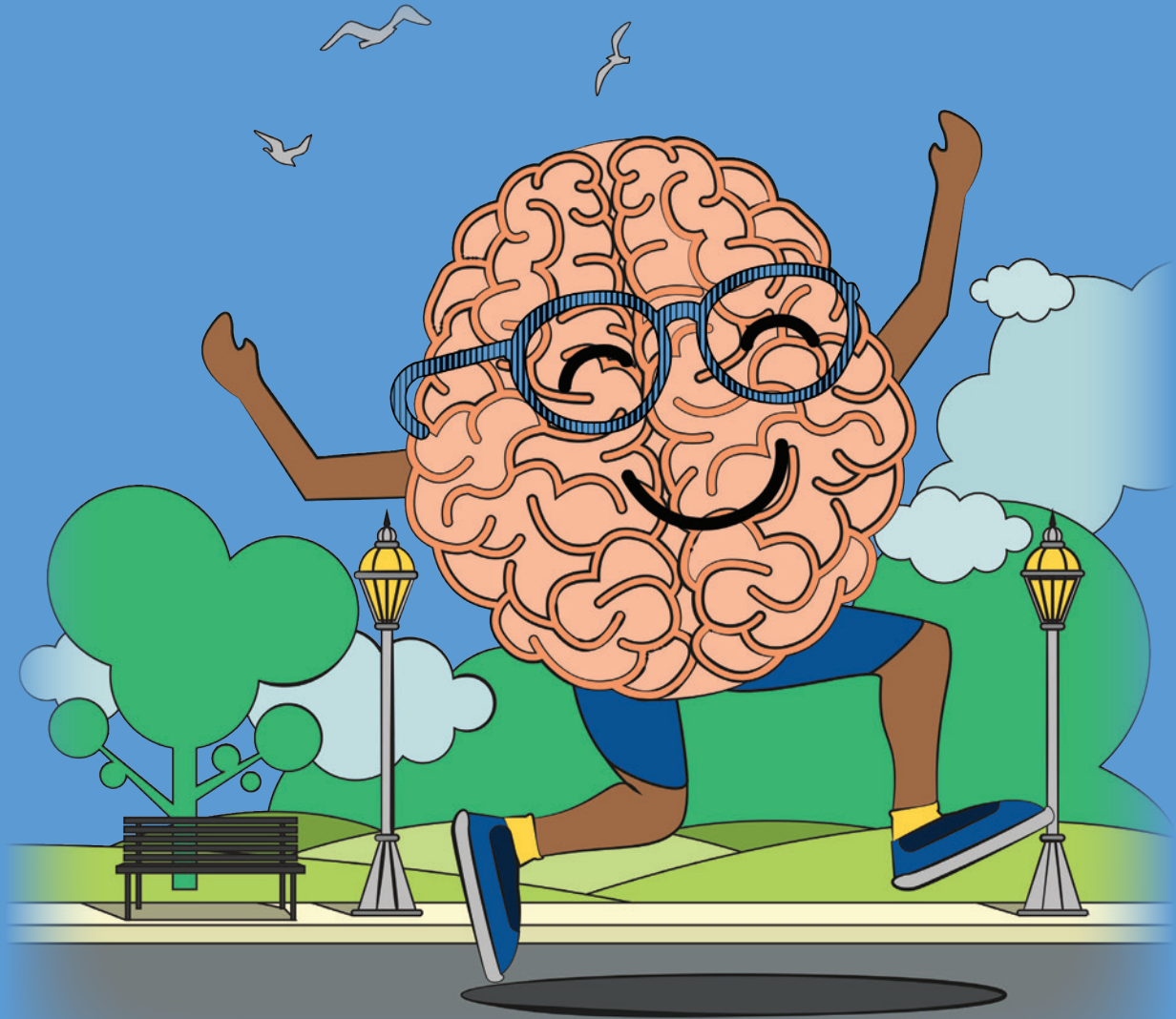


STAND UP TO STRESS!

