could be done at any point during the unit. Write the return date on the sheet before you distribute it. You may want to distribute the sheet with the Friday folders and have it returned on Monday.

2. Hand out the Home Extension Activity and say: “We have been talking about what we can do to handle stress in more healthy ways. I want you to talk about these ideas with your parent, guardian or another adult who cares for you. Please put this in your folder and return by ____________.”

3. After the students bring back their sheets, ask the following questions:
   1) What do you think are some healthy or positive ways for you to handle stress?
   2) What are some ways that people you live with can help you deal with stress?
BACKGROUND

As part of the Random Acts of Kindness program, we have been talking in class about what causes stress and how to handle that stress in healthy ways.

VOCABULARY WORDS

**Perseverance:** Keep trying even when something is hard.
**Self-Care:** Learning how to take care of yourself. Using nice words when you think or talk about yourself.

AT HOME ACTIVITY

Review the vocabulary words listed above. Ask your student what he or she has learned about stress and how to handle stress in ways that show care for yourself. Then discuss the following questions and write (or have your student write) responses below or on the back and return to school by the date above.

- What are some healthy or positive ways for you to handle stress?

_______________________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________________

- What are some ways for us or your friends to support you so that your stress doesn’t get overwhelming?

_______________________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________________

Name: __________________________________               Please return by: ___________
COMMON CORE STANDARDS (www.corestandards.org)

1. Writing
   - **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.1**: Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.
   - **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.3**: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.

2. Speaking & Listening
   - **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.4.1**: Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 4 topics and texts, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly.
   - **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.4.2**: Paraphrase portions of a text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.
   - **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.4.4**: Report on a topic or text, tell a story, or recount an experience in an organized manner, using appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details to support main ideas or themes; speak clearly at an understandable pace.

3. Mathematics
   - **CCSS.Math.Content.4.MD.B.4**: Make a line plot to display a data set of measurements in fractions of a unit (1/2, 1/4, 1/8). Solve problems involving addition and subtraction of fractions by using information presented in line plots.

COLORADO P-12 ACADEMIC STANDARDS
http://www.cde.state.co.us/StandardsAndInstruction/ColoradoStandards-AcademicStandards.asp

1. Comprehensive Health
   - **Standard 3: Emotional and Social Wellness in Health**
     Grade Level Expectation (GLE): 1. Comprehend concepts related to stress and stress management
     Evidence Outcomes (EO): Students can:
     a. Identify personal stressors at home, with friends, in school and the community, and in the environment
     b. List physical and emotional reactions to stressful situations
     c. Identify positive and negative ways of dealing with stress

2. Reading, Writing and Communicating
   - **Standard 1: Oral Expression and Listening**
     Grade Level Expectation (GLE): 1. A clear communication plan is necessary to effectively deliver and receive information
Evidence Outcomes (EO): Students can:

a. Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 4 topics and texts, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly
b. Paraphrase portions of a text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally
d. Report on a topic or text, tell a story, or recount an experience in an organized manner, using appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details to support main ideas or themes; speak clearly at an understandable pace

**Standard 3: Writing and Composition**

Grade Level Expectation (GLE): 1. The recursive writing process is used to create a variety of literary genres for an intended audience

Evidence Outcomes (EO): Students can:

a. Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.
b. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences
c. Write poems that express ideas or feelings using imagery, figurative language, and sensory details

3. Mathematics

**Standard 3: Data Analysis, Statistics, and Probability**

Grade Level Expectation (GLE): 1. Visual displays are used to represent data

Evidence Outcome (EO): Students can:

a. Make a line plot to display a data set of measurements in fractions of a unit (1/2, 1/4, 1/8)

Inquiry Questions (IQ):

1. What can you learn by collecting data?
2. What can the shape of data in a display tell you?

**OTHER STANDARDS MET**

1. 21st Century Skills (www.p21.org)

   - **Learning and Innovation Skills**
     a. Critical Thinking: Reason effectively, make judgments and decisions, solve problems
     b. Communicate clearly and collaborate with others
     c. Creativity and Innovation: Think creatively and work creatively with others

   - **Life and Career Skills**
     a. Initiative and Self Direction: Manage goals and time, work independently, be self-directed learners
     b. Social and Cross-Cultural Skills: Interact effectively with others
     c. Productivity and Accountability: Manage projects and produce results
     d. Responsibility: Be responsible to others

2. Social and Emotional Standards (www.casel.org)

   - Self-awareness
   - Self-management
   - Responsible Decision Making

QUESTIONS? CONTACT: TeacherHelp@RandomActsofKindness.org