University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources

CALIFORNIA 4-H PROJECT SHEET SERIES
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UC PEER REVIEWED

4-H Stress Management Project

Youth experience stress from a wide range of causes: school, friendships, family dynamics, concerns about money, and social media. In this project, youth partner with caring adult leaders to explore ways they can reduce and manage their stress. Youth may learn about

- strategies for identifying and recognizing when they are experiencing stress
- skills for addressing physical and emotional manifestations of stress
- steps they can take to reduce stress in their lives

Starting Out *Beginner*	Learning More *Intermediate*	Exploring Depth *Advanced*
• Learn to identify when one is feeling stressed, including physical and emotional signals. • Introduce key concepts of stress, including definitions, common facts, causes of stress, and ways stress can impact one's well-being. • Practice simple strategies to manage stress, including deep breathing, going for a walk, and journaling.	• Keep a journal to record times and causes of stress, as well as how one responds to the stressors. • Explore how lifestyle changes can assist with stress prevention, including daily physical activity, positive self-talk, mindfulness, getting enough sleep, and eating a healthy diet. • Set one or two goals that will help you prevent stress and stay healthy.	• Explore how environmental factors (such as noise or traffic) contribute to stress. • Research differences in how short-term and long-term stress can impact overall health and well-being. • Develop a plan to reduce and respond to stress in one's life from information learned in this project.

The activities above are ideas to inspire further project development. This is not a complete list.

4-H THRIVE

Help youth:

Light Their Spark

A spark is something youth are passionate about; it really fires them up and gives them joy and energy. Help youth find how this project excites them.

Flex Their Brain

The brain grows stronger when we try new things and master new skills. Encourage youth effort and persistence to help them reach higher levels of success.

Reach Their Goals

Help youth use the GPS system to achieve their goals.

Goal Selection: Choose one meaningful, realistic, and demanding goal.

Pursue Strategies: Create a step-by-step plan to make daily choices that support your goal.

Shift Gears: Change strategies if you're having difficulties reaching your goal. Seek help from others. What are youth going to do when things get in their way?

Reflect

Ask project members how they can use their passion for this project to be more confident, competent, and caring. Discuss ways they can use their skills to make a contribution in the community, improve their character, or establish connections.

Expand Your Experiences!

Healthy Living

- Learn how time in nature can help manage stress.
- Explore how healthy lifestyle changes help people reduce stress.
- Commit to trying a new physical activity (like yoga, running, or hiking) for one month.

Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics

- Explore how stress hormones impact the brain, heart, and other organs.
- Research how technology is being utilized to help people manage their stress.
- Invite a STEM expert to talk about how they deal with stress in their lives and career.

Civic Engagement

- Plan a community discussion with stress managers (like therapists or counselors).
- Create flyers to teach others at your school about stress management practices.
- Volunteer to help others in your community, which can help reduce your stress too!

Leadership

- Start a stress management group in your community. Focus on art, music, or meditation.
- Develop a presentation to educate others about the impacts of stress.
- Lead a stress-busting activity for younger youth.

College and Career Readiness

- Take an online course in stress management.
- Interview a counselor or therapist about their role in supporting others who are trying to reduce stress in their lives.
- Visit a college campus to learn more about majors on their campus related to wellness.

Resources

- Stress Busting Activities for Kids. PennState Extension https://extension.psu.edu/programs/betterkidcare/knowledge-areas/environment-curriculum/activities/all-activities/stress-busting-activities-for-young-children
- Helping Children Handle Stress. Healthy Children www.healthychildren.org/english/healthy-living/emotional-wellness/pages/helping-children-handle-stress.aspx

The UC 4-H Youth Development Program does not endorse, warrant, or otherwise take responsibility for the contents of unofficial sites.

Connections & Events

Presentation Days – Share what you've learned with others through a fitness-related presentation.

Field Days – At these events, 4-H members may participate in a variety of contests related to their project area.

Contact your UC Cooperative Extension Office to determine additional opportunities available, such as a field day.

Curriculum

- Stressed Out! Learning How to Cope with Stress. extension.tennessee.edu/publications/Documents/W438.pdf
- Healthy Living: Yoga for Kids https://www.uaex.edu/publications/pdf/FSFCS70.pdf
- Health Rocks! Program cv4h@uga.edu
- Mindful Me: A 4-H Primary Mindfulness Curriculum http://4h.ucanr.edu/Projects/HealthyLiving/Mindfulness/

4-H Record Books

4-H Record Books give members an opportunity to record events and reflect on their experiences. For each project, members document their experiences, learning, and development.

4-H Record Books also teach members record management skills and encourage them to set goals and develop a plan to meet those goals.

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Light Your Spark Flex Your Brain Reach Your Goals Light Your Spark Flex Your Brain Reach Your Goals

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