Included in this session are:

- **Activity 1.** Reactions to stress or life challenges
- **Activity 2.** Causes of stress
- **Optional/extension activity** (not in workbook)
- **Activity 3.** ‘Can do’ coping
- **Reflection**
- **Home tasks**
List the different signs of stress identified by the class.

## Key messages

Stress is normal — everyone experiences stress.

It is helpful to identify how you react to stress because then you will know the early warning signs and can take steps to manage stress.
1. In groups, brainstorm the common causes of stress for young people.

2. List the causes of stress in the box below. Write as many as you can think of.

3. Group the different causes of stress under different headings like: family, peer, school, community/society.
• Work in pairs. Discuss the things you do to calm down when you feel stressed or overwhelmed.
• List your strategies below.
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• Read over the ‘can do’ coping strategies (on the following pages). These cover a range of coping strategies that might help you feel better when you are stressed.
• Add any other ‘can do’ coping strategies generated by the class in the blank spaces provided.

**Key messages**

It is important to find what works for you when coping with stress.
‘Can do’ coping strategies

- listen to music
- imagine a safe place
- count backwards from 100 (in multiples of 7)
- relax your muscles
- do yoga
- meditate
- distract yourself — think of something pleasant
- breathe deeply
- exercise (go for a jog)
- stretch
lie in the sun  
(with sunscreen on)

plant some seeds  
in the garden

talk to a friend

do something fun  
(see a movie)

read a book

play computer  
games

talk to your  
parents

have a chat session  
on the Internet

immerse yourself  
in a hobby

share some chocolate  
with a friend
set yourself a goal for the week and plan how you will achieve it

be creative

ask for help

get organised (list what needs to be done and do it)

have a warm bath

pray

get a good night’s sleep

cook something nice

write about your feelings

pat the dog or cat
• Look back over the list of ‘can do’ coping strategies and think about times when you have felt really stressed or challenged.
• Has anything helped when you’ve felt this way?
• Pick your top five personal ‘can do’ coping strategies and record them in the box below.

My top five ‘can do’ coping strategies

1. ________________________________________________________________
2. __________________________________________________________________
3. __________________________________________________________________
4. __________________________________________________________________
5. __________________________________________________________________
Think of two situations that are challenging or cause you some stress and that occur regularly (e.g. Maths homework, fight with sister). Write these below.

____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

Over the next week, plan to use one of your top five ‘can do’ coping strategies each time one of these situations arises. Write notes about how the strategy works below.

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____________________________________________________________________
Stress is normal — everyone experiences stress.

It is helpful to identify how you react to stress, because then you will know the early warning signs and can take steps to manage stress.

It is important to find what works for you when coping with stress.

Your own text