

Risk factor: Difficulties in dealing with stress

Stress can be due to a variety of stressors that can impact their school performance such as:

- Exam anxiety: heavy workload or fear to fail
- Personal issues: struggling with self-esteem, identity or life transitions.
- Relational issues: difficulties with friendship or romantic relationships.
- Family problems: family conflicts or other family-related stressors.

Guides for action:

1) EXAM ANXIETY: heavy workload or fear to fail

- a. Use the methodology of “role play” giving students (preferably in groups of two or three) some contents to elaborate and explain with some schemes in order to make a lesson for the class: it can also be used the flipped classroom.
- b. The teacher should encourage students to plan a schedule in order to break down the workload into smaller, more manageable parts, and to reach a steady and bearable time management to cope with heavier schoolwork.

2) PERSONAL ISSUES: struggling with self-esteem, identity or life transitions.

- a. Praise and encouragement: recognize and reward students’ efforts and achievements no matter how small they are.
- b. Regular feedback: provide timely and specific feedback on students’ work, both positive and constructive.
- c. Empathy and understanding: show empathy for students’ challenges and validate their feelings.

3) RELATIONAL ISSUES: difficulties dealing with teachers, with friendship, and romantic relationships

Building relationships: Get to know your students, taking the time to learn about your students’ interests, hobbies, and background, at the same time ask questions, listen actively and show that you care about their well-being.

The same strategies will be learned by the students and become the basis for their social relationships.

4) FAMILY PROBLEMS: family conflicts or other family-related stressors.

Consult with school counsellors or special education teachers: seek professional advice and support for students who may need additional help. The school can activate projects with

psychologists and experts who can, with the authorization of the family, deal with the specific personal problems in order to face every student's difficulties and collaborate with the class teachers sharing information, ideas and suggestions to overcome the critical situations.