

Secondary

Virtual Field Trip 3 Stress Management and Coping

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Visualization



School
Mental Health
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Santé mentale
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Introduction

Every day, educators and students are exposed to big and small challenges that can contribute to feelings of stress. This year educators and students have risen to the challenge in innovative and creative ways, connecting and building meaningful relationships with students and families. As the impact of the pandemic continues to evolve, providing opportunities for explicit skill development will continue to be an essential part of bolstering positive student mental health. As an educator, it is equally important to prioritize your own well-being.

School Mental Health Ontario, in partnership with *Ophea*, is offering a series of lessons to support the development of stress management and healthy coping skills. The activities in these lessons provide an opportunity for skill development and modelling for both students and educators.

Each lesson will provide:

- A **minds on activity** for both educators and students.
- An **action** – through a video, classes will participate in a **'virtual field trip'** that provides opportunities for students and educators to learn, practice and develop skills to cope with and manage stress.
- A **consolidation** activity for follow up after the virtual field trip that includes resources to share with secondary students to further support skill development in this area.

In this series of six lessons we will:

- Explore the connection between mental and physical health.
- Discuss the benefits of physical activity for stress management.
- Practice stress management coping skills.





Grades 9 – 12

Lesson Plan

This is the third lesson in a series of six lessons to support the development of **stress management** and **healthy coping skills**.

By demonstrating a range of stress management strategies, both students and educators will have more options and ideas for staying mentally well during difficult times. It is important to note that different strategies work for different individuals. Sharing a range of strategies over time will allow students the opportunity to try them out and determine what works for them.

FOCUS OF LEARNING:

We develop social-emotional learning skills throughout our lives. SEL has been shown to support student emotional wellness, when offered in the context of a caring, inclusive, equity-minded classroom setting. When student identity is affirmed, and skills are introduced in a developmentally-appropriate and sequenced manner, students can select and adopt social-emotional strategies that build on their strengths. Both elementary and secondary curriculum contain connections to social-emotional learning. Social-emotional learning aligns with the *transferable skills*, the learning skills, and work habits (refer to *Growing Success, 2010*) which are addressed as part of all curriculums. Here is an outline of the six skill categories of social-emotional learning. The two highlighted skills will be the focus of this lesson series. Integrating opportunities for students to practice and discuss stress management and coping strategies will benefit learning in all subject areas.

Students will learn skills to:	So they can:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify and manage emotions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • express their feelings and understand the feelings of others
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recognize sources of stress and cope with challenges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop personal resilience
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • maintain positive motivation and perseverance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • foster a sense of optimism and hope
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • build relationships and communicate effectively 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support healthy relationships and respect diversity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop self-awareness and sense of identity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop a sense of identity and belonging
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • think critically and creatively 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • make informed decisions and solve problems



LEARNING GOALS:

EDUCATOR	CLASS
<p>As educators, we are learning to build the confidence and competence to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explore the connection between our mental and physical health. • discuss the benefits of physical activity for stress management. • practice and model stress management coping skills. 	<p>As students, we are learning to build confidence and competence to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explore the connection between mental and physical health. • practice visualization activities as a possible strategy to help us cope with stress.

SUCCESS CRITERIA:

Co-create success criteria with your students using the following questions:

- How will we know we are achieving our learning goals?
- What will it look like/sound like?

Re-visit the success criteria you created from the [the previous field trips](#). What opportunities are there to extend the learning?

For example:

- I can recognize that stress is a part of life and that it can be managed.
- I can learn ways to respond to stressful challenges.
- I can practice, observe, and apply strategies to help manage my stress.

CONSIDERATIONS:

- ▶ Approaches to all instruction, including Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) skills, must be mediated through respectful conversations about students' lived realities, inequity, bias, discrimination and harassment. Starting with self-reflection about yourself, the classroom and the situations individual students in your class may be coping with is key. It is important to remember that our students face a range of challenges that are relative to their personal, social, and cultural lived experience. They also have existing ways of coping. Be sure to consider sources of stress and examine and address structures that reinforce inequitable conditions that add stress to you, your students and entire communities. Through instruction and modelling, we can help students practise new and bolster existing coping strategies.
- ▶ Our collective learning takes place on many different traditional Indigenous territories all across Ontario. We are grateful to be able to work and learn locally on these lands. As a school in Ontario we understand morning routines, including a land acknowledgement specific to your location, will have taken place prior to this field trip.
- ▶ This virtual field trip lesson is intended to be embedded as part of your school day, as part of a lesson during instructional time, whenever it is apparent that students may be struggling and feeling challenged, and/or during times of the year when students may face additional stressors (e.g., exam period, year-end transitions etc.).



- ▶ The focus on emotions may be difficult for some students. Be prepared to connect students to additional supports if needed. Refer to the [ONE-CALL Desk Reference](#) for more information, and take time to consider your school and board circle of support and service pathways. Know what to do, and who to connect with, if a student seems like they might be struggling with their mental health.
- ▶ An effort has been made to include different options for each of the activities. Please feel free to offer further modifications and accommodations based on the individual student need(s) in your classroom. Also, note that all videos have subtitles. You can choose to have captions by clicking the small 'CC' button at the bottom right of the video screen.

MINDS ON

This virtual field trip focuses on **visualization** activities and how this strategy can help us manage stress. It is important to recognize how our body feels, while noticing and acknowledging our feelings. Guided imagery provides an opportunity to shift our focus away from worries and distractions. It can help us relax when we visualize an image that promotes feelings of calm.

Please complete this Minds On activity before participating in the virtual field trip.

EDUCATOR	CLASS
<p>Try an activity that combines the strategies of breathing and visualization. Play this Breathing and Noticing video. Notice how you feel physically and mentally before the activity. Check in with yourself after the activity to see if there are any changes.</p>	<p>Use the following prompts to spark a discussion with your class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can your thoughts change how your body feels? • Can the way your body feels change your thoughts? • Can your emotions change how your body feels? • Can the way your body feels change your emotions?

ACTION TASK: VIRTUAL FIELD TRIP VIDEO

In the video, an educator and mental health professional will lead two guided visualization activities for you and your students to participate in together. This strategy puts us in touch with our internal thoughts and helps us focus. This in turn can help us recognize sources of stress and help us cope with challenges.

Here are links to the activities that are demonstrated in this video:

- Body scan activity from Ophea combines two activities from the [Brain Blitz resource](#)
- [Visualization video](#) from School Mental Health Ontario

Also, be sure to check out the additional resources in the consolidation section of this lesson for follow-up learning.

Links to view virtual field trip:

[Click here to view on YouTube](#)

[Click here to view on Vimeo](#)



CONSOLIDATION

These activities and resources are designed to provide opportunities for consolidation of learning for both the educator and the students.

EDUCATOR	CLASS
<p>Reflect Now that you have participated in three virtual field trips – (breathing, muscle relaxation, visualization), take some time to reflect on which strategies were most effective for you?</p> <p>Are there specific strategies that you would like to practice and incorporate into your daily life?</p> <p>Practice Consider trying this guided body scan activity to practice using visualization as a strategy for yourself.</p> <p>Click here to view</p>	<p>Choose from the following activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <p>□ Reflect and Discuss Re-visit the strategies learned in the first two lessons – (breathing and muscle relaxation). Which was your favourite activity and why? Are you noticing which strategies work best for you? How do you know they are working?</p> <p>□ Practice Offer students further opportunities to practise the strategies introduced in this field trip, or try one of these complementary activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Mental Health Ontario: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Breathing and Noticing - Guided Body Scan • Ophea, Brain Blitz: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Breathing with Awareness - Breathing Good Energy In - Happy Place Meditation