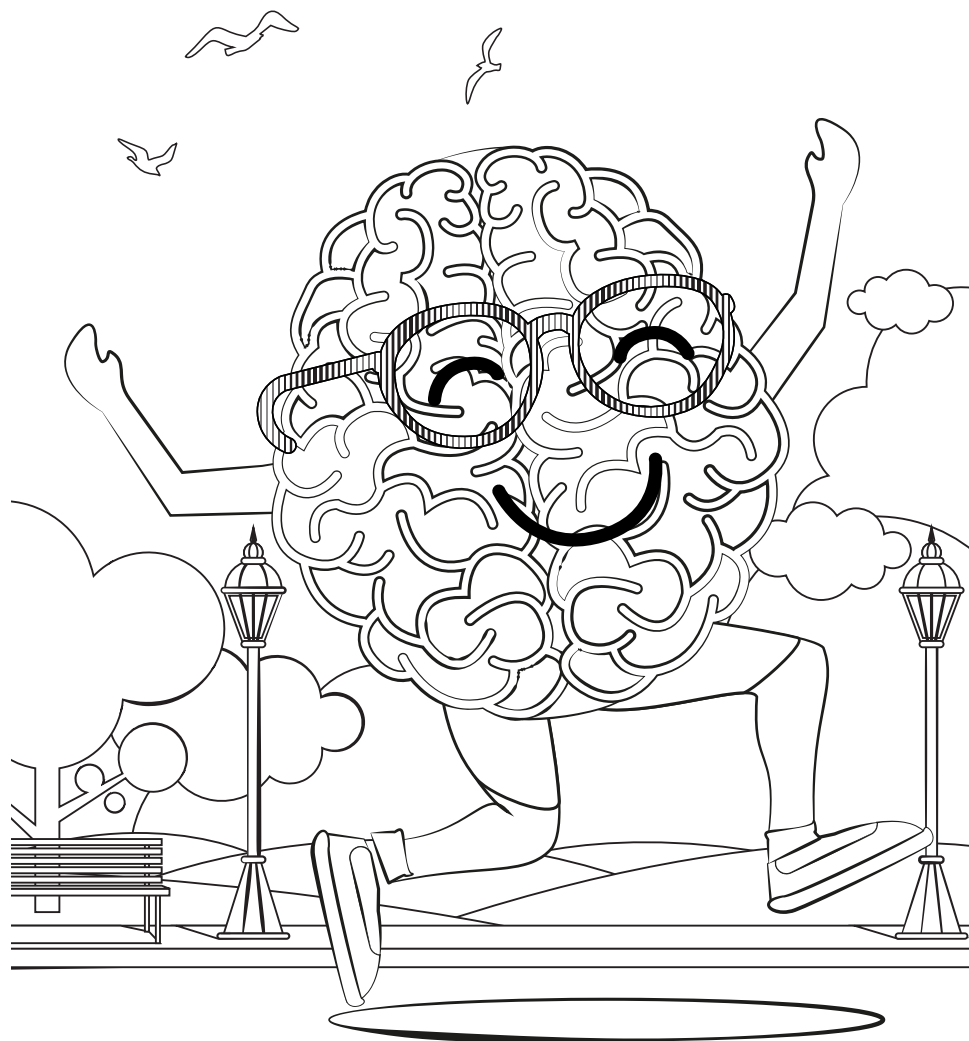


A COLORING & ACTIVITY BOOK FOR KIDS AGES 8-12

From the **NATIONAL INSTITUTE of MENTAL HEALTH**

From the **NATIONAL INSTITUTE of MENTAL HEALTH**

STAND UP TO STRESS!



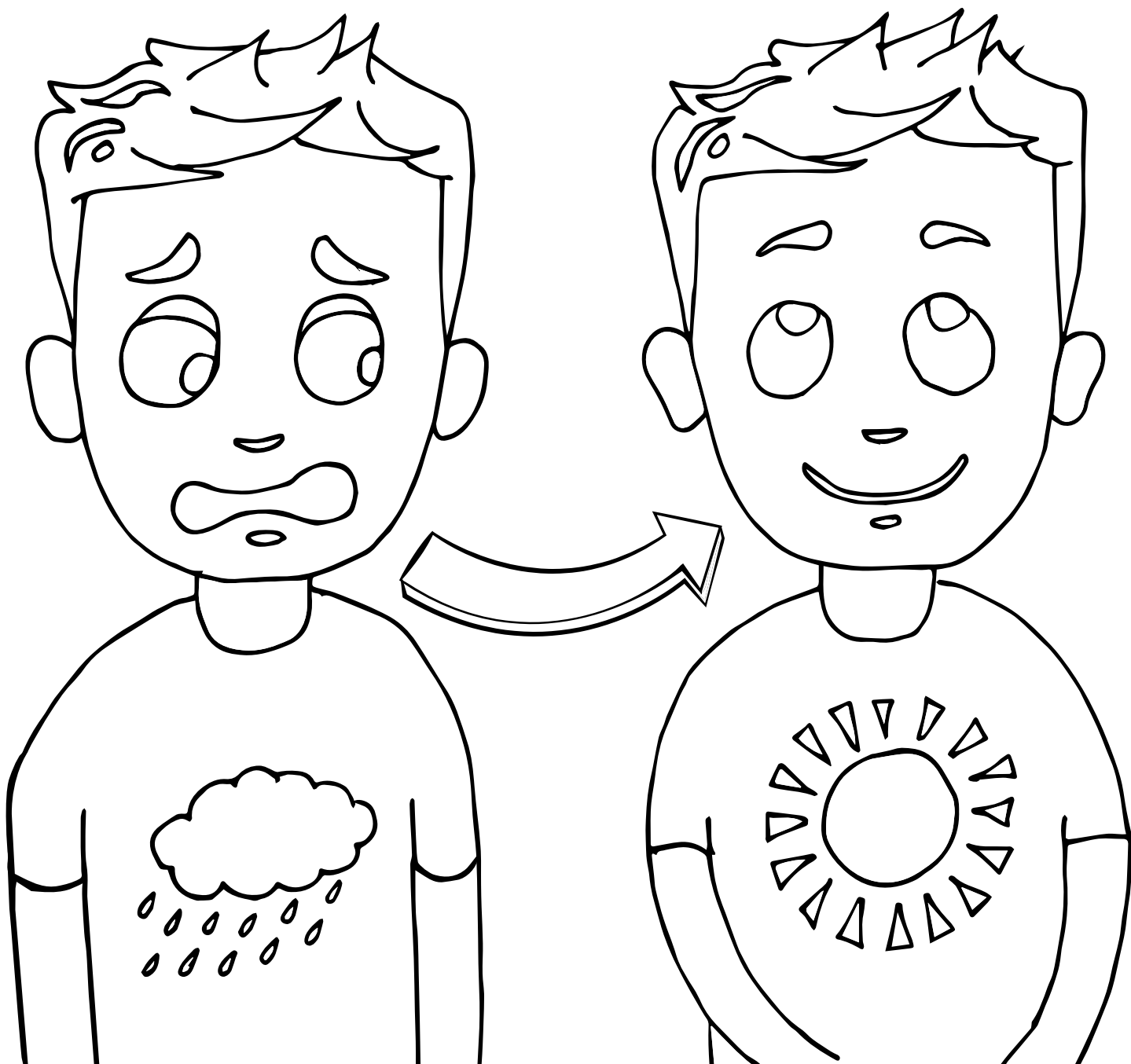
A COLORING & ACTIVITY BOOK FOR KIDS AGES 8-12

The National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) is the lead federal agency for research on mental disorders. NIMH is one of the 27 Institutes and Centers that make up the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the nation's largest medical research agency. NIH is part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

WHAT IS STRESS?

