



**A
Kappa Delta Pi
Publication**

Volume 15, No. 2

KDP Executive Director

Faye Snodgrass

Consulting Editor

Madeline Kovarik

Managing Editor

Karen L. Allen

Assistant Editor

Kathie-Jo Arnoff

Art Director

Chuck Jarrell

NSTOY Liaison

Peggy Tordoff

NTA Advisors

Bernard Bull

Kellie Hammers

Rea Kirk

Madeline Kovarik

Mike McBride

Donna Gail Shaw

Kelly Sumner

Christopher Tienken

Mack Welford

Michael Whitman



ISSN 1070-7301 published four times during the school year by Kappa Delta Pi, 3707 Woodview Trace, Indianapolis, IN 46268-1158. Send all subscription orders and editorial correspondence to address above, call 1-800-284-3167, or visit KDP Online at www.kdp.org. Subscription rate: \$10.00 members, per year, domestic; \$12.00, members foreign; \$12.00, nonmembers, domestic; \$14.00, nonmembers, foreign. Single copies, \$3.50 (+s&h). Third-class bulk permit paid at Columbus, Ohio. Postmaster does not return issue to publisher with address change. Subscriber must send changes to: Kappa Delta Pi, 3707 Woodview Trace, Indianapolis, IN 46268-1158. ©2007 by Kappa Delta Pi. All rights reserved.

STRESS



Copyright and Permission

Copyrights on all print and electronic versions of New Teacher Advocate are held by Kappa Delta Pi, and all content is protected by U.S. copyright law.

One article in any issue of New Teacher Advocate may be reproduced up to 40 copies without permission if (1) duplication is for educational purposes at a nonprofit institution; (2) copies are made available without charge beyond reproduction costs; and (3) each copy fully cites authors and sources, including the sole publisher and copyright holder—Kappa Delta Pi, International Honor Society in Education. Permission to reproduce more than one article or under conditions other than those specified must be obtained in writing from Permissions, Kappa Delta Pi, 3707 Woodview Trace, Indianapolis, IN 46268-1158 or pubs@kdp.org.

Handling disruptive students, developing lesson plans, organizing learning centers, grading papers, preparing students for standardized tests, attending school and department meetings, and communicating with parents and administrators are but a

BUSTERS

few of the responsibilities that teachers face every day. What do busy schedules and the demands on teachers—especially when not handled well—add up to? Stress. You may not recognize it at first, but sweaty palms, a tight chest, or rapid heartbeats signal anxiety, as do headaches and muscle tension. If you become tearful easily, it's time to better manage your daily life.

Though you can't always control stressful situations, you can begin identifying them and applying strategies to combat stress and its negative effects on your teaching and personal health. Avoiding these situations isn't possible, but coping with them and managing your reactions to them is.

Identify Stress

Think about recent situations at school that caused you excessive stress. Discipline problems and time-management issues often are high-stress concerns for new teachers. Face it—dealing with disruptive students is stressful for any teacher. Managing time and determining priorities can be difficult, as can keeping up with paperwork. Once you identify your greatest stressors, you can learn methods for better managing and coping with them.

Cognitive Stress Busters

- Keep in mind that you're not alone and it's okay to ask for help.
- Reflect on why students act out.
- Seek peer and mentor support in handling difficult students.

Time-Management Stress Busters

- Track what needs to be done—and by when—using lists or an organizing tool such as a calendar or PDA.
- Establish a user-friendly and efficient classroom (e.g., routines for daily activities such as distributing and collecting papers, setting up labs, facilitating group work).
- Use your time wisely—work hard, but work smart!

Wellness Stress Busters

- Get enough rest. Seven to eight hours each night will energize you.
- Exercise. Avoiding exercise is easy. You'll convince yourself that the time is better spent on schoolwork. In reality, a 20–30 minute break to walk, jog, or bike will lower stress, clear the mind, and make you more productive.
- Develop a support network. Those family members and peers closest to you want to see you succeed. Seek their support and talk with them regularly—face-to-face, on the telephone, or via e-mail.
- Eat healthy foods. Food is fuel, so choose wisely. Poor choices lead to higher stress levels. Many new teachers either forget to eat or they substitute caffeine, soda, or candy for a meal. Combat this problem by keeping a stash of healthy snacks in your desk, drinking water instead of soda, eating lunch rather than running errands, and making dinner at home rather than choosing fast-food restaurants.
- Make time for yourself. If you don't make time for yourself, no one will. Consider one first-year teacher's solution: "No matter how much I had to do, at 10 p.m. I stopped and did something for myself for a half-hour. It was sometimes an indulgence I didn't really have time for but knew I needed." Quiet time helps you re-center and regenerate.

Simple stress-reduction techniques will help you make the most of your first years of teaching. The stress of being a new teacher may be unavoidable, but knowing how to ward off its negative effects makes all the difference. 🍏

Elizabeth Wilkins is an associate professor in the Department of Teaching and Learning at Northern Illinois University and a member of the Epsilon Alpha Chapter of Kappa Delta Pi. Lauren DiPaula is a doctoral candidate in Composition Studies at Indiana University of Pennsylvania.