

Are We Okay?

Mental Health of Teens

Susan McHale, Jason McNaughton
Published by *K20 Center*

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons CC BY-SA 4.0 License

Grade Level	9th – 12th Grade	**Time Frame**	130
Subject	Social Studies	**Duration**	3 days
Course	Psychology		

Essential Question

What are the sources of teen stress? What are healthy and unhealthy responses to teen stress? What might be some coping strategies for teen stress?

Summary

In this lesson, students analyze the physiological and psychological factors that promote mental health in teens. They brainstorm potential sources of stress and identify strategies to manage stress.

Snapshot

Engage

Students brainstorm what teens worry or stress about using a Circle Map graphic organizer.

Explore

Through class discussion of teen stressors, students create a Collaborative Word Cloud. Students identify what appear to be the most common stressors for teens. Then, they watch a short video about teen stress.

Explain

Students explore healthy or productive responses to teen stress. They read an informational text about teen stress and possible coping strategies.

Extend

Students watch a video interview about the career and daily routine of a psychologist. After the interview, students identify the most important piece of information they learned from the psychologist and add this to their graphic organizers.

Evaluate

Using the RAFT strategy, students choose one scenario from a menu of possible teen stress situations and write a response to their chosen scenario. Students may offer peer feedback on written scenario responses through a peer editing and feedback process.

Standards

Oklahoma Academic Standards (Social Studies: Psychology (9th through 12th grade))

PS.9: The student will evaluate the many factors that promote mental health.
PS.9.1: Identify and explain potential sources of stress, effects of stress,and various coping strategies for dealing with stress.
PS.9.2: Describe the characteristics of and factors that promote resilience and optimism.
PS.9.3: Analyze the relationship between psychological health and physiological health.

Attachments

- Circle Map Graphic Organizer—Are We Okay - Spanish.docx
- Circle Map Graphic Organizer—Are We Okay - Spanish.pdf
- Circle Map Graphic Organizer—Are We Okay.docx
- Circle Map Graphic Organizer—Are We Okay.pdf
- Lesson Slides—Are We Okay.pptx
- RAFT Peer Feedback Form—Are We Okay - Spanish.docx
- RAFT Peer Feedback Form—Are We Okay - Spanish.pdf
- RAFT Peer Feedback Form—Are We Okay.docx
- RAFT Peer Feedback Form—Are We Okay.pdf
- RAFT—Are We Okay - Spanish.docx
- RAFT—Are We Okay - Spanish.pdf
- RAFT—Are We Okay.docx
- RAFT—Are We Okay.pdf
- Teen Stress Reading—Are We Okay - Spanish.docx
- Teen Stress Reading—Are We Okay - Spanish.pdf
- Teen Stress Reading—Are We Okay.docx
- Teen Stress Reading—Are We Okay.pdf

Materials

- Lesson Slides (attached)
- Circle Map Graphic Organizer (attached, one per student)
- Teen Stress Reading (attached, one per student)
- RAFT handout (attached, one per student)
- RAFT Peer Feedback Form (attached, one per student)
- Pens and pencils
- Highlighters

35 minutes

Engage

Introduce the lesson using the attached **Lesson Slides**. Begin with **slide 3.** Briefly, read aloud the essential questions. Then, move to **slide 4** and read aloud the lesson objectives.

Pass out copies of the attached **Circle Map Graphic Organizer,** and display the question on **slide 5**: *"What do teens stress or worry about?"*

Have students use the Circle Maps strategy with the graphic organizer. In the first, outermost circle of the graphic organizer, ask students to jot down a few reasons why teens might be stressed. These ideas should be brief and limited to single words or short phrases. Allow about five minutes for students to write down their ideas.

Display **slide 6**. Pair students with an Elbow Partner, and have them share their ideas with each other. Ask students to add any new ideas they discuss with their partners to their graphic organizers. Have them choose **two ideas** they discussed to share with the class.

Use a word cloud generator such as WordClouds.com to create a Collaborative Word Cloud as you conduct a whole-class discussion. The word cloud will allow students to quickly see what things teens stress about most often according to the class.

Because student pairs have chosen two ideas to share with the class, ask each partner to share out one of the ideas. As each teen stressor is shared, ask other class members to raise their hands if that same topic or idea is also written in their outer circle. Count the number of hands raised, and then add the idea to the word cloud generator once per student (including once for the student who shared it).

Sample Student Responses: Word Cloud Addition Examples

If a partner shares out that "lots of homework" is a teen stressor, ask the class if others wrote "homework" in their outer circle. If, for example, six class members also raise their hands, then add the word "homework" to the word cloud generator a total of seven times—once for each student who wrote the response, plus the student who shared it.

Continue in this manner until all class members have shared their ideas about teen stress. With the compilation of student ideas recorded, generate the class's completed word cloud.

Ask the class to analyze the word cloud, noting trends in the things they identified as common teen stressors. Ask students to make any other general observations about the completed word cloud before moving on to the next part of the lesson. Tell students to keep their Circle Map Graphic Organizer handy, as they will continue to add to it throughout the lesson.

25 minutes

Explore

Next, invite students to watch a video of a teen discussing the stressors in her life and how her perception changed about them. Display the two questions on **slide 7**.

- What stresses does Carley have in her life?
- How does Carley change her viewpoint about stress?

Direct students to the second circle on the graphic organizer, and instruct them to jot down answers to these questions as they watch the video.

Display **slide 8**. Show the video "Stress at School: Carley Rogers."