Stress is how the brain and body respond to any type of challenge, such as a test in school or a difficult talk with a friend. Stress can lead to good or bad things. For example, it might help you meet an important deadline, or it might make it harder to get a good night's sleep.

Everyone experiences stress from time to time, and that is okay. But too much stress over a long time can be bad for your health. Learn about the causes of stress and how to handle it!



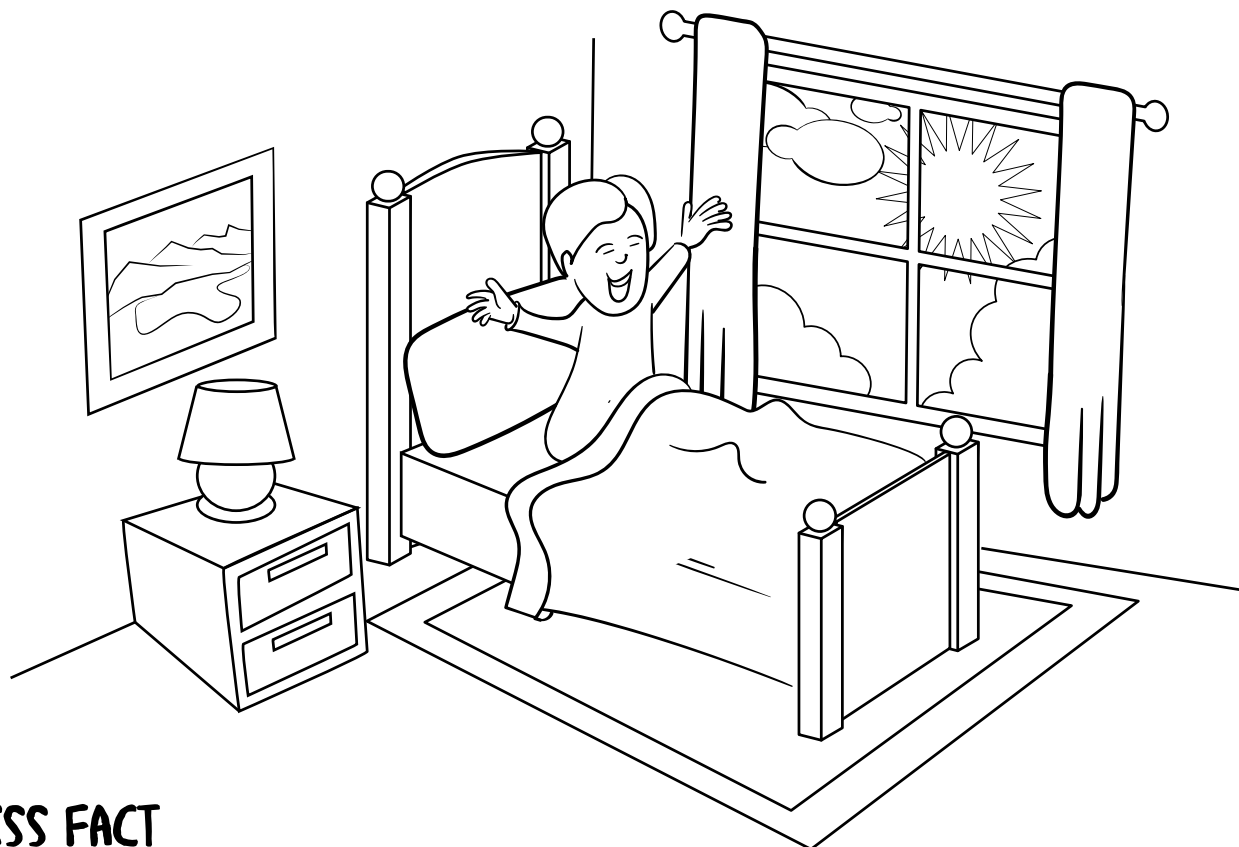
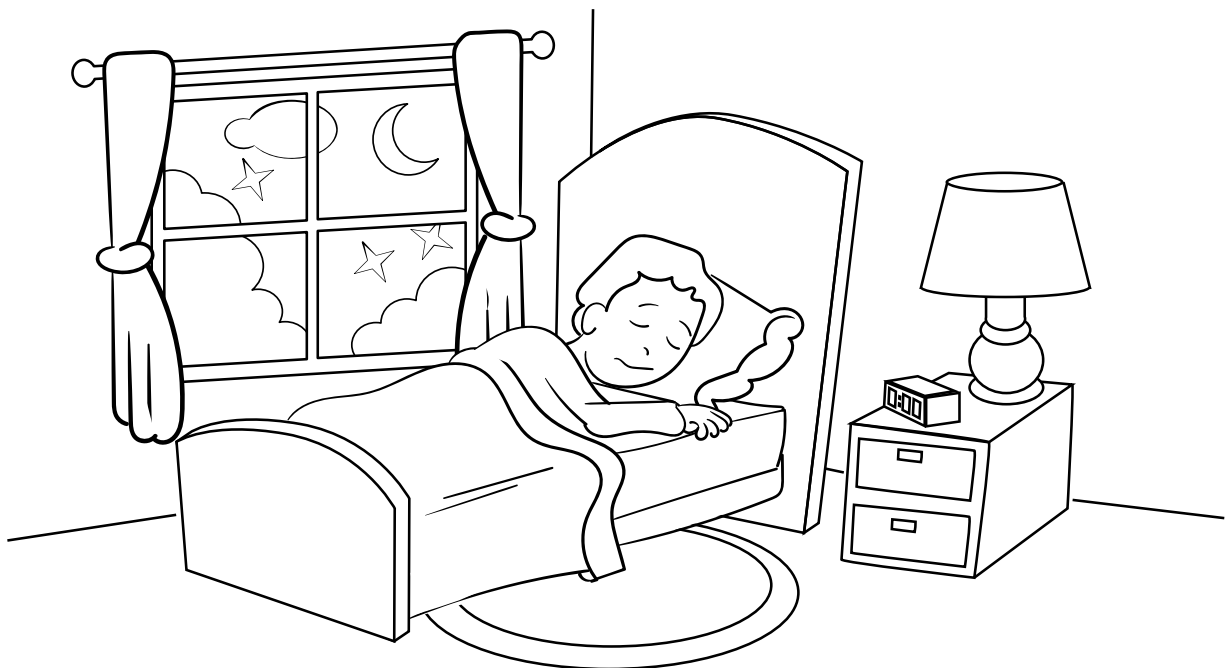
WHAT CAUSES STRESS?



