

Help a family member.

Teaching your children how to cope with challenges in life is one of the most important things you can do for them. You can use Change to Chill and the ideas below to help. You might find some strategies that help you too!

What You Need

- Electronic devices for each participant or one with a larger screen that you can both see
- Internet connection

No parent wants to see their child totally stressed out (or to be stressed out themselves). Stress makes family life challenging for everyone. However, as much as we might like to shelter our families from it all, there are a lot of different pressures in life and some stress is normal and unavoidable. Fortunately there are also many positive ways of dealing with it.

We know that teens in particular aren't always receptive to parents' advice. So we've developed a structure for using the Change to Chill website with family members that allows for tweaks and adjustments to suit your unique needs. Follow your child's lead as to what's important and helpful. The most important thing is to introduce Change to Chill so they know they can turn to it for ideas and information anywhere and anytime they have access to the Internet.

Step 1: Get Started

Watch the Change to Chill intro video together.

Change to Chill Intro video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R7S_WVQ0LRo

Step 2: Determine Stress Factors

Encourage your teen to take the Stress Factors quiz. Better yet, both of you take it at the same time on separate computers. There are five questions and no right or wrong answers. Be sure to give your teen privacy but also be there if they want to talk. By taking the quiz your son or daughter will learn about where their own stress is coming from and what stress does to them.

After the 5th and final question is answered and they click "next," a results page will appear. Take time for reviewing the customized results and exploring the recommended resources on the website. Again, don't pressure your teen to share their answers or results if they don't want to. Note that answers are not saved on the website and will disappear once you leave the site.

Stress Factors Quiz: <http://www.changetochill.org/stress-factor-quiz/>

Step 3: What Is Stress?

Watch the Stress Test video together. Then read through the Causes of Stress. Talk about the different sources of stress you each experience. Has that changed over time? Do the same things that caused you stress when you were younger bother you now? What do you both think might be some sources of stress in the future? Explain again that Change to Chill is all about learning to deal with stress and change your ways of thinking to help you thrive in spite of whatever life throws your way.

Stress Test video: <https://youtu.be/XBXVljwuuSk>

Step 4: Introduction to Mindfulness

Mindfulness and meditation are two of the healthiest and most effective stress-busting strategies.

- Mindfulness is the objective observation of the present moment. It reduces anxiety by focusing on the present moment—not the past or the future, both of which can create anxiety.
- Meditation is the practice of turning your attention to a single point of focus. It can take many different forms.

Change to Chill has a number of options for learning about mindfulness and trying meditation with the help of videos and guided audio recordings. Learning some easy relaxation and meditation techniques can help you think more clearly, make better decisions, and manage whatever comes your way. Take a few minutes to explore the different meditations and then go to Mindful Eating at the very bottom of the page. Paying focused attention while eating a small treat such as a piece of dried fruit or individually wrapped candy is a simple, fun way to learn about the concept of mindfulness. Read through the instructions together and then do the activity following the step-by-step directions. After you've finished, talk about it:

- What did you notice?
- What did you like most? Dislike most?
- How can you incorporate mindful eating into meals and snacks? Would that change your experience with food?

Mindful Eating Exercise (pdf): <http://www.changetochill.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/Mindful-Eating-Exercise.pdf>

Step 5: Five-Minute Meditation

Use the online five-minute video to provide participants with first-hand meditation experience. Invite them to get in a comfortable position. Inform them they can either watch the full video quietly or close their eyes and just listen. Either way, encourage them to follow the instructions and try the meditation. At the end take a few minutes to discuss what they thought of the experience.

Meditation video: <https://youtu.be/uZX4v4lw2Mc>

Step 6: Guided Imagery

Watch the Guided Imagery video together and try one of the processes, either to de-stress or to focus on a future goal. At the end talk about how you think you could use this strategy in different specific situations.

Guided Imagery video: <https://youtu.be/BD3ubF-5KCg>

Step 7: What's Next?

Changing to Chill is what's known as a practice. It's something you do regularly and learn about over time. No one ever just learns to relax once and then has it mastered. Fortunately the Change to Chill resources are available anytime and anywhere young people have Internet access. To encourage your teen and yourself to stay motivated to continue what you've started today, choose one activity or suggestion from the website that you are each committed to trying over the next week. Agree to come back together in seven days specifically to review the website and talk about what you tried and how it went.

Additional Resources: <http://www.changetochill.org/resources/>