

What's on your plate?

Youth draw what's "on their plate" at the moment and discuss their stressors and triggers.

This activity is all about self-care. Self-care is the practice of taking care of ourselves – both our physical and mental selves – during times of stress. So, in this activity, we are going to identify things that are stressful to us and acknowledge that sometimes, life is hard.

Step by Step Guide:

1. Provide examples: People react physically, mentally and emotionally to the things happening around us. Start the discussion by setting up a few hypothetical situations and ask the group how they would respond. They should be encouraged to act it out. For example:

- Pretend you find out your friend is saying mean things about you behind your back. How would your body react? How would your brain react?

- Pretend someone gives you a present that you don't like. How would your body react? How would your brain react?

- Pretend you are given a test you forgot to study for. How would your body react? How would your brain react?

2. Have a discussion: Facilitate a discussion about these hypothetical situations or any real and personal situations young people have faced. Explain to them that these situations can be considered stressors and trigger an emotional and often physical response. While it can be impossible to avoid some of these situations, we can control how we react to them.

3. What's on your plate? Hand out a paper plate to each participant and ask them "What's on your plate?" These are all of the things they are thinking about, responsible for, or stressed about – tests, upcoming games, chores, family concerns, responsibilities, and more. Allow youth time to draw these stressors or triggers on the front side of the paper plate. Encourage youth to talk amongst each other and share stories and experiences.

Thrive it UP!

Mental health and emotional wellbeing are integral to setting young people on the path to thriving and reaching their full potential. Mental health problems affect about 1 in 10 children and young people, most of whom do not have the language to express these issues. This activity looks to provide that foundation for understanding that emotional health is just as important as physical health. Verbalizing their stressors and visualizing the emotions they trigger in their bodies gives youth power over how they react to things in the world. This will aid in the development of other skills, including social skills, life skills, conflict resolution, confidence, purpose, reflection and growth mindset.

Reflection

What? What do you think about your plate? What did you learn about yourself? Was this a difficult activity? Why or why not? - So, what? Why did we write down our stressors and triggers? Why is it important to talk about your emotions and where you feel them on your body? How can we react positively when we are feeling?