STRESS FACT

Lots of things in your life can cause stress. Sometimes, you might feel overwhelmed because there's so much going on at once—like having a lot of homework or activities. Other times, it might be because something is making you feel nervous or worried, like an upcoming test or a tricky situation with friends or family. The good news is there are ways to help your body calm down and handle stress.

SLEEP



STRESS FACT

Sleep can affect how well you think, react, work, learn, and get along with others. Try to have a healthy bedtime routine. Going to bed and waking up at the same time each day and turning off your phone, tablet, or laptop before bed can help you sleep better and may reduce your stress.

BE ACTIVE!



STRESS FACT

Getting 30 minutes of exercise each day helps your body and brain stay healthy and strong. Even 5–10 minutes of being active can help you feel better and reduce stress!

FRIENDS AND FAMILY



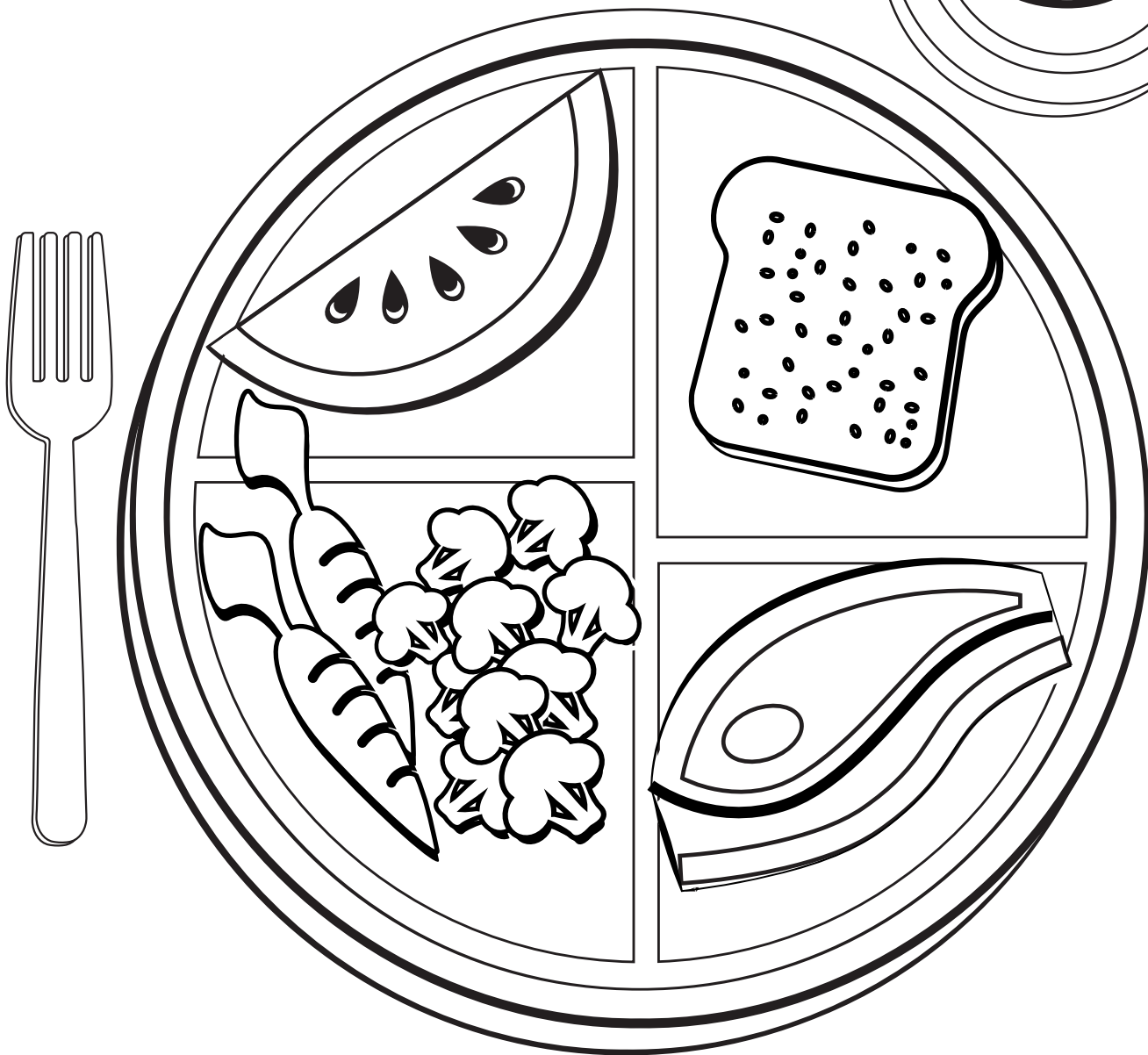
STRESS FACT

Talking to your friends and family—in person, on the phone, or online—can make you feel happier and healthier. You can also talk to a trusted adult, like a parent or teacher, if you start to feel overwhelmed. Talking about your feelings with friends and family can remind you that you're not alone and help you feel better.

