

Belonging

the newsletter from the **FIRST NC ED&I Team** – January 2024

Equity – Treating everyone fairly, having equal opportunities and removing barriers.

Diversity – The way we are all different.

Inclusion – Creating space for everyone where differences are embraced.

Don't let build season stress you out too much!

Build season can be very stressful, with lots of decisions, long days and late nights. Juggling meetings and homework, maintaining grades, keeping a healthy balance with your other activities, and managing personal self-care. Recognize that not everything will go according to plan, and it will be stressful. Here are some ideas to help you cope and keep stress at a healthy level:

I'M SO STRESSED OUT!
From the NATIONAL INSTITUTE of MENTAL HEALTH

Feeling overwhelmed? Read this fact sheet to learn whether it's stress or anxiety, and what you can do to cope.

Is it stress or anxiety?

Life can be stressful—you may feel stressed about performance at school, traumatic events (such as a pandemic, a natural disaster, or an act of violence), or a life change. Everyone feels stress from time to time.

What is stress? Stress is the physical or mental response to an external cause, such as having a lot of homework or having an illness. A stressor may be a one-time or short-term occurrence, or it can happen repeatedly over a long time.

What is anxiety? Anxiety is your body's reaction to stress and can occur even if there is no current threat.

If that anxiety doesn't go away and begins to interfere with your life, it could affect your health. You could experience problems with sleeping, or with your immune, digestive, cardiovascular, and reproductive systems. You also may be at higher risk for developing a mental illness such as an anxiety disorder or depression. More information about anxiety disorders is available at www.nimh.nih.gov/anxietydisorders.

So, how do you know when to seek help?

Stress vs. Anxiety

Stress	Both Stress and Anxiety	Anxiety
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generally is a response to an external cause, such as taking a big test or arguing with a friend. Goes away once the situation is resolved. Can be positive or negative. For example, it may inspire you to meet a deadline, or it may cause you to lose sleep. 	<p>Both stress and anxiety can affect your mind and body. You may experience symptoms such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excessive worry Uneasiness Tension Headaches or body pain High blood pressure Loss of sleep 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generally is internal, meaning it's your reaction to stress. Usually involves a persistent feeling of apprehension or dread that doesn't go away, and that interferes with how you live your life. Is constant, even if there is no immediate threat.

It's important to manage your stress.

Everyone experiences stress, and sometimes that stress can feel overwhelming. You may be at risk for an anxiety disorder if it feels like you can't manage the stress and if the symptoms of your stress:

- Interfere with your everyday life.
- Cause you to avoid doing things.
- Seem to be always present.

Coping With Stress and Anxiety

Learning what causes or triggers your stress and what coping techniques work for you can help reduce your anxiety and improve your daily life. It may take trial and error to discover what works best for you. Here are some activities you can try when you start to feel overwhelmed.

- Keep a journal.
- Download an app that provides relaxation exercises (such as deep breathing or visualization) or tips for practicing mindfulness, which is a psychological process of actively paying attention to the present moment.
- Exercise, and make sure you are eating healthy, regular meals.
- Stick to a sleep routine, and make sure you are getting enough sleep.
- Avoid drinking excess caffeine such as soft drinks or coffee.
- Identify and challenge your negative and unhelpful thoughts.
- Reach out to your friends or family members who help you cope in a positive way.

Recognize When You Need More Help

If you are struggling to cope, or the symptoms of your stress or anxiety won't go away, it may be time to talk to a professional. Psychotherapy (also called talk therapy) and medication are the two main treatments for anxiety, and many people benefit from a combination of the two.

If you or someone you know has a mental illness, is struggling emotionally, or has concerns about their mental health, there are ways to get help. Find more information on the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) website at www.nimh.nih.gov/findhelp.

If you are in immediate distress or are thinking about hurting yourself, call or text the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline at 988 or chat at 988lifeline.org.

More Resources

- NIMH: Anxiety Disorders (www.nimh.nih.gov/anxietydisorders)
- NIMH: Caring for Your Mental Health (www.nimh.nih.gov/mymentalhealth)
- NIMH: Child and Adolescent Mental Health (www.nimh.nih.gov/children)
- NIMH: Tips for Talking With a Health Care Provider About Your Mental Health (www.nimh.nih.gov/talkingtips)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Anxiety and Depression in Children (www.cdc.gov/childrenmentalhealth/depression.html)

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Download the poster for your build space here: [I'm So Stressed Out! Fact Sheet](#)

Do **you** have tips for other teams on how to include people and help them feel they belong?

Send them to FIRSTNC-EDI@googlegroups.com or use this [GOOGLE FORM](#) and we'll include them in upcoming newsletters.

