

A Common Core Challenge : Stress Free Learning

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As the summer winds down thought of books and classes form in our minds. Students of all ages must now focus on the necessary tools required to help them to become successful people in the class room

For many students the thought of school congers up images of lockers , class room , friends , fun and home work . Especially for high school , colleges and university students education at this time in their life can be not only stimulating in an educational sense but also empowering and motivating in a life sense . Claiming that people from all walks of life faces stress in one ay or another and that stress and modern life go hand in hand .

Stress is nothing new to modern generation . Recently their was a report about the laughing clubs in a few metros . It clearly shows how stress can lead to ultimate madness . Even a most efficient needs a break . After all human beings are not machines , Our children who have to fulfill the aspirations and expectations of their parents , teachers and society are no exception . So it is high time we gave a thought to the concept called “ Stress – free Education “.

Stress

Stress or tension has become an integral part of our daily life . A little bit of stress may be unavoidable and good to , for it would never allow us to be complacent in life . But too much of stress may be counter productive and would in due course impair both our physical and mental health .

And such stress and talks all the age groups including the children and the youth education should be a joyous experience but if too much pressure is put into it children find the going a hard nut to crack .

Too much of home work , home work during the long summer vacations and tedious examination system , all have made both the wards and their parents edgy . There are hundreds of cases of youngsters taking their life when they fail in the examination .

Stress is a state of mind which reflects certain bio chemical reactions in the human body and is projected by a sense of anxiety , tension , depression and fear and is caused by such demands by the environmental forces that cannot be met by the resources available to the person .

Stress in elementary form may not be dangerous but its prolongation causes worry , loss of interest in life and a tendency to do no work . Ultimately the prolonged stress leads to the lack of motivation and achievement in human life .

Main Causes of Extreme Stress among Learners

Poor Sleeping habits :

Students who don't have healthy sleeping habits or don't get enough sleep at night are more likely to feel stressed than students who get plenty of sleep , according to the National Sleep Foundation .

Sleep allows a student's body and brain to recharge and it helps to keep the immune system strong . Inadequate amount of sleep can make child more aggressive and limit its ability to learn , concentrate and solve problem . The National Sleep Foundation recommends that young people sleep 8.5 to 9.25 hours per night and that they maintain a regular sleep schedule .

Academic Pressure :

In preparation for standardized tests more and more teachers are assigning home work to children who are as young as six years old . In the 'CQ Researchers' professor Wendy A patternson shares that education professionals suspects the state and federal academic standards placed on schools and teachers to be the cause of an increased amount of stress experienced in the classroom throughout elementary , middle and high school . According to Denis Clark Pope in a February 2005 standard university report , the pressure that students feel from parents and school raises stress level so high that some teachers regards student stress to be a 'health epidemic' .

Full Schedules :

Even those students who have not experienced an increased homework load may experience stress due to over scheduling and over stimulation . According to Tom Loveless of the brown centre on Education Policy at the Brookings Institution , Loveless shares that full schedules can stress a child's brain and impair her ability to learn . while a teacher or parent may want to help a child succeed by planning for examples various worksheets , projects and extra curricular activities , a child brain benefits from " boredom " or free time because it allows her to figure out and develop her talents and identity .

Over - Expectation from the Parents :

One of the striking characteristics of human beings is individual differences . No two persons are alike in physical , psychological or intellectual capacity . But most of the parents don't realize these differences and compare their child with other children and magnify the formers defects . They have a lot of expectations regarding their child's education and future employment . As a result they compel their children to learn more and more which often exceeds their intellectual limits . This obviously leads the children to frustration . Such children gradually develop hatred , fear and tension towards learning . In the later stages of the education they may invite negative reinforcement from their parents and slowly start hating the educational system .

Lack of Concentration :

The children revealed that they could not concentrate on studies . Some said they are tired of studying , parents also were concerned that the children are not studying when asked why they could not concentrate , some said that they were tensed about the exam while some said they could not take pressure . Excessive stress leads to ill health .

Impractical Curriculum :

All the education commission have stressed the need for a balanced curriculum at least at the secondary level . But most of the states do not follow the suggestion and frame an impractical

curriculum for the children . Most of the lessons are unrelated to life and they have no practical value . This make the child thinks in a negative way and then develop stress to learn the lesson for the sake of examination only.

Poor Eating Habits :

Poor nutrition and unhealthy eating habits can increase a student’s stress level , according to Physician’s Committee for Responsible Medicines , food that can increase stress level in students include those that are high in fat , caffeine , sugar and refined carbohydrates which is the case with many types of convenience processed and fat foods . Examples of stress inducing foods are sodas , energy drinks , candy bars , processed snacks foods , white bread and French fries . A healthy diet that helps to reduce stress includes foods that are low in fat and high in fibre and complex carbohydrates such foods include fruits , vegetables , whole grains , nuts and bean proteins .

Fatigue :

Fatigue brings on stress and same results in a condition that slowly takes over their spirit and capacity to work . An unhealthy mental condition may bring on physical symptoms such as headaches , backaches , nausea etc and leads to absenteeism . When students performance level drops s/he develops a petty and narrow attitude towards others . Such students criticize leadership , teachers , parents and fellow students . They are less patient with classmates .

Mismatch between Student and Teacher :

A good experience with a caring teacher can cause a lasting impression on a child’s life – so can a bad experience . While most teachers do their best to improve students with a positive educational experience . Some students are better suited for certain teaching styles and classroom types than others . If there is a mismatch between student and teacher a child can form lasting negative feelings about school or its own abilities .

So , many things can cause stress . The above causes or sources of stress can be divided into two broad categories : Organisational consequences and Individual consequences .

