Permission to Participate in Group Counseling Services

Name of Student________________________________Date________________

Your child has been selected to participate in a stress management group. This group will last for about 7 sessions, meet for about one hour per week, and will help your child learn about:

- How to identify stress and its physical and emotional symptoms
- How to identify stressful situations that are within his/her control and those that are not
- Ways to manage stress such as relaxation techniques, assertiveness training, deep breathing, etc.

This group will consist of only 6th - 8th grade students and will take place during their homeroom or elective class to ensure they do not miss any core classes.

I do give my permission for my child to participate in this group.

Signature of parent or guardian__________________________________________

Date: ____________________________

(IF YOU ARE AN INTERN): Please note that I am currently in my fourth semester of graduate school at ABC University pursuing my graduate degree in school counseling. My professor, Dr. FIRST LAST, as well as the ABC SCHOOL counselors, Ms. COUNSELOR and Ms. COUNSELOR, will be supervising my work with the students. Please feel free to call the school at 123-456-7890 if you have any questions. Thank you! I am looking forward to working with your child!

Please return this informed consent to the Ms. COUNSELOR or Ms. COUNSELOR in the attendance office no later than Wednesday, September 26th. Thanks!
Session 1

Introductions/ Orientation to Group - 25 minutes

1. Introduce myself
2. Introduce the purpose of the group
   - Stress management
   - We will talk about what stress and anxiety are, how to recognize when we are feeling stressed or anxious, what types of things can make people feel those ways, ways to change stressful situations if we can, ways to cope with stressful situations if we cannot, etc.
3. Let all of the members introduce themselves
   - Their name, age, what they want to become when they grow up
   - Ice breaker: 2 truths and a lie

Group Rules – 15 minutes

1. Have the students brainstorm appropriate rules for the group and decorate the poster board with markers that will be hung in the room for each meeting. Go over the rules they come up with.
2. Explain confidentiality and the consequences of breaking confidentiality.
3. Explain when we will meet, for how long, and how many sessions. (IF YOU ARE AN INTERN): Let them know I will be leaving around Thanksgiving or Christmas for the break.

Stress Management Pre-test – 10 minutes

1. Have each student complete the Stress Management Pre-test and go over the language of each item to clear up any confusion.

Conclusion – 5 minutes

1. Review the purpose of the group, the importance of confidentiality, and when we will meet next time.
# Stress Management Quiz

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How confident do you feel that you can manage your stress successfully in your life? Please explain.

______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

What are some things you hope to learn from this group?

______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
Session 2

1. Recap from last session – 5 minutes
   - Reintroduce myself and have them go around the group and give their names to everyone again
   - Give an overview of the rules from last time and have the poster hanging as a reminder

2. What is Stress
   - Stress is a reaction of our body that can be either physical or emotional to different situations. These situations can irritate, confuse, or excite us. Therefore, bad situations can be stressful, but also good situations can be stressful as well (give example of beginning a new school – although it may be scary it is also very exciting and a great opportunity for new friends and activities).

3. Recognizing Stress? – 30 minutes
   - Have each student complete the Stress Cluster Worksheet. Give them time to draw pictures or write words of anything that comes to mind for each topic in the particular bubbles.
   - Have the group members talk about the different things or situations that trigger stress.
   - What are some ways they can tell they are becoming stressed or angry?

4. Flash Card Activity – 30 minutes
   - Have flash cards with different emotions written on them such as “angry,” “upset,” “worried,” and “excited.”
   - Give each student a card and ask them the last time they felt that way, how they knew they felt that way, how they responded to that feeling, and if there was a more appropriate way of responding.

5. Closing – 10 minutes
   - Give them the homework sheet to monitor which area from the Stress Cluster Worksheet that they need to focus on the most. Ask them to fill it out throughout the week and bring it next week.
   - Remind them about next week’s meeting.

