



# Educator Guide: Letter by Letter Game

## **Recommended for Grades:**

6<sup>th</sup>

## **Time:**

30 minutes

## **Prerequisites:**

For students to be successful in the game, they would benefit from participating in the following lessons:

- Facts about Feelings Lesson
- Ways to Express and Manage Feelings Video
- Adolescence Video
- Stress Definition and Examples Lesson
- Stress Toolkit Activity
- Relationships Definition and Types Lesson
- Characteristics of a Relationship Activity
- Influences Definition and Examples Lesson
- Internal vs. External Influences Lesson
- Cyberbullying Video

## **National Health Education Standards:**

This activity aligns with the following National Health Education Standards:

- Standard 1: Use functional health information to support health and well-being of self and others.
- Standard 7: Demonstrate practices and behaviors to support health and well-being of self and others.

For more information about the National Health Education Standards, visit the SHAPE America website: [shapeamerica.org](http://shapeamerica.org).



## **Learning Objectives:**

After completing this game students will be able to:

1. Explain how emotions can change during adolescence.
2. Identify positive ways to deal with stress that they may be dealing with in their own life.
3. Describe what a healthy relationship may look like.

## **Game Description:**

In this game students will solve word puzzles based on clues. They will try to score as many points as possible in each level by solving the puzzles.

## **Vocabulary:**

Use the following list of vocabulary as a reference for yourself or your students as you complete the Letter by Letter Game. You may choose to use this list in any way that fits your needs.

- Adrenaline – a hormone released in the body when a person is experiencing stress
- Compromise – each person gives up something that they want to come to an agreement
- Control – to influence or direct someone's behavior
- Cyberbullying – bullying that takes place over digital devices, such as cell phones, computers and tablets
- Emotional awareness – the skill of identifying what you're feeling and why
- External influence – an influence that comes from people, places and things outside of yourself
- Feeling – an emotional state, such as happy, sad, excited, scared, etc.
- Internal influence – an influence that comes from within you, such as your values and attitudes
- Honesty – to be open and truthful
- Hormones – chemical substances in the body that can cause changes in your body and feelings
- Influence – anything that has an effect on your feelings, actions, behaviors and beliefs
- Relationship – a connection between two people
- Self-esteem – confidence in your own self-worth or abilities
- Social media – technology that facilitates the sharing of ideas, thoughts and information through virtual networks and communities
- Stress – the body's response to pressures from a situation or life event



# Handouts

Included on the following pages are additional resources that you and your students' families may find useful.



# Anxiety Disorders in Children

## What Are Anxiety Disorders?

Children with anxiety disorders have too much fear and worry that lasts a long time. Children with anxiety often have problems at school or home because of it.

A small amount of anxiety is normal in childhood. At different ages, some fears are common like fear of being away from parents and fear of the dark. Children can also have anxiety when they are in new or stressful situations.

Children can have so much anxiety it causes problems.

Some children:

- Have aches and pains, like headaches or stomachaches
- Feel restless, tired or tense
- Have trouble focusing or sleeping
- Can also have tantrums or meltdowns because of anxiety

## What Causes Anxiety Disorders?

There are many reasons why a child may have anxiety. It can run in families and start at birth. It can also start after exposure to stressful events and problems meeting developmental milestones.

## What Are the Symptoms of Anxiety Disorders?

Children with anxiety may:

- Be very upset when caregivers leave them
- Be very shy and quiet in new situations and with people not in their family
- Stay away from places or activities that make them feel nervous
- Worry a lot about many things, and not be able to control the worry
- Talk about or ask questions about the things they worry about
- Not talk in stressful places, but talk easily at home
- Feel very scared of certain things like animals, heights, being in an airplane or seeing blood



## How Are Anxiety Disorders Treated?

Anxiety will not get better without help. Treatment for mild anxiety starts with psychotherapy. In psychotherapy a health care provider helps your child by understanding how they think and feel about things.

Children will learn to:

- Replace their anxious thoughts with helpful ones
- Control their anxious feelings with coping skills

Your child will need to practice what they learn outside of sessions. This is an important part of therapy. Parents are often part of therapy sessions so they can help their child practice the skills. Psychotherapy is usually done by psychologists, mental health counselors and clinical social workers.

- Medicine can help decrease feelings of anxiety. Medicines may be prescribed to help your child's anxiety.
- For moderate to severe anxiety, treatment that uses psychotherapy and medicine together may be most helpful.

