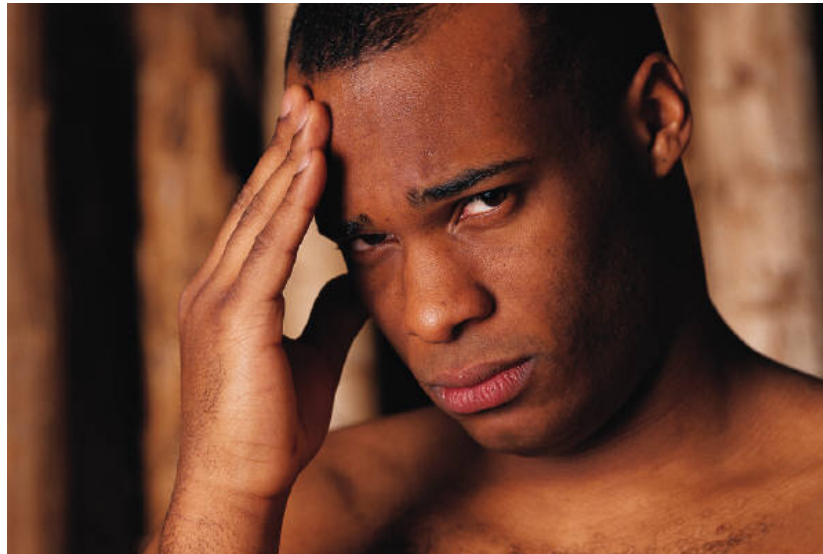




# Dealing With Stress





# What is stress?

- Stress is an emotional response to the demands of life.
- Stress is the one feeling most everyone is concerned about, and for good reason.
- Getting a handle on stress can mean a healthier and longer life.

# Good Stress and Bad Stress

- Not all stress is bad.
- Actually, there is some stress that is good.
- Good stress activates us to use our personal power in positive ways to meet our needs, desires, and wants.



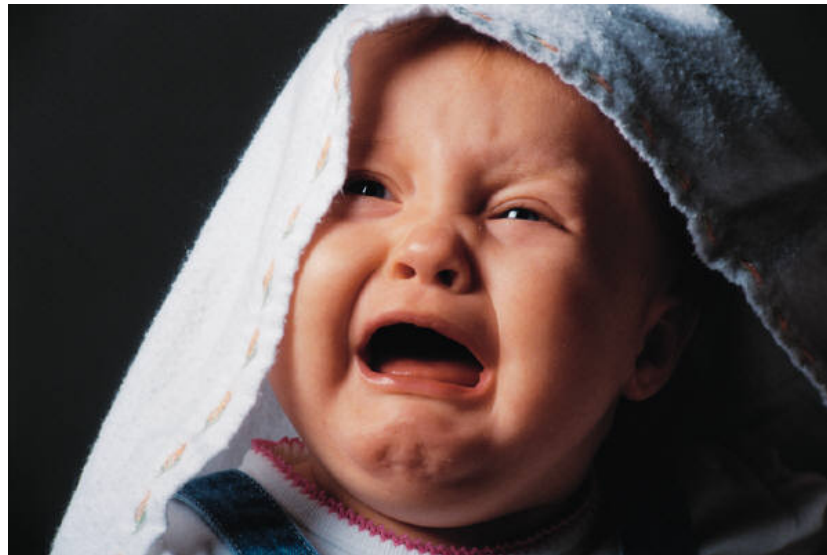


# Good Stress and Bad Stress

- The kind of stress that is bad is called **distress**, or stress that drains us physically, emotionally, and socially.
- Bad stress or distress shows up in symptoms like headaches, backaches, ulcers, diarrhea, fatigue, anxiety, depression, lashing out, or withdrawing from others.

# Distress and Unmet Needs

- Distress can often be attributed to our inability to get our basic needs met.
- As humans, we have several needs we need to fulfill.



# Distress and Unmet Needs

- **Social Needs**

- The need for friendship or companionship.

- **Emotional Needs**

- The need for love, praise, or feeling worthwhile.