Materials
Markers, crayons, and colored pencils
Flashcards for feeling words

Created by Jennie Hermann, Meagan St. Pierre, and Tristen Bergholtz
Stress Cluster

Situations that make me angry

Situations that make me excited

Situations that make me worry

Situations that make me sad
## Monitoring Thoughts and Feelings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Feeling</th>
<th>Describe the Situation</th>
<th>Thoughts</th>
<th>How you Responded</th>
<th>How you Could have Responded</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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Created by Jennie Hermann, Meagan St. Pierre, and Tristen Bergholtz
Session 3

1. Opening – 10 minutes
   - Check in on a scale of 1-10 how everyone is feeling
   - Ask about homework from last time and go over what they have and have not completed

2. Stress BINGO – 30 minutes
   - The letters S-T-R-E-S-S are printed at the top of the columns. Below each letter is a number range. Using, one color of marker, fill in each circle in each column with one of the numbers within the indicated range. For example, a student may choose 3, 5, 8, 12, and 15 to fill in the circles in the column under “S.”
   - Explain…I will draw one number at a time. As I draw the number, see if you have written that number on your Stress Bingo card. If you have the number, raise your hand. I will call on you to complete the sentence. After you respond, you can cross out (one simple line through it incase we play again) that box using your marker. The first person to get a horizontal or diagonal line through all the letters of STRESS can call out BINGO!

3. Closing – 5 minutes
   - Check in on a scale of 1-10 how everyone is feeling
   - State that next time we will work on understanding how our thoughts, feelings, and behaviors all tie into one another

Materials
   - Bingo worksheet
   - Markers
   - Papers with numbers to call out BINGO numbers
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>#1 - #15</th>
<th>#16 - #30</th>
<th>#31 - #45</th>
<th>#46 - #60</th>
<th>#61 - #75</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>One thing stress does to me is ...</td>
<td>Two things I can do when I feel stressed are ...</td>
<td>If stress could be seen, it would look like ...</td>
<td>A time when stress can be positive is ...</td>
<td>The way Mom/Dad handles stress is ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>One thing that causes me stress is ...</td>
<td>In my body, I feel stress ...</td>
<td>If stress were a thing, it would smell like ...</td>
<td>A time when stress can be negative is ...</td>
<td>A stressful event that happened in my life is ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>When I am stressed, I feel ...</td>
<td>Two quick fixes for stress are ...</td>
<td>A relaxation technique I can use when stressed is ...</td>
<td>When creating a quiet scene in my head, I like to go ...</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To calm myself down when I am stressed, I ...</td>
<td>Something I can do to help avoid stress is ...</td>
<td>If stress were a thing, it would act like ...</td>
<td>Two stressors in my life are ...</td>
<td>Something I can do every day to reduce stress is ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Someone I could talk with when I am stressed is ...</td>
<td>Something that worries me is ...</td>
<td>If stress could be heard, it would sound like ...</td>
<td>Two ways a person can relax are ...</td>
<td>Someone who seems stressed a lot is ...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Session 4

1. Opening – 5 minutes
   - Check in on a scale of 1-10 how they are feeling

2. Relationship between thoughts and physical reactions – 10 minutes
   - Explain that you can change how you respond by the thoughts in your head. The way you handle a situation can completely depend on how you think about it.
   - Do the following activity, but remind them not to hurt one another:
     - *Find a partner. One partner stands with palms facing up and the other partner tries to push their hands down. Notice the resistance.*
     - *Next, partner with palms up should think negative thoughts such as: I am weak. I cannot resist the other person’s pressure. I am not strong enough. I can’t stop this.*
     - *Finally, the partner with palms up should think positive thoughts such as: I am strong. I am able to resist pressure. I am capable and confident. I’ve got this.*
     - *Discuss if/how thoughts affected student’s ability to resist pressure.*

3. Ask each student to complete the worksheet on positive/ negative thoughts. – 10 minutes
   - Process as a group their responses

