While you are waiting, please fill out the “STRESS TEST”
How to Stay in Control
When Your Kids are Out of Control!

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AGENDA

- Check in
- Stress and the Brain
- Composure
- Stress Busters
- 5 Steps to Regulation
- Questions
Goals

1. Understand meaning of stress

1. Increase awareness of stress symptoms and triggers

1. Identify strategies to remain composed

1. Participate in stress reduction activities
CHECK IN

1 = Cool as a Cucumber!
10 = Out of Control!!
MINDFUL MEDITATION

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wGFog-OuFDM

Strive to focus on the present
RE-CHECK

1 = Cool as a Cucumber!
10=Out of Control!!
Definition of Stress

• The state of dynamic tension created when you respond to perceived demands and pressure from outside and from within yourself

• Your body’s response to any change in its inner or outer environment.
YOUR BODY’S REACTION TO STRESS

- Alarm (fight or flight)
- Resistance (repair or remain alert)
- Exhaustion (diseases of stress)
Your body recognizes the stressor and prepares for flight or fight and releases adrenaline.
RESISTANCE

Your body repairs any damage caused from stress. If the stressor does not go away, the body cannot repair the damage and must remain alert.
Continued exposure to stress during this stage causes the body to run out of energy and may bring on one of the “diseases of stress” e.g. migraines.
GOOD STRESS

When the brain is in a state of high challenge and low stress the result is:

- Feeling psyched up
- Good memory recall
- High motivation
- High energy
- Normal sleep patterns
- Creativity
- Excitement to learn
BAD STRESS

When the brain is in the state of high stress and anxiety, the result is:

- Poor sleeping and eating patterns
- Feeling overwhelmed
- Experience of physical, emotional or behavior symptoms
- Feelings that usual activities and challenges are too much
- See work as “too much”
WHEN YOU FEEL STRESSED YOU LOSE ACCESS TO THE FOLLOWING SKILLS

- Empathy - everything is about you
- Prioritization - every task is overwhelming
- Organization - piles and piles
- Time Management - usually late
- Impulse control - "OOPs"
- Working Memory
- Flexibility - My way or give up
The Stress Response

- Optimum
- Effective
- Creative
- Decisive
- Alert
- Stimulated
- Under-involvement
- Boredom
- Frustration
- Rust-out
- Reduced efficiency
- Reduced Alertness
- Overload
- Difficulty Concentrating
- Indecisive
- Irritable
- Anxious
- Confused
- Fatigue
- Exhaustion
- Burnout

STRESS CYCLE
And you thought there was stress in your life.
THE BRAIN AND STRESS
UNDERSTANDING THE BRAIN

• The child is born, the brain stem and limbic system develop first. The fight or flight reaction protects the child.

• This is the emotional center of the brain. This is where anger and other feelings originate.
UNDERSTANDING THE BRAIN

- When children upshift to the cerebral cortex (the thinking, executive function part of the brain), they can begin the think of alternative ways of reacting. They can begin control their reactions and responses.

- The cortex develops more slowly (ages 5-6 and older)
BRAIN AND STRESS

• The brain functions optimally in safe environments.

• When the brain is distressed or under threat, chemicals are released in the brain to prepare it for “fight or flight”.

• The alarm system is activated, and it interferes with learning and healthy emotional functioning.
AN OVER-REACTIVE ALARM SYSTEM

In Adults

- Emotions do not match situation
- Yell, scream, cry
- Have low tolerance of behaviors
- Addictions (food, alcohol, shopping)

In Children

- Respond to everyday events in defensive or attacking ways
- Impulsive
- Do not handle disappointment well
- Act out their feelings
Individual may shut down and become sluggish, struggle to feel, appear out of control, exhibit acts of violence, ignore peril and/or situation.
ACTIVITY

• STRESS TEST
I’M STRESSED...NOW WHAT?

- Break the Cycle
SELF CONTROL

- **PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY** for children can only exist when adults learn to manage their own anger and learn the skill of composure.

Self control must be your first priority as a parent and caregiver.
We tend to...

• Focus on the behavior
• With the goal of stopping it!
When we are upset we try to control the behaviors of others instead of managing our inner states (thoughts, feelings, impulses)

CHANGE THE STATE FIRST AND THEN THE BEHAVIOR
COMPOsure

BEING THE PERSON YOU WANT OTHERS TO BECOME

Keep Calm and Breathe

NO ONE CAN MAKE YOU ANGRY WITHOUT YOUR PERMISSION
IT IS OUR CHOICES THAT SHOW WHAT WE TRULY ARE, FAR MORE THAN OUR ABILITY.
COMPOSURE

• I am safe.

• I am calm.

• I can handle this.
Parents who model self control do the following:

1. Focus on what they want their child to accomplish.
2. Celebrate their child’s successes and choices.
3. See situations from their child’s perspective.
4. Teach their child how to communicate his or her wishes and frustrations (words, pictures, signals).
GAINING COMPOFAUSE

Be aware of your trigger thoughts and the “buttons” children push.

