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Introduction

Health is the subject that will accompany every student each and every day, in and out of school. Very likely, it will be the most vital component of their lives.

The better we educate young students about health, and the lifestyles and habits that lead to good health, the more they will realise its benefits in adulthood. *Health and Safety Curriculum* is designed to provide stimulating lessons for primary students. Using simulations, problem-solving vignettes, motivating demonstrations and creative review activities, *Health and Safety Curriculum* offers numerous avenues of learning for students. Its twenty-seven lessons engage students with such diverse topics as nutrition, home safety and substance abuse.

This book attempts to stimulate student interest in a subject area that is often overlooked due to a lack of innovative materials and lesson plans. *Health and Safety Curriculum* is dedicated to the belief that the lessons with the greatest influence on health are those that are internalised through a proactive hands-on approach.

Controlling Stress

Objective

Students will identify at least two ways they can help to reduce harmful stress in their lives.

Background

Adrenalin is the hormone produced during moments of extreme stimulation. It provides the body with greater strength or energy. Riding a roller-coaster, playing a game of cricket or being asked to spell a word in front of the class are typical examples of times when our body has a temporary increase in energy requirements.

However, under certain conditions, this helpful internal energy release may become chronic. Divorce, a move to another town, or an inability to organise one's schoolwork may lead to the harmful consequences of stress. It is at these times of high anxiety that students need the coping skills of opening up to parents and friends, as well as the physical skills of exercise, sufficient sleep and proper nutrition in warding off the negative effects of stress.

Materials

- copies of the reading selection and worksheets, *Wired Willy*

Preparation

- Make copies of the reading selection and worksheet for each student.

Procedure

1. Ask students if they have ever been in a running race. Ask them to recall the excitement before the race began. Conclude this introduction by asking if the student(s) would enjoy running a race that lasted every hour they were awake. It can be harmful to the entire body if excitement is ongoing in a person's life. Some stress may be helpful, such as the excitement one would feel just before a race.

Entertain a discussion on stress with the class employing your health text or teacher-led questions. Suggested questions may include **What is stress?** (a feeling of tension or strain on your mind and/or body) **Have you ever felt stress?** (Answers will vary.) **How can stress affect your body?** (The heart may beat faster; the palms of the hand may get sweaty, breathing may quicken to gain more oxygen for the body; and stored sugar may be released to allow for more energy.)

Can stress be helpful? (Yes.) **How?** (It can help us do our best when we feel occasional pressure, such as competing in a game or race, or doing well on a test. It can give us an energy lift.) **How can stress be harmful?** (Stress can be harmful when events occur in one's life that cause prolonged tension or worry. This may lead to restlessness, a lack

of sleep, nervousness, headaches, the heart working faster and an inability of the body to fight off disease. Over a long period of time, it could damage the heart.)

How can one control stress? (talking and sharing feelings with your parents and friends, getting enough exercise and rest, eating a balanced diet)

For more information, see *Background*.

2. Have the students read the story and answer the subsequent questions on the *Wired Willy* worksheet. This may be done individually, in small groups or with the entire class.

Answers to Worksheet:

1. at the start of the game
2. when he blamed himself for the loss
3. not sharing his feelings of guilt with his parents or friends
4. assignments weren't completed; he appeared tired during class
5. probably not; answers will vary
6. talking with his parents helped Willy understand the problem
7. talking with parents and friends about important issues in your life; getting enough sleep and exercise; eating a balanced diet

Wired Willy

Name _____

Read the story and answer the questions that follow.

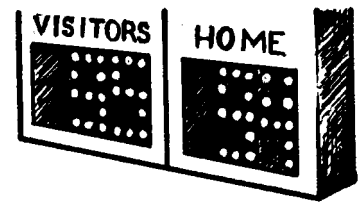
Willy felt like he had butterflies in his stomach as the basketball game was about to begin. He wanted to do his best against this champion team. When the game started, Willy forgot all about being anxious and played very well. He led his team in scoring in the championship game.

With one second left in the game, Willy was fouled while shooting the ball. His team was behind by two points. With two free throws, Willy had a chance to tie the game. Willy made his first shot but missed the second. Willy's team lost by one point. Willy felt horrible. He believed that he was responsible for the loss.

Not wanting to talk to anyone after the game, Willy hurried home. He went to his room and refused to talk to his parents about the game. In his distress, he even forgot about his school project that was due the next day. All he thought about was missing the last shot. His stomach hurt and he had a difficult time getting to sleep that night.

The next day, Willy ignored his friends who wanted to talk about the game. He yawned frequently and almost fell asleep in class. Because his project wasn't completed, his teacher wasn't pleased. In fact, for several days, Willy had a hard time getting any of his schoolwork done and he seemed very tired.

Willy's parents encouraged him to talk about what was bothering him. Willy finally shared how he thought he had lost the game for his team. His parents helped him realise that without Willy's strong effort, his team would not have been so close to winning in the first place. They also reminded him that the reason for playing was not just winning. Someone had to lose. Willy slept much better that night when he realised he had done his best, and that was all anyone could do.



Wired Willy (Cont.)