# Distress and Unmet Needs

## ○ **Intellectual Needs**

- The need for intellectual stimulation, for thinking new thoughts, for reading challenging books, or for learning something new.

## ○ **Physical Needs**

- The need for sleep, food, and exercise.



# Distress and Unmet Needs

## ○ **Creative Needs**

- The need to make something, to dance, write a poem, listen to music, or create something.

## ○ **Spiritual Needs**

- The need to know that we are part of something bigger than ourselves and that we can increase our awareness of and sensitivity to it.



# Distress and Unmet Needs

- Getting our needs met reduces our stress and allows us to be the caring parent we want to be.
- It also allows us to help our children get their needs met and reduces their stress.



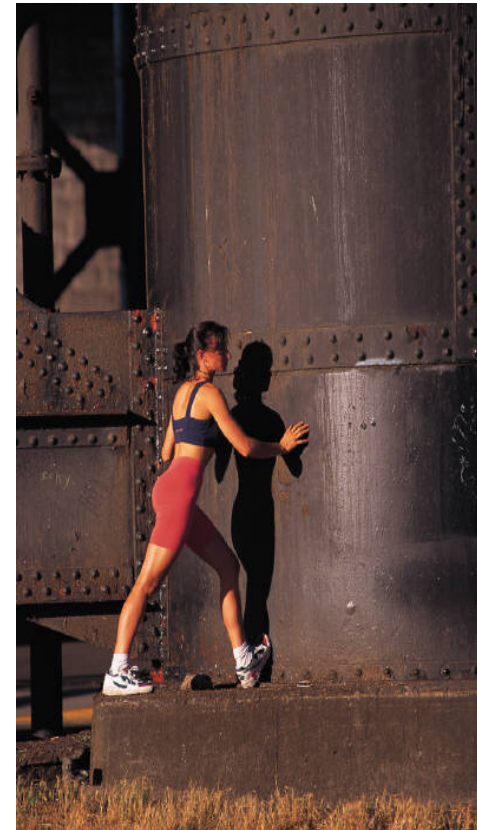


# Handling Stress

- The most important aspect of stress is the ability to handle it.
- Since most stress is self-induced, the ability to handle it rests primarily with each person.
- The following are some proven strategies for reducing stress.

# Physical Approaches

- Get regular exercise.
- Improve your diet.
- Listen to your body.
- Learn relaxation skills.
- Get adequate sleep.





# Mental Approaches

- Adopt a new attitude.
- Increase self-worth.
- Set realistic expectations.
- Keep a positive outlook.
- Improve your communication skills.
- Leave work at work.
- Get organized.

# Social Approaches

- Develop a support network.
- Develop a social life.
- Volunteer your time.
- Develop a sense of humor.
- Relax.
- Develop hobbies.





# Helping Children Handle Their Stress

- Contrary to popular belief, adults are not the only ones who feel stress.
- In many ways, life can be a lot more stressful for kids because they don't have all the resources adults do in relieving their stress.



# Helping Children Handle Their Stress

- For example, when parents argue, kids worry.
- Children ask, “What’s the matter?” and are told, “Nothing.”
- Children have no one to talk to about their fears so they internalize them and their health and personality are affected.



