LET’S TALK IT OUT!

Managing stress as LGBTQIA+ youth

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Facilitated by

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Brought to you by Allina Health Change to Chill
Powered by Hennepin County Public Health
Agenda

- Introductions
- What is Change to Chill™?
- What is stress?
- How can stress look different for LGBTQIA+?
- What does stress look like for you?
- Managing stress/Coping strategies Practicing some strategies together
- Q & A
- Resources
Change to Chill™

- Free online educational resource
- Designed and tested by teens – BUT all can benefit
- Focus: identify stress and build resiliency
- Prevention based
- Linked to National Health & Physical Education Standards
What Is Stress?

My Heart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alarm going off.</th>
<th>Disarming a bomb.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Heart" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Heart" /></td>
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- Alarm going off.
- Disarming a bomb.
- Microwaving a burrito at 3am and stopping it going off with 2 seconds left.

My stress glands pumping adrenaline into my bloodstream.

My heart, lungs and other vital organs:

- ![Heart](image)

What is your greatest stressor right now?

a) School
b) Friendships/Dating
c) Family
d) Covid
e) All of the above
Everybody has stress. How is it different for us in the LGBTQIA+ community?

- **Seventy-seven percent** of LGBTQ teenagers surveyed report feeling depressed or down over the past week;
- **Ninety-five percent** of LGBTQ youth report trouble sleeping at night;
- LGBTQ youth of color and transgender teenagers experience unique challenges and elevated stress -- only **11 percent** of youth of color surveyed believe their racial or ethnic group is regarded positively in the U.S., and over **50 percent** of trans and gender expansive youth said they can *never* use school restrooms that align with their gender identity;
- More than **70 percent** report feelings of worthlessness and hopelessness in the past week;
- Only **26 percent** say they always feel safe in their school classrooms -- and just **five percent** say all of their teachers and school staff are supportive of LGBTQ people;
- **Sixty-seven percent** report that they’ve heard family members make negative comments about LGBTQ people.
When It Comes To “The Closet”… Stress Can Look Different

- Fear of others’ reactions
- Keeping a secret
- Surface-level friendships
- Dating pressure

- Changes in relationships
- Fear of being “outed”
- Bullying
- Limit on activities by parents
- Rejection
- Feeling unsafe

- Keeping track of who knows & who doesn’t
- Code switching between groups
- Guilt for “lying”
- Isolation/withdrawal

- Bullying
- Pressure to “explain”
- Targeting from peers, coaches, teachers, family, co-workers
Which glass will fill up first?

Identity

Academics

Covid

Friends

Money/Job

Extracurriculars

Parents

© BRIGHTSIDE
Managing stress/Coping strategies

When we see or feel stress coming, it’s a good time to slow down...
Guided Meditation

Managing Stress
Increasing self awareness
Controls anxiety
Lengthens attention span
Pain control
Decreased blood pressure

If guided meditation isn’t for you there are other ways to relieve stress. Listening to a song and focusing on the lyrics, drawing, or anything that can help you focus
Deep Breathing Exercises

Lions Breath

- Relieves tension in your face
- Releases pent up aggression
- Energizing
Movement

Stretch Game
Person 1 chooses a stretch
The group repeats their stretch
Person one calls on person 2
Person 2 chooses a stretch
The group repeats their stretch
## Coping Skills

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<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Pros</th>
<th>Cons</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Distraction</strong></td>
<td>Gives your heart &amp; mind a break. Great for short term relief.</td>
<td>Can't do it for too long. Doesn't resolve any underlying issues. Meds can make it hard to concentrate.</td>
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<td>Great to get through a crisis.</td>
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<td><strong>Grounding</strong></td>
<td>Helps slow or stop &quot;dissociation&quot; (feeling numb, floaty or disconnected) Reduces physicality of anxiety</td>
<td>Sometimes it's better to stay a bit dissociated (that's how your mind protects you).</td>
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<td><strong>Emotional Release</strong></td>
<td>Great for anger and fear. Releases the pressure of overwhelming emotion.</td>
<td>Hard to do in every situation. Feels cold. Some people might think you're acting &quot;crazier&quot; (be together with love &amp; everyone you see)</td>
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<td><strong>Self Love</strong></td>
<td>Become your own best friend, your own support worker. Great for guilt or shame. You deserve it!</td>
<td>Sometimes can feel really hard to do, or feel superficial (but it's not)</td>
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<td><strong>Thought Challenge</strong></td>
<td>Can help to shift long-term, negative thinking habits. Trying to be more logical can help reduce extreme emotion.</td>
<td>The more emotional you feel, the harder this is to do. In particular, feelings of shame can make this very hard.</td>
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<td><strong>Access your higher self</strong></td>
<td>Helps someone else, smile at strangers (see how many smiles you get back), pray, volunteer, do randomly kind things for others, pet dogs at the local park, join a cause</td>
<td>Don't get stuck trying to save everyone else and forget about you!</td>
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You don’t have to manage it all alone!

- Utilize mental health supports between school & community
  - Therapists, Social Workers, Counselors, School Psychologists

- Online chat & text resources through TrevorChat & TrevorText (678-678)

- Call Trevor Lifeline if you’re in crisis - 1-866-488-7386

- Q Chat Space - connect with others in the community & get support on a variety of topics
Question & Answer
Resources

- Change to Chill - https://www.changetochill.org/
- Queer Zine Archive Project (QAZP) - https://www.qzap.org/
- Queer Media Matters - http://www.queermediamatters.com
- Out, What Now?! Podcast - Apple, Spotify
- Breathing exercises - https://www.healthline.com/health/breathing-exercise#lions-breathe
Resources

- Q Chat Space - online community support
  - https://www.qchatspace.org/

- Trevor Project - community & crisis support
  - https://www.thetrevorproject.org/

- SMYAL - Sexual Minority Youth Assistance League: empowering LGBTQ+ youth
  - https://smyal.org/

- Ally Parents - Trans ally parents available via phone/text
  - https://standwithtrans.org/ally-parents/