

Health, Wellness, Safety, and Nutrition

January 2012

"Assessing Stress in Children and Youth: A Guide for Out-of-School Time Program Practitioners: (2010)

Mary Terzian, Ph.D., M.S.W., Kristin A. Moore, Ph.D., and Hoan N. Nguyen

Overview: While stress is a natural part of everyone's lives, stress that is prolonged and managed poorly can result in negative physical, mental, and cognitive outcomes for children and youth. This brief provides common indicators of stress as well as assessment tools for OST practitioners. Based on research, the authors suggest the following strategies to address children's stress in OST programs:

- **Provide or increase access to social support.** Social support (in the form of emotional support, advice, assistance, and guidance) can reduce stress and improve coping skills. Program providers can offer this support, as well as involve parents, peers, teachers, mentors or other caring adults in the community in providing needed support.
- **Teach breathing and relaxation techniques.**
- **Encourage involvement in sports and other extra-curricular activities.**
- **Consult clinical resources for additional guidance.** One useful resource for clinicians is the Behavioral Health Toolkit (<http://ahwg.net/resources/FINAL%20BH%20Toolkit.pdf>), which includes activities and handouts for teens.

Where to Find It: http://www.childtrends.org/Files/Child_Trends-2010_10_05_RB_AssessingStress.pdf

"Changing Lives, Saving Lives: A Step-by-Step Guide to Developing Exemplary Practices in Healthy Eating, Physical Activity and Food Security in Afterschool Programs." (2010)

Overview: This guide, developed by the Healthy Behaviors Initiative, is designed to help out-of-school time program staff strengthen their afterschool program to help students develop healthy lifestyle habits.

Where to Find It: Go to the OSTRC Document Library @

www.sp2.upenn.edu/ostrc/document_library

Click on "Health, Wellness, Safety and Nutrition" tab, and then go to "Physical Health and Wellness."

Featured Information

Health and Nutrition in OST Programs

Tools and Resources

Health Promotion Council (HPC)

Health Living Guidelines:

HPC is leading the Healthy Kids Healthy Communities Out-of-School Time Initiative. They have developed Healthy Living Guidelines for the Public Health Management Corporation (PHMC) managed Out-of-School Time (OST) Programs. These guidelines intend to improve the environment for youth in OST programs (i.e. limiting non-homework screen time, encouraging physical activity, and discouraging sugary drinks) and reverse the epidemic of overweight and obese youth.

HPC's Professional Education:

HPC provides a diverse array of trainings and consultation services for both individuals and organizations in topics including Diversity Dialogue, Food Safety Training, and Health Literacy.

Website: www.hccpa.org

Online toolkit and checklist:

This online resource from The Strategic Alliance for Healthy Food and Activity Environments provides an assessment as well as fact sheets and tools to integrate health and nutrition into your OST program.

<http://www.eatbettermovemore.org/sa/enact/afterschool/index.php>