## How Can I Help My Child's Anxiety?

- Be with your child and support them during stressful times. If your child gets anxious remain calm. Have them take deep and slow breaths. They can pretend they are blowing up a balloon. Do not let your child pass up things that raise their anxiety.
- Ask your child to talk about their worries. You can tell them what you saw that made you think they were anxious. For instance, if their body shakes when they are anxious, this is called a non-verbal cue. Do not tell your child not to worry.
- Have a daily routine or use a schedule so your child knows what to expect.
- Praise your child for facing fears and being brave in stressful situations.
- Talk with your child's school to let teachers know how they can help your child practice using their coping skills. If anxiety causes problems for your child at school a special plan called a 504 Plan or IEP may be needed.



# Recognizing Depression in Children

## What Is Depression?

Depression is a mood disorder that affects the way you think and feel. The most common symptom is a feeling of deep sadness. People who are depressed may also:

- Feel hopeless
- Feel that life isn't worth living
- Have thoughts of suicide or death

## Depression in Children

Children as young as age 6 may feel depressed. But they can't always tell you how they feel. Instead, your child may:

- Eat more or less than normal
- Sleep more or less than usual
- Seem unable to have fun
- Think or speak about suicide or death
- Seem fearful or anxious
- Act in an aggressive way
- Use alcohol or other drugs
- Complain of stomachaches, headaches or other pains that can't be explained
- Have problems at school or home

## What Can You Do?

Children with depression can be helped with treatment. Here are some ways you can help:

- Talk with your child's healthcare provider about medicine and psychotherapy. Both can help.
- Look for mental health resources at your child's school, local mental health center, social service agency or hospital.
- Let your child know that they will not feel this way forever.
- Offer your love and support.
- If your child talks about death or suicide, seek help right away.



# Mental Health Resources for Families and Educators

988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, call 988 or [988lifeline.org](https://988lifeline.org)

Anxiety and Depression Association of America, [adaa.org](https://adaa.org)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), [cdc.gov/childrensmentalhealth/](https://cdc.gov/childrensmentalhealth/)

Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, [chadd.org](https://chadd.org)

Children's Wisconsin, [childrenswi.org](https://childrenswi.org)

Children's Wisconsin Shine Through, <https://shinethrough.childrenswi.org/parents>

The Institute for Child and Family Well-Being,  
<https://uwm.edu/icfw/tools-and-resources-3-2/>

KidsHealth, [kidshealth.org](https://kidshealth.org)

Mental Health America, [mentalhealthamerica.net](https://mentalhealthamerica.net)

National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), [nami.org](https://nami.org)

National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), [nimh.nih.gov](https://nimh.nih.gov)

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (Student Services/Prevention and Wellness), [dpi.wi.gov/sspw/mental-health](https://dpi.wi.gov/sspw/mental-health)



# Transcript

## Instructions

### Letter by Letter

First, you must choose a level. Each level contains four word puzzles. Within each puzzle, you'll be given a clue, or definition, like this one. Click or tap on the letters to spell out the word described by the clue. Once a letter has been used, you can tap or click it again to remove it. Click or tap this button to clear the entire answer. Click or tap this button to replay the clue. If you get stuck, you have a few options for help. You can click or tap here to reshuffle the letters. Each set of letters will include a few that you won't need. You can click or tap here to remove the extra letters. You can click or tap on this button to reveal one of the correct letters. And you can click or tap this button to solve the puzzle. All three of these buttons will cost you points, which you will earn by solving puzzles. You can use them as many times as you want, as long as you have enough points. Try to score as many points as you can in each level. Click the start button to begin.

## Help

- This will remove the letters that are not part of the solution. It will cost you 20 points.
- This will reveal one of the correct letters. It will cost you ten points.
- This will solve the puzzle for you. It will cost you 50 points.

## Level 1

Puzzle 1: If you're confused about your feelings, it's always helpful to \_\_\_\_\_ to an adult.

Answer 1: That's correct! If you're confused about your feelings, it's always helpful to talk to an adult.

Puzzle 2: Learning to do this can help you deal with stress. It could mean remembering to take deep breaths or finding different ways to be mindful throughout the day.

Answer 2: You got it! Learning to relax can help you deal with stress.





Puzzle 3: Internal influences can include your values, self-esteem, confidence and your \_\_\_\_\_. Having a good one of these can improve your mental health.

Answer 3: Correct. Having a good attitude can improve your mental health.

Puzzle 4: This characteristic of a healthy relationship means being open and truthful when sharing thoughts and feelings with each other. It means always telling the truth.