4. Deep Breathing
   - Explain this can be done to some extent anywhere
   - It takes relatively little time
   - Provide the following directions:
     - Stand straight up with feet shoulder-width apart
     - Arms and hands are relaxed downward
     - Body is relaxed
     - Eyes closed
     - Focus on lower abdomen (belly) and imagine a small balloon in that space
     - Breath in slowly and deeply through nostrils, imagining the balloon inflating (getting bigger/larger/growing) slowly, hold a few seconds
     - Slowly exhale through the mouth, imagining the balloon gently deflating (getting smaller, shrinking); blow out of the mouth as if blowing out a candle or whistling
     - Tip: Place a hand over the lower abdomen to feel it go up and down, and make sure you’re not breathing with the chest
     - Repeat at least five times
5. Conclusion
   - Ask on a scale of 1-10 how they are feeling
   - Explain that we only have two more sessions left
   - Ask what ways have they learned thus far to help manage their stress
   - Ask if there is anything in particular they would like to learn about or discuss
Stressful Event: 

*Negative* way of thinking about the situation:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

What you might feel if you had that thought:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

What you might do if you had that thought:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

*Positive* way of thinking about the situation:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

What you might feel if you had that thought:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

What you might do if you had that thought:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
Session 5

1. Opening – 5 minutes
   - Check in on a scale of 1-10 how they are feeling
   - Remind them that they only have one more session – ask them how they feel about this

2. Circle of Control Worksheet – 15 minutes
   - Ask them to complete the circle of control worksheet with situations and events that stress them out that they can control, cannot control, and can somewhat control
   - Discuss some of the things they wrote down and how they can handle the situations they cannot control
   - How hard will it be to let go of the control they want to keep over the situations they can’t control? How will they know when they have let go?

3. Wheel of Wellness – 15 minutes
   - Stress the importance of “holistic” wellness and how that can relate to stress in a positive or negative way (when one area is down, it negatively affects other areas; when one area is up, it positively affects the other areas)
   - Ask them to shade it in with the appropriate colors
   - Discuss how they shaded it, what areas they need to work on, and how they will work on them
   - Pay particular attention to the “emotional” cluster as it relates the most to the purpose of the group but also discuss how other areas affect stress and overall life happiness

4. Conclusion
   - Check in again with a 1-10 scale
   - Remind the group that we only have one more session
Circle of Control

Outside of my control

Some control

Within my control
The Wellness Wheel

Intellectual

Occupational

Physical

Social

Emotional

Spiritual
The Wellness Wheel

Blue – very well
Green – somewhat well
Orange – neutral
Pink – somewhat not well (could do a little better)
Red – not well (could do a lot better)

Physical
- Exercises
- Balanced diet
- Sleeps enough (not too little or too much)
- Regular visits to doctor
- Avoids drugs and alcohol

Intellectual
- Attend class
- Completes assignments
- Organization
- Challenging yourself

Emotional
- Sensitive with others
- Can cope with stress
- Independent, but can ask for help when you need it
- Feeling in control of your life

Spiritual
- Reflective
- Thoughtful
- Relaxation
- Religion
- Peace

Social
- participate in activities at school and in community
- feel satisfied with relationships (friend and family)
- can trust others, but not overly trusting
- take time for fun activities with others

Occupational
- taking school seriously
- thinking about a career that interests you
- thinking about a job you may want to have when you are older in high school
- thinking about where you might want to live
Session 6

1. Opening – 5 minutes
   - Check in on a scale of 1-10 how they are feeling
   - Remind them that this is our last session – ask how they feel about this

2. Work it Out Worksheet – 15 minutes
   - Go over whether the situations they have chosen are within their control or outside of their control
   - Recap: How do your feelings impact how you act?

3. Menu Worksheet – 15 minutes (counselor must create and include list of tips/things discussed during group-put on cardstock and/or laminate so they can keep it)
   - What things have they learned this semester to cope with stressful situations?
   - Remember it is important to recognize when we are beginning to feel stressed.
   - Keep this for times you are stressed out. Give suggestions of things to add.

4. Conclusion
   - Post-test
   - Check in again with a 1-10 scale
   - Tell them who they can talk to when I you are not available (OR IF YOU ARE AN INTERN) when you are no longer at this site
Work It Out!!

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How confident do you feel that you can manage your stress successfully in your life? Please explain.

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

What are some of the main things you learned from this group?

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

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Created by Jennie Hermann, Meagan St. Pierre, and Tristen Bergholtz