

# Give Yourself a break from stress & learn **STRESS REDUCTION TECHNIQUES**

- Exercise for 15-20 minutes each day and/or engage in progressive muscle relaxation (PMR)
- Write down your thoughts and feelings in a journal. Journal-writing has been proven to have positive effects upon overall health and to reduce one's overall level of stress.
- Talk to a friend, relative, or counselor about your stress.
- Organize and plan:
  - Set goals
  - Make a list of "pros" and "cons"
  - Organize your backpack or room
  - Create a "To-Do" list.
- Talk positively to yourself. Counter negative thoughts such as, "I'm never going to finish everything that I have to do" or "I'm going to fail" with positive thoughts such as, "I'm smart and I work hard; I believe that I will do a good job" or "I can be calm. I do not need to stress over this situation."
- Do something relaxing (meditate, pray, read a magazine, listen to soothing music, etc.).
- Have fun! Hang out with a friend or family member.
- Get plenty of sleep. Try to get at least 7-8 hours per night. Lack of sleep can trigger stress and anxiety attacks.
- Eat right. The nutrients in fresh fruits and vegetables have been shown to reduce stress/ anxiety.
- Avoid caffeine (coffee, pop, etc.) and simple sugars (chocolate, candy, etc. ). These can all contribute to elevated levels of stress/anxiety.
- Breathe deeply from your abdomen- drawing air in slowly through your nose and blowing it out slowly through your mouth. Repeat this several times to help center your concentration and reduce the physical symptoms of stress