



## Managing Our Stress using the Stress Bucket Teacher's Guide

Thank you for facilitating a session with your children, linking with Children's Mental Health Week.

**The Aim of this session:** To introduce the concept of the stress bucket and help children understand that things can fill our buckets, but that we can manage our stress levels through opening the taps on our stress buckets.



Children learn that we each have a stress bucket which can fill up with lots of different stresses. We can learn to release the stress by opening our taps through different actions and avoid feeling overwhelmed.

Each person is unique, so different things will fill and empty different buckets.

### Resources for the session:

1. You will have been sent an MP4 of the video to watch, you can also find it via the link: <https://standinginthegap.uk/childrensmentalhealthweek2024> or the QR Code here:  
The video running time is: 5 minutes
2. You will need one worksheet per child
3. Decide on how to run the activity and prepare that.



### The structure of the session:

1. Show the video: The video will introduce the session and demonstrate some ideas of things that fill our stress buckets and things that open the taps on our stress buckets. (Note: If needed you can rewatch the video after the activity and while completing the worksheets, pausing at each part as the children complete the worksheets)
2. Activity: Follow the video with an activity to review the ideas and add children's own ideas.

### Options on the Activity

1. Organise the children into small groups with a picture of a bucket and small pictures of taps and stress water drops to fill the bucket (See PDF for pictures) For a less resource heavy option- use a whiteboard with a bucket drawn on per team and then coloured counters for taps and water drops.
2. You could use a real bucket and counters instead, get each team to put a water droplet or tap into the bucket- see which team has had the most ideas.

3. Set a time limit for the game ( 3 minutes) each team is responsible for saying a cause of stress or an activity to turn on the release tap.
4. You might like to add an element of chance by using a dice. The teams with taps must get an even number to make a suggestion and the team with stress bubbles must get an odd number to make a suggestions.
5. You could keep a record of the ideas as they are said to help the children fill in the sheet.

Finish by giving the children the sheet to complete and send the sheet home so adults at home can discuss it with children. The sheet gives children opportunity to draw or write their own ideas about what causes them stress and what they can do about it.

There will also be an electronic mailing sent to parents containing the information and the link to the video and resources- please encourage children to discuss this with their parents as they also have stress buckets.

**Hints and tips on what can fill up our buckets** (here are some of the suggestions mentioned in the video- there are many others)

Big things like:

- Being unwell ourselves or worrying about someone else who is unwell
- New things- like a new house, or a new teacher, new school or a new person in our lives
- Falling out with someone
- Having some tests coming up
- Practicing for a performance or a big game/ match depending on your sport

Smaller things can also fill our buckets like:

- I can't remember that persons name
- I don't understand my homework
- I can't find my- shoes, jumper, favourite toy
- My hairband isn't right
- My jumper feels wrong

**Hints and tips on things that open our taps**

- Getting enough sleep- we can't run a car without fuel and your brains won't work if you haven't had enough sleep. Enough sleep is when you wake up feeling refreshed and ready to go.
- Eating healthy food regularly
- Drinking enough water
- Talking to someone you trust if something is concerning you
- Drawing a picture
- Smile at someone or telling them a joke
- Getting some physical exercise- whether that's running up and down outside, bouncing on a trampoline (did you know changes brain waves) or enjoying a quick dance to fun music.
- Doing something different if you are stuck on something
- Watching a film
- Playing a game

- Some things you can do at home with a parent/carer can help- having a hug, a tickle or a pizza massage are all great