

Make Parenting A Pleasure™

A Group-Based Positive Parenting Curriculum



4 Stress and Anger Management: Techniques



Anyone can become angry, that is easy; but to be angry with the right person, to the right degree, at the right time, for the right purpose, and in the right way—this is NOT easy.

— Aristotle

4

Stress and Anger Management: Techniques

KEY CONCEPTS

- Stress is a normal part of parenting.
- Managing stress effectively is critical to parenting children effectively.
- As parents we teach and model how to cope with stress.

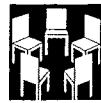
GOALS

By the end of this session parents will:

1. Identify a personal support system.
2. Learn about longer term stress reduction techniques.

MODULE 4

KEY TO ICONS



group discussion



activity



flip chart



two-person
activity or dyad



videotape



home activity



group
sharing



guided
visualization

Be Flexible And Adjust As Needed

Each module gives only an example of an agenda. It is crucial for you as facilitator to tailor the agenda, pace, and style to the needs of the particular group of parents with whom you are working. The sessions are intended for a fast-paced, two-and-a-half-hour time frame. Each module probably contains much more material than you can comfortably use in that time.

Think about:

1. Are there too many activities to carry out realistically in one class? If so, do less.
2. Are there activities in the appendices that might be more effective for the class? If so, substitute.
3. What style of presentation will work best with the parents in the class? Adjust the style to the group.
4. Individualize. Would your group prefer to focus on one topic for a number of weeks? There is enough material in each module to be used for two, three, four, or more classes. Through pacing and the use of appendices, there is sufficient material to expand on topics over a period of time.

AGENDA

1. **Welcome/Announcements** (5 minutes)
2. **Review Last Session/Home Activity** (25 minutes)
 Videotape: *Stress Busters Recap* (approx. 2 minutes)
3. **Group Sharing Time** (45 minutes)
4. **Stress And Parenting: Presentation** (5 minutes)

BREAK (10 minutes)

5. **Understanding Long-Term Stress: Presentation, Activity, and Discussion** (45 minutes)
6. **Session Review** (5 minutes)
7. **Introduce Home Activity** (5 minutes)
8. **Close** (5 minutes)

MATERIALS

HANDOUT

"Special Time" Activity Cards

SUPPLIES

Name tags

Flip chart, colored markers, and easel

Pens or pencils and plain paper

REFRESHMENTS

VIDEO EQUIPMENT

Videotape: *Stress Busters Recap*

VCR and monitor

PREPARATION

1. **Review the *Agenda* for this module**, then read the material that expands each agenda item. Read the material in the appendices. Decide which, if any, of the additional activities from *Appendix 4.1* you want to use. Revise your agenda as necessary.
2. **Prepare the following flip chart sheets:**
Agenda
Five Basics For Managing Long-Term Stress—Copy the *Five Basics For Managing Long-Term Stress* from Page 17.
3. **Bring the following flip chart sheet:**
Ground Rules
4. **Prepare the following handout:**
"Special Time" Activity Cards—Photocopy the *Activity Cards* on Page 19 onto heavy paper and cut them apart (or, make your own *Activity Cards* on 3" x 5" index cards). Make enough cards for each parent to receive two.
5. **Bring copies of handouts from previous sessions.**
6. **Preview the videotape *Stress Busters Recap*** if you have not already seen it. Review the discussion questions.
7. **Phone any parents who might be in crisis**, anyone who missed the last class, or anyone you feel needs individual support.
8. **Review the Home Activity** that you introduced at the last session.
9. **Set up the video equipment.**
10. **Arrange the room** so that parents can sit in a semicircle and see the flip chart, VCR, and each other.
11. **Set up the Resource Table.**
12. **Set up the refreshments.**

SESSION 4



POST THE AGENDA

POST THE GROUND RULES

1. Welcome/Announcements (5 minutes)

2. Review Last Session/Home Activity (25 minutes)



Show the videotape *Stress Busters Recap*.

Ask parents which *Stress Busters* they tried during the week. Did anyone come up with something that works especially well for them? Ask them if they would like to share it.

It is not uncommon for people to become more aware of, and sometimes more concerned about, issues that cause stress once these issues are raised and brought out in the open. Let the parents know that this is normal.

Ask parents if they were more aware of physical sensations since last session. Were they able to connect these physical responses to stressful situations? Which ones? Were they the same each time? Are there particular parts of their bodies that express stress more than others?

