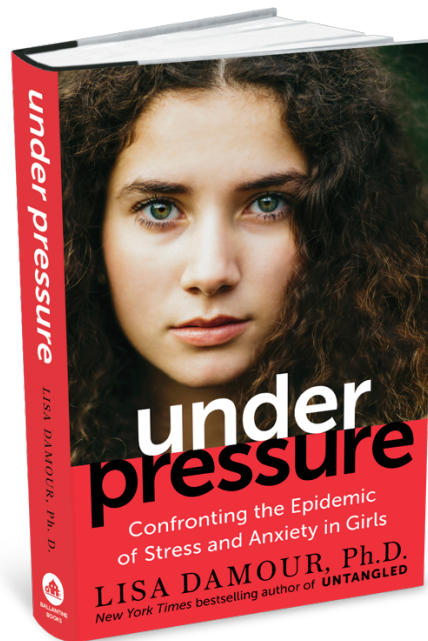


under pressure

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Discussion Guide for Educators

Introduction

When you think about the causes of stress and anxiety for your students, what are the main culprits?

Chapter One: Coming to Terms with Stress and Anxiety

What programming does your school offer to help students manage stress? Does that programming highlight the differences between healthy and unhealthy stress?

What accommodations, if any, does your school provide to students with diagnosed anxiety disorders? Are those accommodations designed to help students learn to manage their anxiety over time?

Chapter Two: Girls at Home

How do the adults at your school respond to a student who:

- wishes to avoid something that makes her uneasy,
- has an emotional meltdown, or
- has a dramatic overreaction at school.

It is now common for a student who becomes upset to reach out to a parent by text or phone call during the school day. Does this happen at your school and, if so, how has this changed your work as an educator?

Today's parents seem to be more anxious than those of previous generations. Have you noticed this among the parents at your school and, if so, how has your school worked to help parents feel more at ease?

Chapter Three: Girls among Girls

How does your school manage the conflicts that arise among girls and their female classmates?

How do the girls in your school manage competition with one another? Are they able to draw on competition as a positive source of motivation, or does it become uncomfortably fraught with emotion? What steps have you taken to help girls better manage the challenges that come with competing with their peers?

Chapter Four: Girls among Boys

How does your school talk with students about the topic of peer-to-peer sexual harassment? What policies and procedures are in place to address sexual harassment should a student come forward with a complaint about a peer?

Well-meaning educators may unwittingly reinforce the harmful boys-on-offense-girls-on-defense framework when talking with students about their romantic lives. How does your school tend to approach these conversations? What changes would you like to see made to how these conversations are handled?

Chapter Five: Girls at School

Girls are more likely than boys to “floor it” in all of their classes while boys are more likely to figure out when they can coast. Are there times when you or your colleagues tacitly endorse girls’ inefficient work style? What take [delete] steps could you take to help girls become tactical in their approach to school?

How does your school talk with students about test anxiety?

What steps can be taken at school to help parents trade a “projectiles” model of future success for a “pathways” model?

Chapter Six: Girls in the Culture

What conversations do you have at school about how girls speak? If, in the past, you have policed girls’ use of language in the name of empowerment, might you now take a different approach having read *Under Pressure*?

How does your school address our culture’s heavy emphasis on female appearance? How do you talk with students about their feelings about their own looks?

What is it like to be a student of color at your school? How does your school community address the topics of privilege, prejudice, racism, equity, and inclusion?

Conclusion

How was *Under Pressure* of help to you personally or in your role as an educator? What questions remain unanswered for you? What topics related to stress, anxiety, or girls’ education would you like to learn more about?