

# Ways to Cope

**Objective:** Participants will identify ways to cope with the stress sometimes experienced during puberty.

**Structure:** Large group.

**Time:** 20 minutes.

**Materials:** Blackboard or flipchart.

## Procedure

1. **Introduce** the topic by telling your group that, along with physical changes, there are a number of emotional changes associated with puberty.
2. **Ask** the group to brainstorm a list of physical responses to stress (e.g. headache, stomach ache, loss of appetite, tiredness, inability to sleep, etc.).
3. Next, ask the group to **brainstorm** a list of emotional responses to stress (e.g. sadness, loneliness, anger, irritability, withdrawal, anxiety, etc.).
4. **Point out** that we all experience stress in our lives, and that this is normal. It is important for us to think about ways to deal with, and respond to, stress and upset in our lives. Ask the group to brainstorm ways of dealing with stress and upset (e.g. talk to someone you trust, cry, eat right, exercise, take time to relax, be patient with mood swings, ask for help). Ask the group to consider who they can turn to for support in times of stress and upset.
5. **Conclude** the activity by pointing out that puberty is a time of significant change, and that there may be some stress associated with these physical and developmental changes. This is normal. It is important to identify ways of coping with these changes to ensure good physical and emotional health.