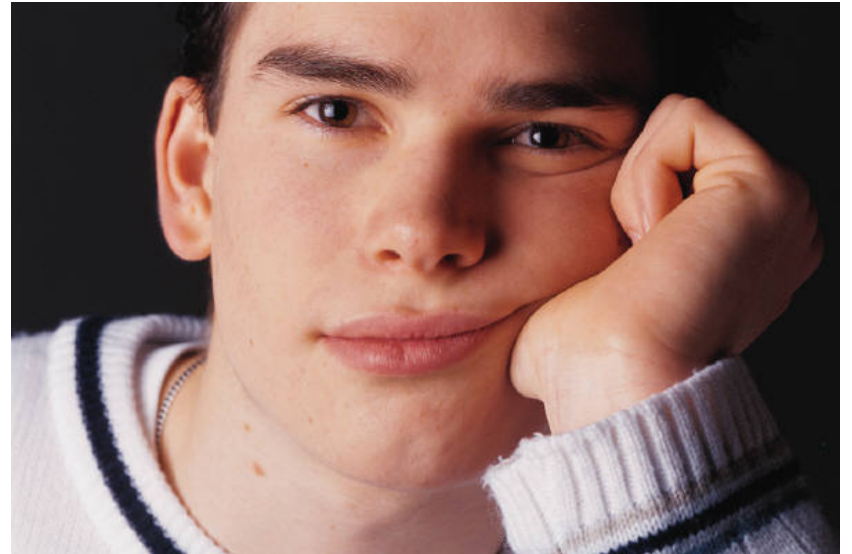
# Helping Children Handle Their Stress

- When parents feel stress, they can exercise, take a bath, or just leave for hours.
- Kids have to stay in, do their homework, or some other passive activity.
- In many ways, the stress children feel is overwhelming. Let's look at stress from a child's viewpoint.



# Areas of Children's Stress

- Home
- Community
- School and community violence
- Self





# What's A Parent To Do?

- Parents can do plenty to help children manage their stress by following these simple guidelines:
- **Be a role model.**
  - When children see their parents doing healthy things to relieve their stress, the message is clear: “It is important to take care of yourself.”

# What's A Parent To Do?

- **Do things as a family.**
  - Family outings can be fun outings, and having fun is a great stress reducer.





# What's A Parent To Do?

- **Establish routines.**

- Family routines are predictable and consistent expectations of life that provide children with a sense of comfort.

- **Praise.**

- Praise your children for doing and being. When children know their parents are pleased with their efforts, the stress in worrying about “doing the right thing” is dramatically reduced.



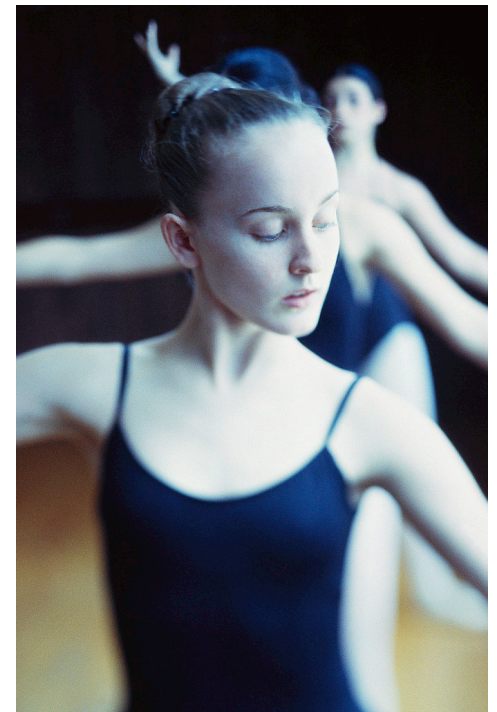
# What's A Parent To Do?

## ○ **Acceptance.**

- Nothing helps reduce emotional stress like the feeling of unconditional acceptance.
- Knowing a parent's love is given freely, and is never threatened by mistakes or poor judgments, is the basis of healthy parent-child relationships.

# What's A Parent To Do?

- **Encourage sports and the arts.**
  - Get kids active.
  - Organized athletics or street ball are excellent ways to relieve stress, build stamina, and become energized. Music and dance lessons or gymnastics are also good ways to work off stress.





# What's A Parent To Do?

## ○ **Massage.**

- Back rubs are wonderful ways to help children relieve their stress.
- Stress is retained in the body. Tight muscles, back and neck aches, and headaches are signs of tension.
- A massage helps lessen stress by loosening up muscles.

# Dealing With Stress

- In short, both children and adults experience stress. It is a natural part of life to feel stressed from time to time, but there are ways to deal with it.







# Dealing With Stress

- Most parents give first priority to their children, last priority to themselves.
- The result is stress, harshness, and the desire to disappear and just have some time for yourself. It does not have to be that way if you make a plan.