

# STRESS

*Working Together to Keep Our Youth Healthy*

## **How Would You Know If a Child Is Under Too Much Stress?**

If your child is under too much stress, it will probably affect the way he or she acts and feels. Watch your child for a few days and notice if he/she shows any of these typical symptoms of stress:

- ◆ crying
- ◆ depression
- ◆ restlessness, fidgeting
- ◆ exhaustion, fatigue
- ◆ overeating or loss of appetite
- ◆ aggression
- ◆ withdrawal
- ◆ emotional outbursts
- ◆ excess sleeping or inability to sleep
- ◆ lack of concentration
- ◆ headaches
- ◆ flushed, dizzy feeling
- ◆ grinding teeth
- ◆ tight, aching neck, back or shoulders
- ◆ nail biting
- ◆ fast heartbeat
- ◆ nausea, heartburn
- ◆ diarrhea, frequent trips to the bathroom
- ◆ tapping fingers or feet
- ◆ cold or sweaty hands and feet

## **What Can You Do If You Think Your Child Is Under Too Much Stress?**

If you notice several symptoms of stress in your child, start with these simple ideas for handling stress. If these don't seem to work, get help from a professional.

- ◆ Encourage your child to talk to you about what is bothering him/her.
- ◆ Ask your child if there is something that could be changed to relieve the stress.
- ◆ Show confidence in your child's ability to work through the stressful period.
- ◆ Tell your child what special qualities and achievements you admire about him/her.
- ◆ Arrange for your child to have some time to burn off stress by exercising on a regular basis.
- ◆ Think about your child's schedule. Is there time for relaxing each day? Is your child getting enough sleep? Is your child eating regular, nutritious meals?
- ◆ Talk with the school counselor or social worker.
- ◆ Talk to a counselor from a community agency or your pastor, priest or rabbi.
- ◆ Call your local mental health agency for an appointment. Check the telephone book for the number to call.



Oakland County Health Division will not deny participation in its programs based on race, sex, religion, national origin, age or disability. State and Federal eligibility requirements apply for certain programs.

Source: Health and Me, 1994