Organisational Consequences

Task demands

a.Occupation

b.Security

c.Overload

Demand Physical

a.Temperature

b.Classroom design

Individual Consequences

Behavioural

a.Alcohol & drug abuse

b.Violence

c.Performance Problem

Psychological

a.Sleep disturbances

b.Depressions

Role Demand	c. Burnouts
a. Ambiguity	d. Nervousness & Tension
b. Conflict	Physical
Interpersonal Demand	a. Headaches
a. Peer Pressure	b. Sleep disruption
b. Leadership Style	c. Fatigue
c. Personalities	d. lack of concentration
Life Stressors	e. Digestive Problems
a. Life Change	f. Heart Diseases
b. Life Trauma	

Other Cause :

There are numerous problems that await the children at home a well like broken families , divorced parents , orphans , bad environment and others . These can be a major cause of stress among children . Sometimes stress at this stage may affect the children in the long run in life .

Way to Minimize and Managing Stress among Students

1. Short term Strategies :

- Take a break when you need .
- Take some deep breaths and slow down and count to ten .
- Stand up and stretch. Remember relaxation is the opposite of stress .
- Stand up and smile . Try it ! you'll feel better .
- Take a short walk or do something that changes your focus .
- In the book Gone with the wind , Scarlett O' hara says ,” I can't think about that right now. If I do , I 'll go crazy . I'll think about that tomorrow . Good Advice !
- Use coping strategies like I'll will try to do better next time & This is not the end of the world .
- Keeping sense of perspective by asking ourselves . Is this really worth getting upset about .
- Eat Healthy
- Listen to your favourite music .
- Talk to a friend about your problem , don't hold it in .

2. Long Term Strategies :

- Individual coping Strategies . Learning time management skill is often recommended for managing stress .
- Better learning environment .
- Proper method of learning the content material .
- Better teacher student relationship .
- Positive motivation from parents and teachers .

- Learning good study skills .
- Role Management Strategy is to learn to say ‘ No ‘ .
- Minimize student’s workload .
- Teachers and parents should understand the individual difference of the children .
- Self realization of one’s potentialities .
- Awareness of one’s own life .
- Having a good support network .
- Learning how to get organized .
- Not trying to please others and live up to their expectations .
- Giving up having to be perfect .
- Daily and Routine exercise .
- Yoga Practice and Meditation .
- Learning to think rationally and optimistically .
- Setting goals and priorities and living by them .
- Avoid drug and Alcohol abuse .

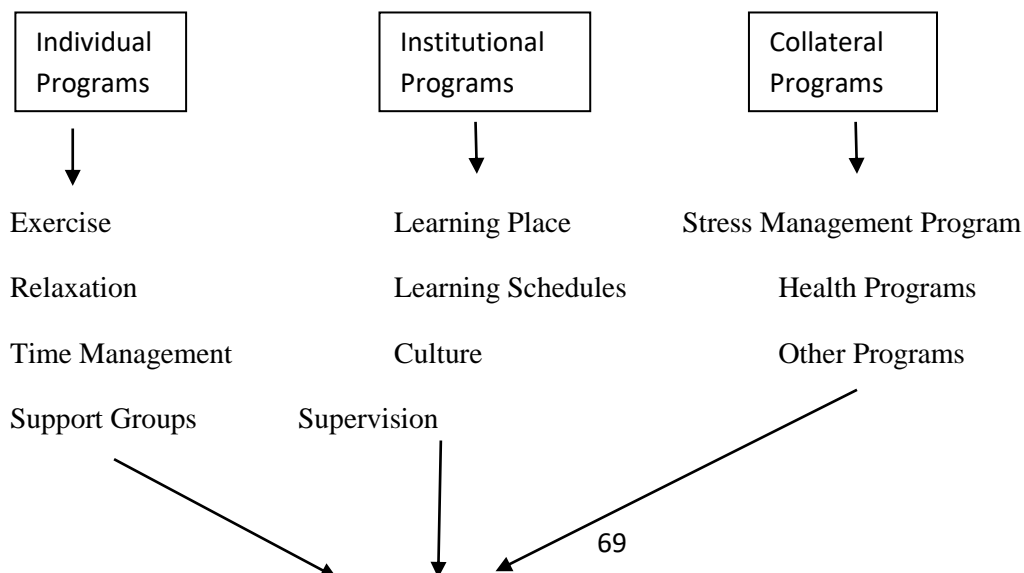
Apart from these children can change the source of the stress . Divert attention by jogging , walking , listening to music etc. Take time for enjoyable activities . Laugh often . Try to see the humorous side of the situation . Laughter is a great way to put people at ease and reduce stress.

Institutional Programs :

Institutional Programs for managing stress are undertaken through established mechanisms . Properly designed jobs and organization’s culture and work schedules can help ease stress . Supervision can play an important institutional role in managing stress .

Collateral Programs :

A collateral stress program is an organizational program created to help employees deal with stress . Organization should try to help employees cope with stress through other kinds of programs . They have adopted stress management programs , health programs and other kinds of programs for this purpose .



Reduce Stress

Conclusion :

Too much stress can contribute to health problems . This is not a new statement . Stress can also reduce your ability to perform at the highest levels . The negative effects of stress can impact profitability and quality of life . Stress can be either temporary or long term , either mild or severe . Both organizations and individuals are highly concerned about stress and its effect . In a broad sense stress and modern life go hand in hand . Stress is one of the most important psychological problem faced by the majority of people all around the world . Relaxation , biofeedback , cognitive restructuring , self control training , problem solving skills , assertiveness have proved as effective tools for managing stress free environment . It leads to reduction in negative emotional experiences associated with stress and improvement in creativity achievement , productivity , quality of life and sense of well being .

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