

How You Can Deal With High School Stress (from DiplomaGuide.com)

High school can be a pretty tough time for many students: classes become harder, you have more responsibility, you feel the need to fit in with your peers, and perhaps you even have to work. This article provides several tips on managing your stress level.

The following are six tips, adapted from *about.com* that can help reduce your stress:

- Have a healthy escape from school
- Lighten up and laugh a little
- Give yourself a little reward for doing well
- Keep things in perspective
- Be positive
- Stay away from drugs and alcohol

A healthy escape from school means breaking your daily routine a little. Give yourself a little bit of 'me' time each day. A good idea is to use this 'me' time to do something physical: physical activity reduces stress. For example, take a walk or hike, play with your dog outside, shoot some hoops, jump rope, etc. However, don't just be creative with your physical activity; be creative about hobbies you may want to pursue. If you like the sound of a saxophone, you could try taking lessons. Even underwater basket weaving has its place if it helps you relax and have fun.

Even when you do your day-to-day activities, don't take things too seriously-laugh a little. Laughter can get rid of stress as well as exercise can, and it's another healthy escape. There are things you can do to promote a light-hearted nature: spice up movie night with a comedy, buy some funny books/magazines, and most importantly, be able to laugh at yourself even when things don't go your way.

You should reward yourself for doing well in school, on a sports team, or for doing all your chores and homework and other commitments without any complaints. This doesn't mean you should go buy yourself a new computer. Nor does it mean you should reward yourself for every little thing like just getting up in the morning. What this means is when you know you have performed well on a given task, don't be afraid to give yourself a pat on the back.

An important skill to have throughout your life is to keep things in perspective. A proper perspective actually reduces stress. For any situation that is stressful, take a second to look at it from a different point of view. Try to visualize how unimportant this stressful moment is in the whole scheme of life. This exercise is designed to help you 'let go' of the little stress triggers that everyone experiences.

Often associated with proper perspective is positive thinking. The next time a stressful situation happens, instead of focusing on how it can ruin your life; focus on the benefits of overcoming this little hurdle. If a big test is coming up, don't look at it with the attitude, 'If I fail, I'll do bad in the class.' Instead, look at it with the attitude, 'When I pass this test, I'll be closer to my class goal of an 'A'!

You've heard before and you'll hear it again-stay away from drugs and alcohol! Imagine this situation: You have a really nice car, I mean, REALLY nice. The color, make, model, everything you want in a car. The car needs work done on it, so you take it to the mechanic. He spends a lot of time on it and you spend a lot of money on it. Finally you get it back. What's the first thing you do with it? You take out your dad's sledgehammer and beat the bearings out of it? Why would you do that? The same is true with your body and drugs and alcohol. You are given a truly remarkable body. You spend time improving it inside and out. So, why would you destroy all the work and money you've spent on your body? Good answer-you shouldn't.