

# Ontario Dress Purple Day: Lesson 2



## Activity: What's on Your Mind?

<b>Grade Range:</b> Grades 7-12
<b>Task Time:</b> Part 1 – 15 minutes; Part 2 - 20 minutes
<b>Activity Objective:</b> <p>The purpose of this activity is to have youth identify some of the stresses that they experience in life, explore how stresses impact their selves and their self-esteem, and identify healthy coping strategies.</p>
<b>Materials Needed:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sticky Notes</li></ul>
<b>Activity Description:</b> <b>Part 1:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Discuss with the class the following questions:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ <i>What is stress?</i></li><li>➤ <i>How does stress make you feel?</i></li><li>➤ <i>Where do you carry stress in your body?</i></li></ul></li><li>2. Explain to the class that each individual will have an opportunity to write down some stresses they are experiencing in their everyday lives. Emphasize that individuals do not have to write down their names as the activity is anonymous.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ <i>Explain that some of the sticky notes may be used as examples in the class discussion, but individuals can choose if they would like to share what they have written. If they do not mind having their sticky note shared, they can place a check mark on it, and if they would not like it to be shared, they can place an 'X'. Again, remind the class that either way, no individual will be identified and it will all be anonymous.</i></li></ul></li><li>3. Give each individual a sticky note and give them about 5-7 minutes to write some things down.</li><li>4. Collect all the sticky notes and tell the class that you will sort through them and there will be a class discussion.</li></ol> <b>Part 2:</b> <p>*Before the discussion, facilitator sorts all the sticky notes into overarching 'sources of stress' categories as it fits (e.g., family, friends, self, school, bullying, relationships, racism etc.). To make this process more efficient, the facilitator can prepare the categories beforehand and as individuals hand in their sticky notes, sort them into the categories.</p>

1. Report back to the class the 'sources of stress' categories that were found in the class and give some examples from each category.
2. Use the following discussion questions as guidelines:
  - *Was anyone surprised by the amount of stress experienced in the class?*
  - *How can stress impact our self-esteem?*
  - *How can stress impact our relationships with others?*
  - *What are some unhealthy ways to work with stress?*
  - *What are some healthy ways to work with stress?*
  - *Who are some of the people or resources we can go to for help with some of the stresses we have discussed?*
3. Write down some of the healthy ways of dealing with stress during the discussion on a sheet of chart paper. Write down some of the people/resources youth can go to for help with the stresses they have identified. Have this chart paper displayed somewhere in the classroom.
4. Remind the class that sometimes we need support for some of the stresses that we are experiencing. In those situations, we need to get help from a trusted adult or turn to a resource like Kids Help Phone, Black Youth Helpline, Naseeha Youth Helpline, LGBT Youth Helpline.

**Adaptations:**

- Allow individuals to add to the list of healthy coping strategies throughout the year. Refer to this list from time to time and check in with the class in terms of how they are working with the stresses they are experiencing.

**Comments and/or Additional Resources:**

- The types of stresses identified in the class can guide the types of topics to explore in Lesson 4 activity, "How to Use Organizations and Resources that Support Youth".