Stress

In order to overcome obstacles in life, a person must possess the ability to manage stress. The same is true for students. What do your students perceive as “stressors” when it comes to their academic abilities and social interactions? Outside of school, do students worry about where their next meal might come from, or whether their parents have enough money? Some students take on the financial stress of their parents or other adults close to them. These areas of stress can begin to impede students academically and socially. Do your students have the Resiliency skills necessary to manage their stress and persevere?

**Academic Stress**

What are some things that can be done in classrooms to help students handle the stress of rigorous coursework?

“TAB” Station or “Take A Break” is a dedicated desk or station in your class where a student can choose to go if they feel they may be on the verge of losing control. The teacher may also ask a student to visit “TAB.” While there, they fill out a form explaining why they chose TAB or reflect on why it was assigned to them. Teachers can use this strategy to begin identifying triggers and to later meet with students to discuss their reflection and try to reduce future flares.

**Student Planners** can help students organize their school priorities and keep tabs on upcoming assignments and due dates.

**Organization Time** in each class and/or in Advisory/Homeroom can help students organize their binders, backpacks, notes, etc. Teachers can also use this time to ensure students are using planners appropriately.

**After School Tutoring** allows students the chance to get additional help in areas they may be struggling. It also is extra time for students to catch up on homework or general classwork.

**7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens** by Steven Covey is a self-help guide that can be used with students to help them build organizational skills, responsibility skills, and manage stressful situations they may face.

**Physical Activity** is important to students so they have designated times to get up and move in order to release some energy so they can refocus their attention when needed. They need time to “play.” This can come in many forms: games in Advisory, intramural sports, dedicated brain break times, etc.

**Financial Stress**

It may seem like educators can’t affect a student’s stress when it comes to finances outside of school. But there are some things that can be done.

**Banking Programs** Many schools are starting to partner with local banks or credit unions in order to have them come in and work with students and parents to teach them basic financial planning.

**Banking Services** Some schools are even taking this many steps further and having credit unions open up within a school, allowing students a chance to actually work in the program and use services provided to help them understand the basic principles of finance.

**Finance Courses** can be a required course giving students the opportunity to acquire an understanding of writing checks, making deposits/withdrawals, saving, interest, loans and credit cards.

**Social Stress**

What are some things that can be done in classrooms to help students deal with the stress of their social interactions?

**Strategic Partnering** Think about the strengths and weaknesses of different students and put students together who could help one another. Be careful not to put someone too dominant with someone too passive.

**Assign Group Roles** during group activities (presenter, time keeper, recorder, etc) and rotate in order to prevent one student from taking on too much or having students feel not included. This will also allow students to open up and get help from their peers if needed.