

Stress Toolbox Relay

Respectful
Relationships

To give students an opportunity to explore, collect, and reflect on a range of stress management strategies in a fun, fast-paced team relay format.



Learning Intentions

Students describe different strategies that help them manage stress and difficult emotions.

This helps students build emotional literacy and resilience.

Students explore which coping tools work best for them.

This promotes self-awareness and helps students take ownership of their well-being.

Students learn to support others by sharing helpful ideas for stressful moments.

This encourages empathy, connection, and collective problem-solving.



Success Criteria

Self-Awareness:

Students can name strategies that help them stay calm or bounce back from stress.

Coping Skills Toolkit:

Students can choose and explain at least one physical, one mental, and one connection-based strategy.

Empathy & Peer Support:

Students can share tools that might also work for friends and classmates, promoting a sense of community care.

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Objective:

To give students an opportunity to explore, collect, and reflect on a range of stress management strategies in a fun, fast-paced team relay format.

Players:

Small groups (teams of 4–6 students work best)

Materials:

- Printable “Strategy Cards” for three types of coping strategies: (found in PDF resource tab). Alternatively you can simply write them out on separate pieces of paper, see below. You will need enough Strategy Cards per zone for each team.
- Physical Strategies (e.g. stretching, deep breathing, walking)
- Mental Strategies (e.g. positive self-talk, visualising success, reframing thoughts)
- Connection Strategies (e.g. talking to someone, asking for help, helping others)
- Cones, markers, or signs to mark each of the 3 relay zones
- A “Stress Toolbox” basket or container per team (shoeboxes, tubs, etc.)

Setup:

1. Print and cut out the *Strategy Cards* for each zone, ensuring there are enough for each team in each zone.
2. Designate a start line and 3 relay zones:
 - Zone 1: Physical Strategies
 - Zone 2: Mental Strategies
 - Zone 3: Connection Strategies
3. In each zone, place a pile of printed or written strategy cards.
4. Place each team’s “Stress Toolbox” container at the finish line.

Activity:

1. Relay Time!

One by one, students run through all three zones, collecting one card per zone (a physical, mental, and connection strategy). After they return and place their cards in their team’s toolbox, the next runner goes.

2. Team Talk:

Once the relay is complete, teams open their toolbox and:

- Sort their strategies into the 3 types
- Choose one favourite from each category
- Prepare to share why they chose those 3 tools

3. Present & Reflect:

Each team presents their top 3 coping tools and explains:

- When might you use this strategy?
- Why does it work for you?
- Who could this help?



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Reflection Prompts:

- “Which strategy do you think you’ll try next time you feel overwhelmed?”
- “Is there a tool in your team’s box that you hadn’t thought of before?”
- “Why is it helpful to have different tools for different situations?”

Winning the Game:

This is a strengths-based, non-competitive activity. Everyone wins by walking away with a stronger, more personal toolbox of strategies for managing stress, both individually and as a team.

Extension Ideas:

- Students can decorate personal “Stress Toolbox” posters or notebooks after the activity.
- Create a class “Strategy Wall” where students can add strategies that have worked for them in real life.

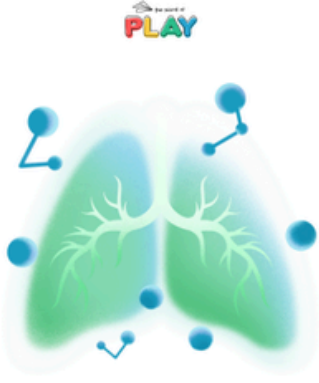
Additional Notes:

Stress Toolbox Relay turns well-being education into movement-based fun. It encourages thoughtful reflection and teamwork, while developing the core skills of resilience, emotional regulation, and respectful support in the classroom community.



STRATEGY CARDS

PRINT AND CUT OUT THE STRATEGY CARDS. LABEL THREE AREAS OR TABLES AS PHYSICAL, MENTAL, AND CONNECTION STRATEGIES. STUDENTS RACE RELAY-STYLE, COLLECTING ONE CARD FROM EACH AREA TO BUILD THEIR TEAM'S "STRESS TOOLBOX."




PHYSICAL STRATEGY

TAKE DEEP BREATHS FOR 30 SECONDS.



PHYSICAL STRATEGY

GO FOR A SHORT WALK OR STRETCH YOUR ARMS AND LEGS.



PHYSICAL STRATEGY

SQUEEZE A STRESS BALL OR COUNT TO TEN SLOWLY.



PHYSICAL STRATEGY

DRINK WATER AND ROLL YOUR SHOULDERS BACK.

STRATEGY CARDS

the power of
PLAY



MENTAL STRATEGY

TELL YOURSELF, "I CAN
HANDLE THIS."

the power of
PLAY



MENTAL STRATEGY

PICTURE A CALM, HAPPY PLACE
IN YOUR MIND.

the power of
PLAY



MENTAL STRATEGY

THINK OF THREE THINGS
THAT WENT WELL TODAY.

the power of
PLAY



MENTAL STRATEGY

REFRAME YOUR THOUGHTS: "IT'S
OKAY TO MAKE MISTAKES."



STRATEGY CARDS

the power of
PLAY



CONNECTION STRATEGY

TALK TO A FRIEND OR CLASSMATE
ABOUT HOW YOU FEEL.

the power of
PLAY



CONNECTION STRATEGY

ASK A TEACHER, PARENT, OR
TRUSTED ADULT FOR HELP.

the power of
PLAY



CONNECTION STRATEGY

WRITE A THANK-YOU NOTE OR
MESSAGE TO SOMEONE WHO
HELPED YOU.

the power of
PLAY



CONNECTION STRATEGY

HELP SOMEONE ELSE WHO
LOOKS UPSET OR LONELY.