EATING WELL

STRESS FACT

Eating healthy food fuels your body! Making healthy food choices helps reduce stress by keeping your heart and brain healthy and giving you the energy to stay active.



MINDFULNESS



STRESS FACT

Mindfulness is like giving your brain a little break to focus on what's happening right now. You can practice mindfulness in different ways, like paying attention to your breathing, feeling the warmth of the sun on your skin, or listening carefully to the sounds in nature. Paying attention to positive feelings and thinking about the good things in your life can help you develop a positive mindset, which helps reduce stress.

LET'S RELAX!

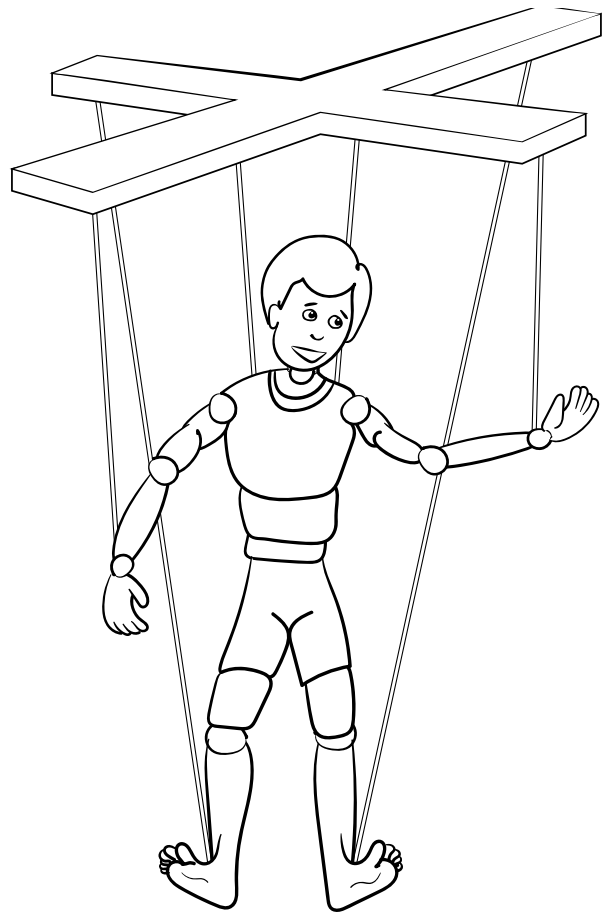
STRESS FACT

Taking time to relax is important because it helps your body and mind rest. Quiet activities like reading a book, coloring, taking a bath, or cuddling a pet can also help you feel calm and less worried. Try the activity below to help you relax and handle stressful feelings.

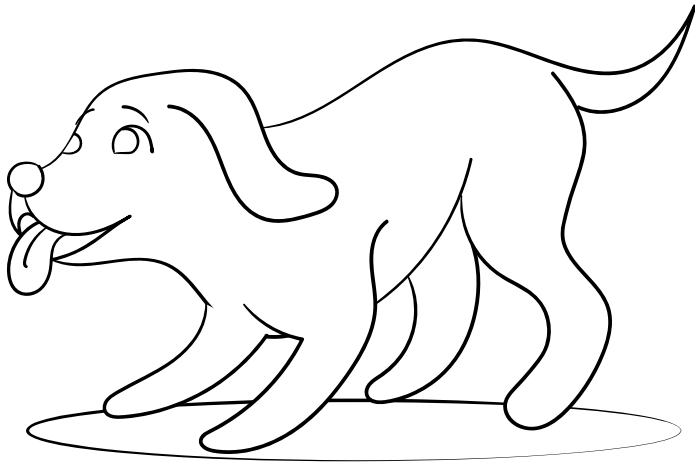
TENSE AND RELAX

Stress can make your muscles feel tight. Your whole body might feel stiff like an uncooked spaghetti noodle. Because the body and mind are connected, relaxing tight muscles can help you feel calmer. You can do this activity before bed or anywhere. Be sure to practice it often! Afterwards, you will notice how much more relaxed your body feels.

1. Start by tensing your feet and curling your toes. Imagine you're digging your toes into the sand or wet, squishy mud. Relax your toes and take a deep breath in and out.
2. Pretend you're a puppet with strings attached to your feet. Relax your legs and take a deep breath in and out.



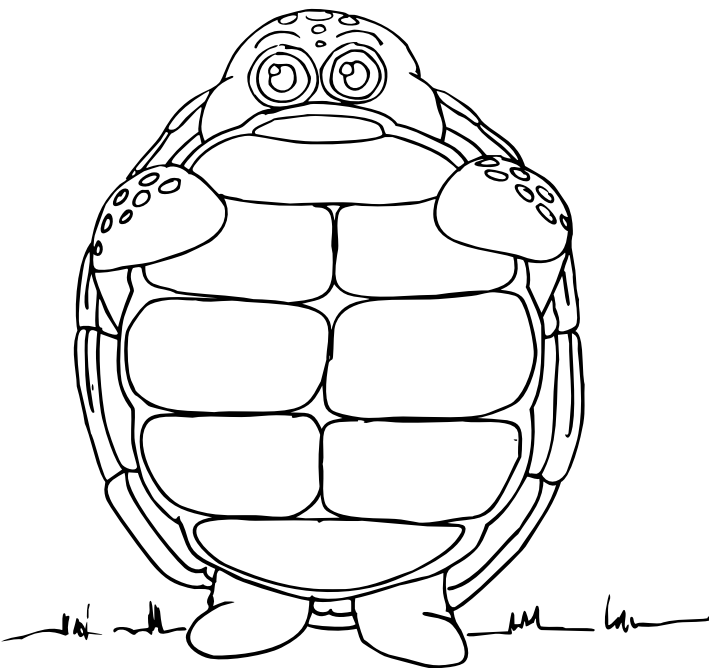
3. Tense your stomach. Imagine that a puppy is about to jump on you. Relax your stomach and take a deep breath in and out.