REMOVE THESE

- Reduce stress through calming and coping strategies and activities.
- Focus and tune into the body to recognize early signs of anger.

BREATHE- It is an antidote to stress.
MY BUTTONS

WHAT ARE YOUR BUTTONS?

Don't Push My Buttons
CALMING ACTIVITIES

• Emotional states are reflected in the way we breathe.
• Conscious slow, deep breathing brings more oxygen to our lungs and our brain.
• Breathing can upshift our brain.
Deep breathing can reduce feelings of stress and lower heart rate.

- Breath through your nose for a count of four
- Hold your breath for a count of two
- Breath through your mouth for a count of eight.

Inhale. Exhale. Repeat.
YOGA BREATHS

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ejFrNkaeHF4
Brain Stem 🔄 Limbic 🔄 Frontal Cortex

JUST BREATHE
S.T.A.R.

- SMILE
- TAKE A DEEP BREATH
- AND
- RELAX
DISENGAGE STRESS

STAR

Drain

pretzel

balloon
ACTIVE CALMING

BREATHE DEEPLY

WISH WELL

Creates an energetic connection

USE AFFIRMATIONS

① I am safe
② I can handle this
③ Keep breathing
CALMING ACTIVITIES

Tell a joke
Puzzles
Humming
Yoga
Stretching
Being creative (drawing, singing, painting, building)
ACTIVITY
Write down how you “KEEP CALM AND...”
Ways to Calm in 1 Minute or Less

• Breath
• Shout it out
• Ask for a hug
• Pet your dog
• Listen to your favorite song
• Peel an orange
• Smell a lemon
• Drink some water
• Visualize a peaceful place
• Hold a hand
• Reflect on what you value
Healthy Living

- Breathing Exercises
- Yoga
- Eat Healthy
- Drink Water
- Visualization/Relaxation
- Eye Contact
- Stress Checklist
- Aroma Therapy
- Nuture Yourself
- Stress Kit/Safety Plan
CHOOSE TO BREAK THE CYCLE

SAFETY PLAN
SAFETY PLAN

WHAT IS IT?

“A Safety Plan is a list of simple activities that a person can choose when feeling overwhelmed so that the person can avoid engaging in the unsafe, out-of-control or toxic behavior he or she is accustomed to resorting to under stress and instead, use an activity that is safe, effective and self-soothing. The items in a Safety Plan should be simple things that people can do anytime, anywhere without embarrassment.”

SANCTUARY INSTITUTE
MY SAFETY PLAN

1. Count backwards from 20.
2. Take a walk on campus.
3. Drink a glass of water.
4. Massage my hands.
5. Privately say a prayer.
Take a minute to write down ideas for your safety plan...
2 Minute Yoga Break

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wvrlua-oT1s
FIVE STEPS TO SELF REGULATION

• I Am
• I Calm
• I Feel
• I Choose
• I Solve

Managing Emotional Mayhem by Dr. Becky Bailey
I AM

Individual is triggered into a state of upset. Emotions biochemically overtake us and we become them.

I AM ANGRY!
I CALM

Individuals need to turn off the stress response in their body and calm down their physiology. Begin to move from “I AM ANGRY” to...

“I FEEL ANGRY”
Individuals need to name and tame the feelings that have overwhelmed them. Once you can name a feeling and become conscious of it, you are automatically better able to manage it.
INDIVIDUALS need to choose strategies that will help them move from the lower centers of their brain to the higher centers of their brain in order to get back to work and perform daily activities.

SAFE SPACE/SAFETY PLAN
I SOLVE

Something triggers the individual into a state of upset before entering a “safe space” or using their safety plan. Whatever happens needs some type of solution.

What Happened?
How Did You Feel?
Why?
What Can You Do Next Time?
1. Squeeze hands
2. Take three slow breaths (slow in/slow out)
3. Rub legs

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Happy</td>
<td>Ready and willing to Work</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Anxious</td>
<td>Trying to stay focused, but having a hard time staying on task. Use calming strategies now</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Frustrated</td>
<td>I’m not getting it, I’m showing signs of stress. I should take a break now</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Overwhelmed</td>
<td>Everything is too hard. I’m losing control and need to leave the environment I’m in. Give me space</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Angry</td>
<td>I’ve lost control. I’m not listening anymore. I could hit, kick or bite. I need a quiet place to calm down</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
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*When My Worries Get Too Big!* A Relaxation Book for Children Who Live With Anxiety. Second Edition. Written and Illustrated by Kari Dunn Buran. Foreword by Brenda Smith Myles, PhD.
Warning signs  I feel  I will

Parent Practice
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xS7OWBj_GiE

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4PHvNMHuLBY
I COMMIT

You cannot make a real commitment unless you accept that it’s a choice that you keep making again and again.
RESOURCES

www.ConsciousDiscipline.com
Managing Emotional Mayhem by Dr. Becky Bailey
http://www.sanctuaryweb.com/safety-plans.php
WHEN MY WORRIES GET TOO BIG by Kari Dunn Buron
