

*Same stress.
Brighter days.*

BERGEN COUNTY
YOUTH ASSEMBLY

The Reset



A stress and resilience toolkit for high school students.



1 GUIDE



1 CARD



1 CLICKER

Small tools. A brighter you.

1 This is normal.

High school is a lot. There are tests, grades, and deadlines. There are college questions, sports, family, friends, and a phone that never goes quiet. Some weeks it all lands at once, and it makes sense that you feel stretched.

WE ARE NOT PROFESSIONALS.

We are students who trained in Psychological First Aid and Skills for Psychological Recovery, plus a college stress management course one of us took. This will not diagnose you, treat you, or replace an adult who knows what they are doing. If it helps, good. If you need more than this, page 6 tells you where to go.

Stress is your body doing its job: getting you ready for something hard. The problem is when it never turns off. You do not need all of these, and having some does not mean anything is wrong with you. It means you are carrying a lot.

In your body



Tight shoulders, headaches, a stomach that will not settle, tired no matter how much you sleep, or not able to sleep at all.



In your head

Rereading the same paragraph five times, forgetting things you normally would not, a loop of worry you cannot switch off.



In your mood

Snapping at people you love, feeling flat about things you used to enjoy, wanting to be alone more than usual.

Almost everyone in this building feels some version of this.

2 Name your three.

Before anything else, write down the three things weighing on you most right now. Just three. Stress with a name is easier to deal with than a fog. Some of these you can shrink. Others you can only carry better. The tools here are for both.

1

2

3

CALM THE BODY

When it is running hot.

1 Breathe on purpose · 1 min

In for 4. Hold 4. Out for 6. Five times. The long exhale tells your body it can stand down. It feels silly the first time. Do it anyway.

2 Come back to the room · 2 min

5 things you can see, 4 you can hear, 3 you can touch, 2 you can smell, 1 you can taste. You cannot spiral and inventory a room at the same time.

3 Move, even a little

Not a workout. Walk the block, stretch on the floor, shoot a basketball badly. Ten minutes of moving does something for your head that sitting and thinking never will.

4 Protect your sleep

First thing to go when things get busy, and it makes everything else harder. Pick a time your phone leaves your bed and keep it. A tired brain reads every problem as bigger than it is.

5 Use the clicker

Students made it. Keep it in your pocket. Test, hard conversation, long wait: click it. Nervous energy needs somewhere to go.

A clearer mind starts here.

SHRINK THE PROBLEM

When the list is too long.

6 **Break before you break · every 45**

Your brain does not do four straight hours of anything well. Work 45, get up for 10. Not your phone; that is a different screen, not a break. You will get more done, not less.

7 **Make the list shorter than the panic**

Write everything down, circle the one thing actually due first, and do only that. Then say it out loud to someone. A worry kept inside grows; one said out loud usually has a next step.

8 **Catch the sentence**

Stress talks in absolutes: "I'm going to fail everything." Notice the sentence, then swap it for one that is true and specific: "I have one test Friday and I know half of it." The second one you can do something about.



This week I will try:

Pick one. Not all of these. One, from either list, once this week. If it helped even a little, do it again next week and add a second. That is how a habit starts, and a habit is the only kind of stress management still there next month.

One step still counts.

3 When it is more than stress.

The tools on pages 2 and 3 are for ordinary hard days. Some things are heavier than that, and a guide cannot help with them. A person can. This page is about knowing the difference and what to do.

SIGNS IT IS TIME TO TALK TO AN ADULT

Not a checklist. A gut check. If any of these have been true for more than a couple of weeks, or if one is true right now and it scares you, that is the sign.

- You feel low or empty most days, not just on bad days, and it is not lifting.
- You have stopped caring about things and people that used to matter.
- Your sleep or eating has changed a lot and stayed changed.
- You are using something, or doing something, to not feel what you are feeling.
- You have thoughts about not wanting to be here, or about hurting yourself.

If that last one is you, please do not wait.



Go to page 6, call or text **988**, or tell any adult in this building. Today. You do not have to be sure. You do not have to explain it well. You just have to say it once.

WHO COUNTS AS AN ADULT

Anyone you trust. A parent. A counselor. A teacher whose class you like. A coach. The school nurse. Someone at your place of worship. You do not have to pick the perfect person. Pick one who is there, and if that does not work, pick another.

4 If a friend is struggling.

Sometimes it is not you. It is someone you love, and you can tell. You do not have to fix it. You just have to show up. This is what we learned in training, and what we have seen work.

1 Listen more than you talk.

You do not need the right answer. Give them space to talk, without judgment. "That sounds really hard" is enough.

2 Ask directly and calmly.

"Are you okay?" and, if you are worried, "Are you thinking about hurting yourself?" Asking does not put the idea there. It shows you can handle the answer.

3 Do not promise to keep it secret.

If your friend is not safe, the most loyal thing you can do is get an adult. "I care about you too much to keep this to myself." It is not betraying them. It is helping them.

4 Bring in an adult.

Together if you can. Alone if you have to. A parent, teacher, coach, or counselor. You are a friend, not a counselor, and that is exactly what your friend needs you to be.

5 Take care of yourself after.

Carrying someone else is heavy. Check in with someone you trust about it. That is allowed.

EVERY PATH ON THIS PAGE ENDS WITH AN ADULT. THAT IS ON PURPOSE.

Real conversations save lives.

Where to go.

Every resource here is real, free, and staffed by people trained for this. Save one number in your phone now, before you need it.



Emergency, danger right now

911



Thinking about suicide or self-harm

988 call or text · 24/7 · free · confidential



Would rather text

HOME to 741741 Crisis Text Line · 24/7

AT SCHOOL



Your school counseling office

You can walk in. You do not need a reason that sounds serious enough.



Your school nurse

Also a safe first stop.

FOR TEENS IN NEW JERSEY



2NDFLOOR Youth Helpline

888-222-2228 call or text · ages 10 to 24 · 24/7



NJ Hopeline

1-855-654-6735 peer support · 24/7



PerformCare · NJ Children's System of Care

1-877-652-7624 youth crisis response; a parent can call

IN BERGEN COUNTY



Bergen County Division of Mental Health

201-634-2750 county office for local services

WHAT IS IN THE KIT



This guide. Read it once. Keep it somewhere you will see it on a hard day.



One wallet card. Emergency numbers on one side, a 60-second reset on the other.



One clicker, 3D printed by students. A small click for a brighter day.

Something that works for you and is not in here? Tell us. We add to this every year.

Same students. Stronger tomorrow.

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Written by students of the Bergen County Youth Assembly, from six Bergen County high schools. This is not medical or psychological advice. If you are struggling, please talk to a trusted adult or use a resource on page 6.