From *FIRST*: Just in case you missed it! – Inspired Youth, Inspire You: How FIRST Robotics Competition Team 2080, Is Helping A 5-Year-Old With Spinal Muscular Atrophy Gain Greater Independence

Five-year-old Makenzie Burleson was born with type 1 spinal muscular atrophy (SMA). Due to her genetic condition, Makenzie has certain needs such as utilizing a wheelchair, nutrition and breathing assistance, and has had to work hard to learn how to communicate through her tablet and modified sign language.

The Burleson's had been in search of a supportive device for Makenzie to help her use her arms with greater ease but could not find one on the market that could adequately support and fit her particular needs. They contacted FIRST® Robotics Competition Team 2080 "Torbotics" of Hammond, Louisiana with a request for the students to design and create a supportive device, with the goal of helping her potentially develop additional muscular strength in combination with other treatments and therapy. The team spent 14-months designing and prototyping fully functional supportive "robot arms" for Makenzie before giving her the first iteration of arms. Learn more about the FIRST® students who made this project possible: <https://community.firstinspires.org/inspired-youth-inspire-you-how-first-robotics-competition-team-2080-is-helping-a-5-year-old-with-spinal-muscular-atrophy-gain-greater-independence>

January Events:

January 1 - New Year's Day: The first day in the Gregorian calendar celebrated by most Western countries.

January 1 – Emancipation Proclamation: President Lincoln declared all individuals held in slavery free on this day in 1863

January 4 – Louis Braille's birthday: he was a French educator who created a reading and writing system known as "braille" for the visually impaired

January 6 – Feast of the Epiphany: this Christian feast day celebrates the star leading the three wise men to baby Jesus closing the Christmas season

January 7 - Orthodox Christmas Day: A special day when many Eastern Orthodox Christians celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ.

January 14 - Orthodox New Year: Also known as the Julian New Year, it's a time for Eastern Orthodox communities to celebrate the start of their new year.

January 15 – Makar Sankranti: Hindu festival dedicated to the god of the sun, Surya

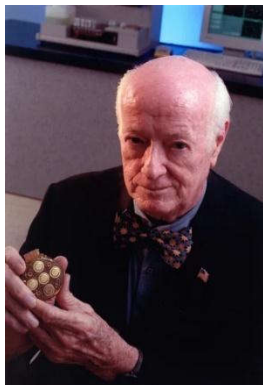
January 15 – Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day: celebrates one of the best-known civil rights activists, MLK Jr.

January 20 – Timkat: A holiday observed by Ethiopian Orthodox Christians who celebrate the baptism of Jesus in the Jordan River on Epiphany.

January 25 - Mahayana New Year: The day that Mahayana Buddhists celebrate the new year.

January 27 – International Day of Commemoration in Memory of Victims of the Holocaust: a United Nations holiday that remembers the approximately 6 million Jews murdered during World War II

Inspiration & Recognition Spotlight: Dr. William Murphy Jr. 11/11/1923 to 11/30-2023



Dr. Murphy attended Harvard University and graduated in 1946. He received his M.D. in 1947 from the University of Illinois and studied physiologic instrumentation at MIT. Combining a passion for mechanical engineering with his expertise in medicine, he revolutionized the biomedical industry. His inventions include significant improvements on the early cardiac pacemakers, artificial kidneys, cardiac catheters, and disposable medical trays – including a collaboration to develop a flexible sealed blood bag for the transfusion of whole blood. Its first use was during the Korean War when Dr. Murphy took the device to the battlefields and created a simple system for rapid, air-free transfusions. He has co-authored 30 medical publications and advised many boards and companies. Dr. Murphy is also the son of the American physician William Parry Murphy, who shared the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine in 1934 and Harriett Adams, the first woman to be licensed as a dentist in Massachusetts.

Dr. Murphy founded the prestigious Woodie Flowers Award in 1996. The Woodie Flowers Award celebrates effective communication in the art and science of engineering and design.

Read more - <https://community.firstinspires.org/a-farewell-to-dr.-william-murphy-jr>

Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion Training: *Youth With Autism Spectrum Disorder*

These interactive Inclusion tools will help you feel confident in understanding inclusion, creating accommodations, supporting and responding positively to behavior challenges and creating supportive environments.

Click here to view [Creating a Sense of Belonging](#)

The *FIRST* NC ED&I Team: Contact us at: FIRSTNC-EDI@googlegroups.com

We are a team of coaches/mentors who want to help create a community and culture of people who embrace the values of equity, diversity, and inclusion, who want to develop themselves, and who understand that growth and diversity of all types lead to team excellence.

Anisha Patel - The Pitt Pirates 2642

Dave Lashley (he/him) - Team SPORK 3196

Linda Whipker (she/her) - Team PyroTech 3459

Melissa "Bee" Bube (they/she) - Girls on Fire 5679

All Editions are Available Online at: <https://www.firstnorthcarolina.org/belonging-newsletter>