Answer 4: You got it! Honesty means being open and truthful when sharing thoughts and feelings with each other.

## Level 2

Puzzle 1: \_\_\_\_\_-term stress is ongoing, can last for an extended period of time and can negatively affect every system in the body.

Answer 1: That's correct. Long-term stress is ongoing, can last for an extended period of time and can negatively affect every system in the body.

Puzzle 2: These are people around your age you like and trust and start spending more time with during adolescence.

Answer 2: That is correct! Friends are people around your age you like and trust and start spending more time with during adolescence.

Puzzle 3: This type of relationship may include your parents, grandparents, siblings, cousins, aunts and uncles.

Answer 3: That is correct. A family relationship may include your parents, grandparents, siblings, cousins, aunts and uncles.

Puzzle 4: A positive or negative \_\_\_\_\_ is something that has an effect on your feelings, actions, behaviors and beliefs.

Answer 4: Correct! A positive or negative influence is something that has an effect on your feelings, actions, behaviors and beliefs.

## Level 3

Puzzle 1: Getting a good night's \_\_\_\_\_ helps keep your body and mind working well so you can better deal with stress.

Answer 1: You got it! Getting a good night's sleep helps keep your body and mind working well so you can better deal with stress.



Puzzle 2: Most of us experience lots of different \_\_\_\_\_ each day, and it's important to express them in a healthy way.

Answer 2: Correct. Most of us experience lots of different feelings each day, and it's important to express them in a healthy way.

Puzzle 3: These types of influences come from people, places and things outside of yourself. They're the opposite of internal influences.

Answer 3: You got it! External influences come from people, places and things outside of yourself.

Puzzle 4: Everything you post online should be considered \_\_\_\_\_ because you can never completely erase it.

Answer 4: Correct! Everything you post online should be considered permanent because you can never completely erase it.

#### Level 4

Puzzle 1: External influences that can affect your mental health can include your home environment, family, friends, technology, laws, life events and \_\_\_\_\_ media.

Answer 1: Correct! External influences that can affect your mental health can include your home environment, family, friends, technology, laws, life events and social media.

Puzzle 2: This characteristic of an unhealthy relationship is shown when one person makes all the decisions and tells the other person what to do, what to wear or who they can spend time with.

Answer 2: You got it. Control is shown when one person makes all the decisions and tells the other person what to do, what to wear or who they can spend time with.

Puzzle 3: A target, or \_\_\_\_\_ of cyberbullying is more likely to suffer from anxiety, depression, loneliness and low self-esteem.

Answer 3: That is correct. A target, or victim of cyberbullying is more likely to suffer from anxiety, depression, loneliness and low self-esteem.

Puzzle 4: These types of influences come from within you. They're the opposite of external influences.

Answer 4: You got it! Internal influences come from within you.

## Level 5

Puzzle 1: This is the body's response to pressures from a situation or life event. Things like taking a test, moving to a new school or giving a presentation could all cause it.

Answer 1: Correct! Stress is the body's response to pressures from a situation or life event.

Puzzle 2: A \_\_\_\_\_ is a connection between two people. Friendship is an example of this.

Answer 2: Correct. A relationship is a connection between two people.

Puzzle 3: As you get older, you get better at identifying what you're feeling and why. This is called emotional \_\_\_\_\_.

Answer 3: You got it! This is called emotional awareness.

Puzzle 4: Someone who witnesses cyberbullying is called a \_\_\_\_\_. They can feel helpless, guilty, afraid and confused, but they should always tell an adult when they see cyberbullying.

Answer 4: Correct! Someone who witnesses cyberbullying is called a bystander.

## Level 6

Puzzle 1: During puberty, these are released in the body, which can cause changes in emotions.

Answer 1: That is correct! During puberty, hormones are released in the body, which can cause changes in emotions.

Puzzle 2: This type of bullying takes place over digital devices, such as cell phones, computers and tablets.

Answer 2: You got it! Cyberbullying takes place over digital devices, such as cell phones, computers and tablets.

Puzzle 3: Stress triggers this hormone to be released in the body as a way of preparing to deal with a tough situation.

Answer 3: That is correct! Stress triggers adrenaline to be released in the body as a way of preparing to deal with a tough situation.



Puzzle 4: This characteristic of a healthy relationship is when each person gives up something they want in order to come to an agreement.

Answer 4: You got it. Compromise is when each person gives up something they want in order to come to an agreement.

Win

Congratulations! You completed all of the puzzles!



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