Name _____

1. When did Willy feel helpful stress in this story? _____

2. What caused Willy to start feeling harmful stress? _____

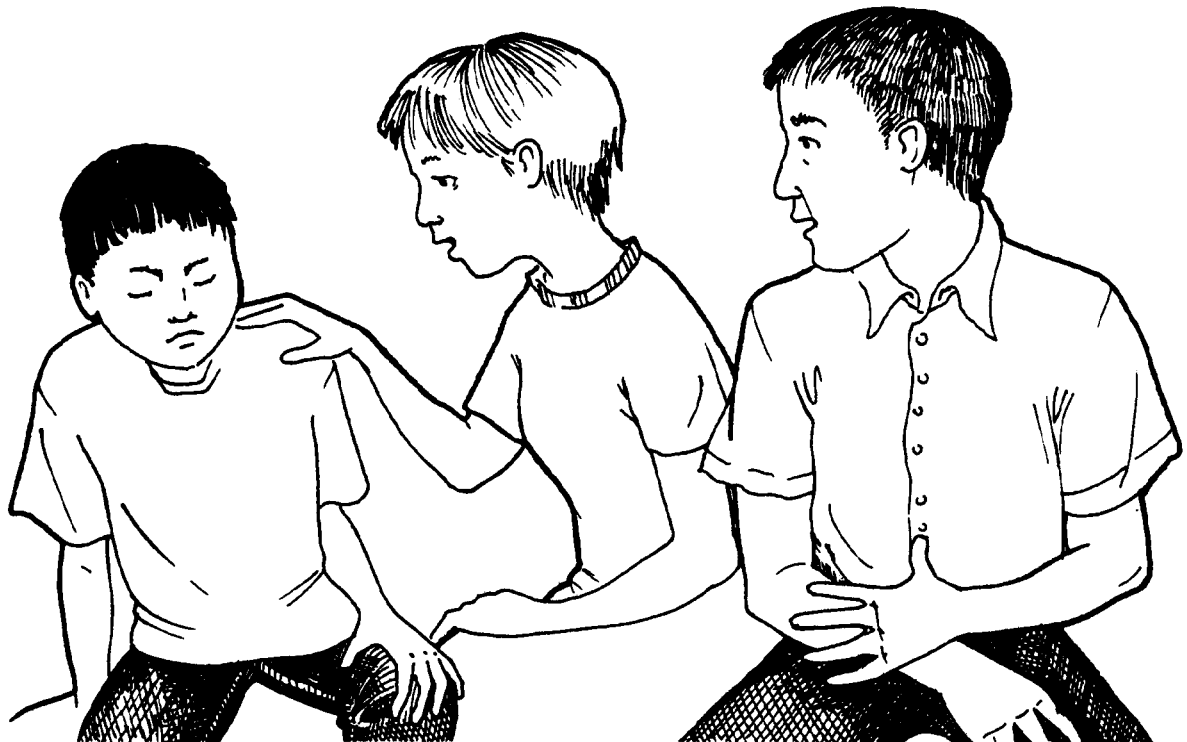
3. What created more harmful stress for Willy? _____

4. How did Willy's schoolwork suffer because of increased stress? _____

5. Do you think Willy was pleasant to be around during this time? Explain.

6. What finally helped Willy successfully deal with his stress? _____

7. Name three ways that you can help control harmful stress. _____



Touch Contamination

Objective

Students will discover important reasons for washing their hands on a regular basis.

Background

This activity has similar objectives to the *Personal Hygiene* lesson on page 53. They complement each other very well. Present this lesson as a teacher demonstration or modify it into a group investigative activity.

Growing mould from the spores on your hands provides a dramatic lesson on the importance of washing hands before eating.

Mould is grown from spores. Spores are tiny bodies that settle on damp food, swell and reproduce. Different moulds have different spores which produce varying colours. The very air we breathe is rich in numerous dust and mould spores. Our body's natural defences, such as nose hairs and earwax, work to trap such airborne invaders. However, students need to realise that they can decrease the amount ingested by washing their hands regularly.

Materials

- loaf of bread
- two air-tight sandwich bags (the kind that zip)
- water
- measuring spoon (or optional graduated cylinder)
- anti-bacterial hand soap
- texta

Preparation

- Obtain all the materials making sure that the bread has been left untouched in its original wrapper.

Procedure

1. Three to four days in advance of the lesson on the importance of washing one's hands, remove a slice of bread from a fresh loaf. With this first slice, your hands should not be clean. In fact, your hands should represent hands that are rarely washed. To achieve this condition, run one of your hands over several dusty areas of your room, and then be sure to handle the initial slice of bread with your dirty hands. Ask a couple of students to handle it as well.
2. Place the contaminated slice into one of the sandwich bags. Before sealing it, add two teaspoons (about 10 ml) of water to the bag. Mark the bag 'Unwashed'. (Damp food encourages the growth of mould.)
3. At this point, thoroughly wash your hands (preferably using anti-bacterial soap). Whether this is a teacher-led demonstration or a group activity, it would be timely to do this around lunch time when students may ordinarily be sent to wash their hands.
4. Remove the second slice of bread, taking care to avoid contact with contaminated surfaces. Place it directly into the second sandwich

bag. Once again, add two teaspoons of water. Mark it 'Washed'. Ask the class, **'What is the only difference between what's in these two bags?'** (One slice of bread was handled by dirty hands while the other was handled with clean hands.)

5. Place both bags in a relatively warm, dark area for the next three to four days.
6. To demonstrate the importance of washing hands, remove the two bags for purposes of inspection by the students. The 'Washed' bread should have little, if any, mould growing on it. However, the 'Unwashed' bread should hold an array of moulds. Different colours of mould may even have taken root.
7. Discuss what helped the mould grow on the one slice of bread. (the existence of mould spores, darkness and moisture) **'Where did the mould spores come from?'** (off numerous surfaces and our hands)

The water represents our body's perspiration (liquid waste that comes through our skin). Germs and dirt can collect more easily on the surface of our skin if the perspiration is not removed through regular and careful washing.

8. Explain to the class, **'In this case we purposely touched many dusty, dirty areas. However, do you think you could pick up a lot of germs during a normal day just by**