

Managing Pressure and Stress

A 90-minute workshop for adults who work with young people

FOR PARENTS, COACHES, TEACHERS, AND SCHOOL COUNSELORS

WELCOME AND OBJECTIVE

This workshop builds shared language around student stress and gives participants practical tools to recognize and respond to it effectively. The goal is not to eliminate pressure but to help young people develop a healthier relationship with it.

OVERVIEW

Academic pressure is one of the most consistently reported sources of distress among high school students. Yet the adults in their lives are often operating from a different picture of what students are actually experiencing. This workshop closes that gap.

RESEARCH

50%+

of high school students report regular stress or burnout. Students in accelerated programs feel it most acutely.

17x

more likely to experience depressive symptoms: adolescents who struggle to cope with achievement pressure, compared to those who manage it well.

EXERCISE 1 — MAPPING THE GAP (SMALL GROUPS, 20 MIN)

In small groups, identify the top stressors students name vs. what adults typically assume those stressors are. Write both lists. Then compare and discuss the gaps. What surprises you? What do you recognize?

EXERCISE 2 — THE CHECK-IN CONVERSATION (PAIRS, 20 MIN)

Using the provided prompts, practice a single open-ended check-in conversation with a partner. One person plays the adult, the other plays the student. Then switch. Debrief together: what felt natural? What felt hard to stay in?

DISCUSSION

What do we currently do that genuinely helps? And what might we be doing, with the best intentions, that adds to the pressure? This conversation is most useful when it is honest.

CLOSING

Each participant leaves with one concrete change they will try in the next two weeks. Write it down. Be specific.