4. Tense your hands by making fists. Pretend you're trying to squeeze all the juice out of a lemon. Relax your hands and take a deep breath in and out.



5. Tense your shoulders by pulling them up to your ears. Think of yourself as a turtle going into its shell. Relax your shoulders, bring your head out of its shell, and take a deep breath in and out.



6. Tense your face by scrunching it up. Pretend you're eating a really sour candy. Relax your face and take a deep breath in and out.

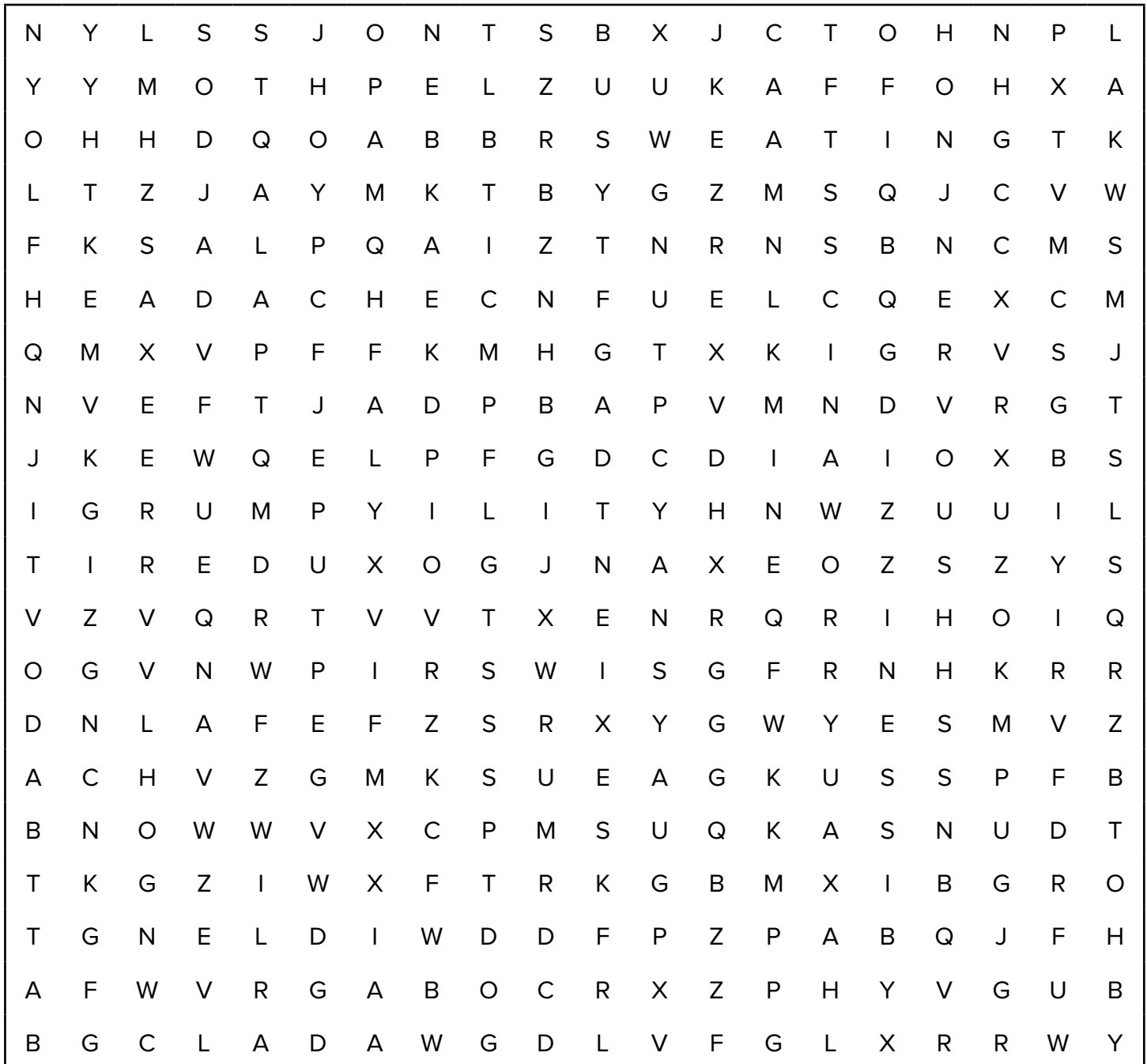


CAN YOU FIND THESE SIGNS OF STRESS?

Your mind and your body are connected.

Too much stress in your brain can cause your body to feel bad.

Search up, down, forward, and diagonally to find the hidden words.



