

TRUTH SPOTLIGHT

on stress management

FEELING like there are too many pressures and demands on you?

LOSING sleep worrying about tests and schoolwork?

EATING on the run because your schedule is just too busy?

You're not alone. Everyone feels stressed out at times — adults, teens, and even kids. But you can avoid getting too stressed out by handling everyday pressures and problems, staying calm, asking for help when you need it, and making time to relax.

You can do things to handle the stress that comes with any new challenge. Stress-management skills work best when practiced ahead of time, not just when the pressure's on. Knowing how to "de-stress" and calm yourself can help you get through challenging circumstances.

- **Take a stand against overscheduling.** If you're feeling stretched, consider cutting out an activity or two, choosing just the ones that are most important to you.
- **Be realistic.** Don't try to be perfect — no one is. Don't put useless pressure on yourself.
- **Get a good night's sleep.** Getting enough sleep helps keep your body and mind in top shape, making you better equipped to deal with any negative stressors.
- **Make time for fun.** Build time into your schedule for activities you enjoy — read a good book, play with your pet, laugh, do a hobby, make art or music, spend time with positive people, or be in nature.
- **Treat your body well.** Get regular exercise and eat well to help your body function at its best. When you're stressed out, it's easy to eat on the run or eat junk food. But under stressful conditions, you need good nutrition more than ever.
- **Find the upside.** Your outlook, attitude, and thoughts influence the way you see things. Is your cup half-full or half-empty? A healthy dose of optimism can help you make the best of stressful circumstances — and even recognize something you've learned from the situation.
- **Solve the little problems.** Take action to solve problems that crop up. For example, if you're stressed out over homework, size up the situation and figure out ways to handle it better.
- **Build positive relationships.** Knowing that there are people who believe in us boosts our ability to deal with challenges. Ask for help and support when you need it.