What kinds of self-talk did parents observe during the week? Were they able to change their self-talk from negative to positive?

Ask if parents used the *Filling the Bottle* breathing technique. What was their experience with it?

3. Group Sharing Time (45 minutes)



Sharing occurs at the beginning of this session so that you can use parents' real-life examples of long-term stress or situations where *Stress Busters* might be inadequate in your discussion of the long-term stress reduction techniques described in the second half of the class.

4. Stress And Parenting: Presentation (5 minutes)

Parenting is often stressful, sometimes very stressful. Even though we love our children, we may find ourselves responding to stress by yelling at them, spanking them, or treating them in ways we would never treat other people. When we respond to our children in this way we lower their self-esteem. For example, if our boss yelled, "How many times do I have to tell you to fill out the blue sheet when you come in! You're impossible!" we would probably feel embarrassed, humiliated, bad about ourselves, and angry, and our self-esteem would suffer. It's the same for our children. When we manage our stress we are modeling skills for our children, and we help maintain their self-esteem.

Parents As Teachers

As parents we want to minimize our stress and stressed reactions to our children. We also want to teach our child useful ways to express frustration and anger. Our children learn from watching us. Our children need to see the steps we take to reduce our own stress. When they see us handle our anger and frustration positively, they will begin to learn the same skills. When they see us take three DBs and count to 10 when we are angry, or take a Parent Time Out, they are learning how to deal with their own anger.

When we treat our children with respect, when we listen to them, and respond to them constructively, especially when they are disagreeable, we are teaching them important life skills.

BREAK (10 minutes)

5. Understanding Long-Term Stress: Presentation, Activity and Discussion (45 minutes)

Before the break we talked about modeling stress management for our children. When we use *Stress Busters*, our children will see us managing our stress and will learn to do it themselves.

Stress comes in many packages. Sometimes it's wrapped in the pressure of a moment, other times it's stuffed into the responsibilities of a lifetime. The stress management techniques discussed last session diffuse the kind of stress that builds quickly. They are quick techniques to be used during those moments of pressure when we're trying to keep cool.

But what about the stress in our lives that is deeper—the stress that comes with ongoing financial difficulties, chronic health problems, or troubles in our relationships? What can we do to reduce this kind of stress? Here are some suggestions.



POST THE *Five Basics For Managing Long-Term Stress* FLIP CHART SHEET

Five Basics For Managing Long-Term Stress

1. Build a support network.
2. Create family routines. Be consistent.
3. Simplify family routines at high-stress times.
4. Have one thing a week that you look forward to doing with your family ("Special Time").
5. Take care of yourself.

1) Build a support network. In times past, parents of young children often lived in the town where they grew up. They had a network of friends and family that could help them with child care, finances, illness, housing, even meal preparation and laundry. Both men and women relied on others in their family and community in order to survive. Today, many of us don't have a support network. We need to create one. As we've discussed, we all need a support system. We need to reach out to our friends, neighbors, and community to get and give support. This *Make Parenting A Pleasure* class can be the beginning of an ongoing support group.

Continued on Page 10

SESSION 4

*Understanding
Long-Term Stress
Continued*



Ask parents to turn to the *Support Network Form* on Page 13 of the *Parent Booklet*. Have them spend about five minutes filling in all the areas they can.

Ask the class what they noticed as they filled out the *Support Network Form*. As individual parents respond, ask the other members of the group if they had the same reaction.

- 2) **Create family routines. Be consistent.** Routines offer a source of stability and comfort to children and families. All of us, and especially children, need to know what's expected of us and what we can count on. Predictable patterns can be stress reducing.

If I know that I will eat after mom gets home from work and that after dinner I will play, get ready for bed, hear a story, and go to sleep, I feel more safe. My life has a routine that lets me know what is happening. Even if that routine gets juggled a bit, I know that it will still have a structure, something I can count on. If, on the other hand, I don't know when it will be time to eat, play, or sleep, I feel out of control and anxious.

Establishing regular

- mealtimes,
- bedtimes, and
- family times

helps to build a structure for children to feel safe and secure.

We need to try to be consistent in our

- expectations,
- discipline, and
- routines.

Of course, each family has to find its own balance and know that occasionally things happen that change our day-to-day routines. At these moments, our family

Ask the cl
works esp

End Preview Material

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our routines. What