ANGER
HEADACHE
SHAKING
TENSION

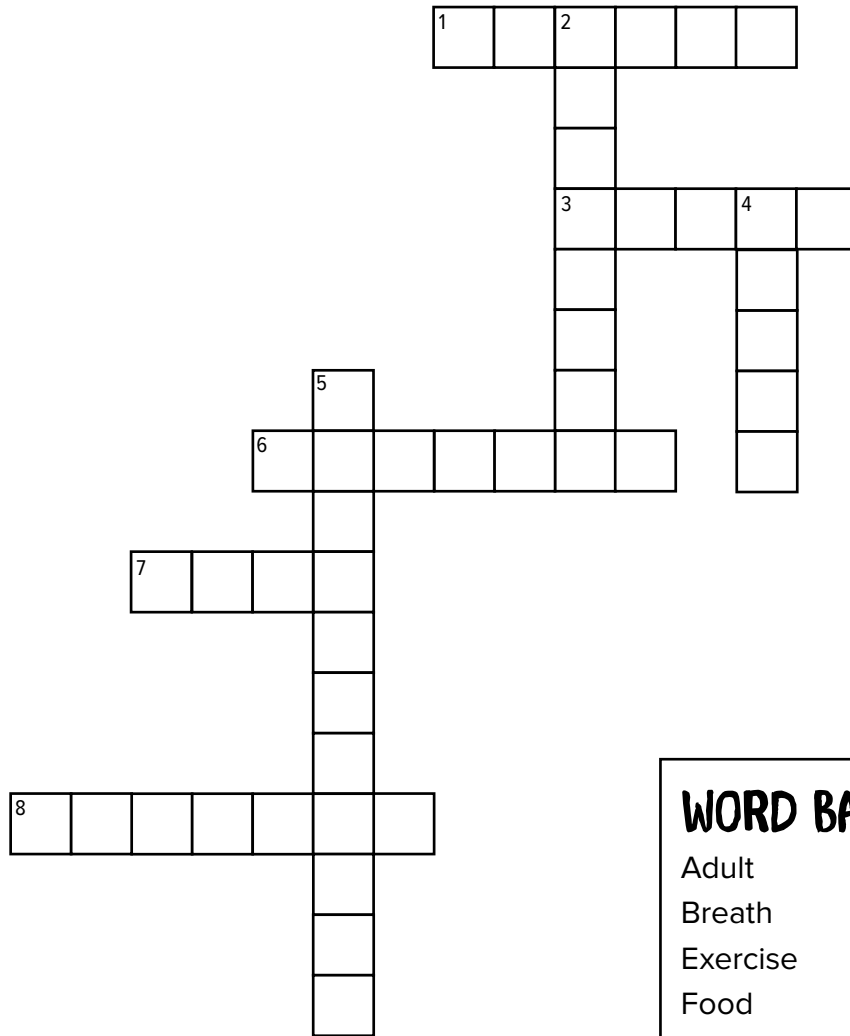
DIZZINESS
NERVOUS
STOMACHACHE
TIRED

GRUMPY
PAIN
SWEATING
WORRY

Answers can be found on page 13.

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF HEALTHY COPING SKILLS

Use the word bank to solve the crossword clues below.



WORD BANK

Adult	Mindfulness
Breath	Mindset
Exercise	Relax
Food	Routine

ACROSS

1. To help calm your body, take a deep _____, count to 5, and let it out slowly.
3. Activities like drawing, coloring, or reading can help you _____.
6. Pay attention to positive feelings so you can develop a positive _____.
7. Choosing healthy _____ fuels your body and your brain!
8. Not getting enough sleep can increase your stress, so it's important to have a good bedtime _____.

DOWN

2. Even 10 minutes a day of _____, like walking or running, can help you feel better.
4. If you start to feel overwhelmed, you can always talk to a trusted _____.
5. Slowing down and paying attention to the warmth of the sun on your skin is an example of _____.

Answers can be found on page 14.

CHECK YOUR EMOTION TEMPERATURE

Sometimes your emotions feel like they might boil over! Write down some situations that might cause stress, like moving to a new house or school, or arguing with a friend. Then, starting at the bottom on the left side, name some emotions you might feel in those situations, from most calm (1) to most upset (5). On the right side, fill in actions that might help you cope when you have those emotions. You can use the words in the word banks or come up with your own ideas.

MY SITUATIONS:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

4. _____
5. _____

EMOTION THERMOMETER

	5	
	4	
	3	
	2	
	1	
0 EMOTIONS ACTIONS		

EMOTIONS WORD BANK

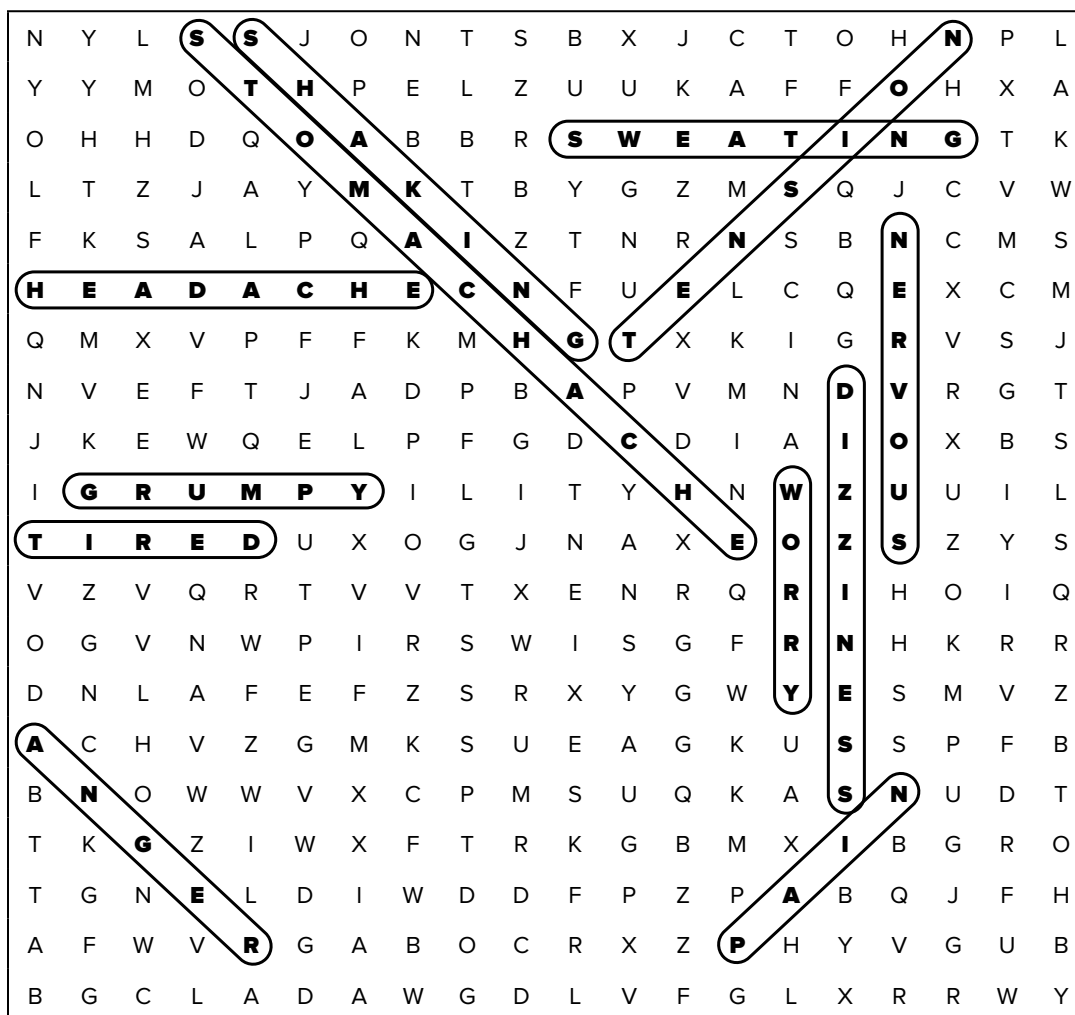
Angry	Frustrated
Annoyed	Furious
Bothered	Grumpy
Calm	Upset
Disappointed	Nervous