Embedded video
https://youtube.com/watch?v=dbic3JCX1jo

After the video, allow students time to finish writing their answers in the second circle. Invite students to choose a new Elbow Partner and share their answers with each other. Allow about five minutes for this discussion. Once ideas are shared, conduct a class discussion about the video.

In addition to discussing Carley's experience with stress and practicing gratitude, invite students to share their own opinions and experiences, as they might use different coping strategies or find that what works for Carley does not work for them.

Possible Responses and Class Discussion

Students should be able to answer the questions posed by the video.

What stresses does Carley have in her life? Possible responses could include: Carley doesn't like school, her classes are boring, there are academic pressures to get good grades, and there are expectations to prepare for college.

How does Carley change her viewpoint about stress? She practices gratitude by reflecting on all the opportunities she has. Carley points out that viewing her life through this lens helps her gain a new perspective on her stress.

Additional discussion questions could include:

- *Have you ever changed your point of view about a stressful situation? If so, did this change help you in any way?*
- *Do you believe that practicing gratitude is an effective coping strategy? If not, what are other strategies you might find to be more helpful in coping with stress?*
- *The speaker mentions that she sometimes struggles to imagine school stress from the perspective of a person who can't attend school. When might this strategy help? When might it not?*
- *At what point might it be important to ask for help from others?*
- *Do you have any other thoughts about the video that haven't been addressed?*

To support students who may be experiencing depression or anxiety, be sure students do not walk away from the video or discussion without understanding that everyone may experience stress, depression, or anxiety at one time or another in their lives. This is the experience of being human, regardless of how many benefits a person may have.

35 minutes

Explain

Continue the class discussion, focusing on strategies students have tried to alleviate stress.

Teacher's Note: Sensitive Material Warning

Read the following article and the **RAFT** handout, which is used later in the lesson, before presenting them in class. They contain potentially sensitive information or scenarios that could cause distress for teens who may be experiencing personal or peer issues. You may wish to edit these documents before class based on your knowledge of students. You may also consider disclosing the nature of the content to all students before class so they can prepare coping strategies as needed to safely engage with the material.

Display **slide 9**. Pass out copies of the attached **Teen Stress Reading**. Introduce the reading and ask students to use the Why-Lighting strategy to annotate as they read. This includes highlighting main ideas and writing in the margin why they chose to highlight that phrase or idea.

Give students time to read and Why-Light. Then, discuss which ideas they highlighted. Ask students to review the teen stressors mentioned in the reading and compare the list of teen stressors mentioned in the reading with the list the class generated earlier.

Display **slide 10**. Direct students to the third circle of the Circle Map Graphic Organizer and ask them to write down any coping strategies that sound reasonable or doable to them. Call on volunteers to share what they wrote.

Conclude the conversation by discussing the following question with the class: *How might focusing on physical coping strategies help with our emotional well-being?*

15 minutes

Extend

Transition to the video on **slide 11**. Invite students to watch a career interview with professional counselor Natalie Gallo: "K20 ICAP - Are We Okay?"

Embedded video
https://youtube.com/watch?v=BN10mvJYoTA

As students watch the interview, ask them to write in the innermost circle of their Circle Map Graphic Organizer at least one idea that seems important. Display **slide 12** after the video to remind students to complete this step if they haven't already.

Teacher's Note: Professional Bio

Natalie Gallo is a practicing Licensed Professional Counselor at the OU Health Sciences Center. She primarily works with adolescent clients. Gallo works with adolescents individually and also conducts small-group therapy meetings. In addition, Gallo supervises master's-level students who are training to become counselors. Gallo also consults with a team of fellow therapists who work together to provide treatment plans for children and adolescents in their care.

Ask for volunteers to share what they wrote. Discuss how the ideas presented in the video might be helpful in addressing teens' stress.

25 minutes

Evaluate

Display **slide 13** and pass out copies of the attached **RAFT** handout. Ask students to take a moment to reflect on all that has been discussed in this lesson.

Teacher's Note: School Guest Speaker

This lesson offers an opportunity to introduce the school counselor or the school mental health professional to the class, should that staff member exist. The school counselor or mental health professional can provide information on how students can meet with or contact them, explain what services are provided, and discuss issues of confidentiality per school guidelines.

To wrap up the topic of teen stress and mental health, students will complete a RAFT writing activity. Review the RAFT choices on the handout, and instruct students to choose **one** of the prompts to write about. Emphasize to students that they should use their Why-Lighted reading, the videos, and their Circle Map answers to inform and support their writing. Allow at least 20 minutes of uninterrupted time for students to complete their writing.

Optional Extension

To help students improve their RAFT writing, you may ask them to share their first draft with a partner. If you choose to include this activity, however, **be sure to inform students before they begin writing their drafts** to allow them to screen out any personal information they may not wish to share with a peer unexpectedly.

Pass out copies of the attached **RAFT Peer Feedback Form**. Ask students to give constructive feedback on their peers' drafts using the rubric as a guide. Once each student receives their partner's suggestions, students can revise their writing and prepare a final draft of the RAFT document. (Allow an additional 30–35 minutes for this activity.)

Resources

- K20 Center. (March 2021). K20 ICAP - Are We Okay? [video]. *YouTube*. https://youtu.be/BN10mvJYoTA
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Circle Maps. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/159
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Collaborative Word Clouds. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/103
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Elbow Partners. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/116
- K20 Center. (n.d.). RAFT. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/158
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Why-Lighting. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/128
- TEDx Talks. (2016, June 9). Stress at School | Carley Rogers | TEDxYouth@ParkCity. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dbic3JCX1jo
- Word Cloud Generator. (n.d.). https://www.wordclouds.com/