ACTIONS WORD BANK

Appreciate the moment	Sit somewhere quiet
Count to 10	Take a deep breath
Find something funny	Take a walk
Imagine a beautiful place	Talk with a trusted adult or friend
Listen to or play music	Tense and relax exercise
	Write in a journal

ANSWERS TO ACTIVITY PUZZLES

ANSWERS TO "CAN YOU FIND THESE SIGNS OF STRESS?" (FROM PAGE 10)



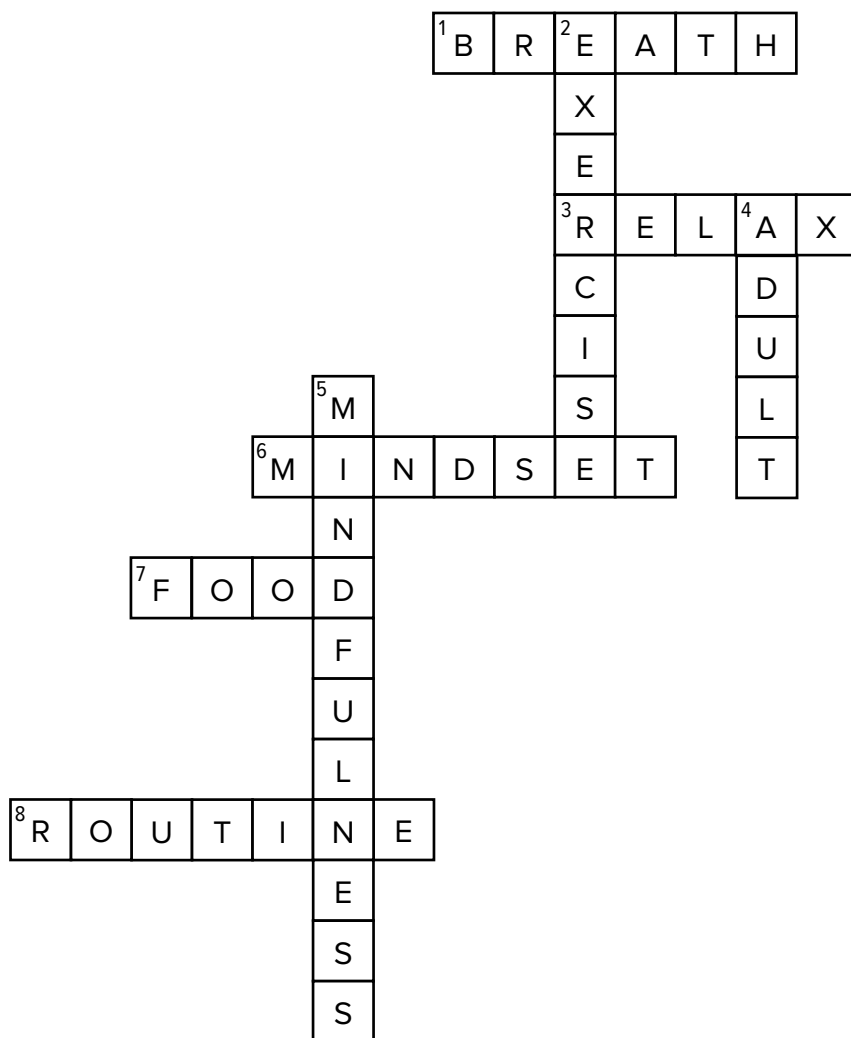
ANSWERS TO "TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF HEALTHY COPING SKILLS" (FROM PAGE 11)

ACROSS

1. Breath
3. Relax
6. Mindset
7. Food
8. Routine

DOWN

2. Exercise
4. Adult
5. Mindfulness





National Institute
of Mental Health

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
AND HUMAN SERVICES

National Institutes of Health

NIH Publication No. 24-MH-8156

Revised 2024

For more information about mental health, visit the NIMH website at **www.nimh.nih.gov**. For information on a wide variety of health topics, visit the National Library of Medicine's MedlinePlus service at **<https://medlineplus.gov>**.

Reprints

The information in this publication is in the public domain and may be reused or copied without permission. Please cite the National Institute of Mental Health as the source. Read our copyright policy to learn more about our guidelines for reusing NIMH content at **www.nimh.nih.gov/copyright**.