



NATIONAL CENTER ON

Early Childhood Health and Wellness



Reducing Stress

Stress is part of life. However, stressful experiences can take a toll on the health and well-being of caregivers and on the children they care for. When caregivers are stressed, they are less likely to offer the praise, nurturance, and structure young children need.

Although the stressors of life can never be removed, caregivers can adopt practices that reduce the effects of stress. When EHS/HS staff practice stress reduction tactics, they model appropriate coping behaviors for children, coworkers, and families.

Children also experience their own stress, either from everyday life or from traumatic experiences. Teaching children to deal with stress can significantly improve their behavioral, emotional, and physical health.

Stress Reduction Resources for EHS/HS Providers

[Taking Care of Ourselves: Stress and Relaxation](#)

Visit this page for a compilation of resources (workshop materials, promotional materials, relaxation exercises). Staff members of EHS/HS programs can use these for personal stress reduction or when educating families about ways to identify and handle stress appropriately.



[Understanding How Stress and Trauma Impacts Family Home Visitors \(webinar\)](#)

Learn about the secondary traumatic stress that may affect home visitors. Home visitors can discover strategies for preventing or reducing this type of stress so they can more effectively support families in crisis.

Helping Children and Families Cope with Stress

Some resources for providers that are also helpful for families are described in the prior section. Here are additional resources for families:

[Making Life Easier: Holidays - Strategies for Success](#)

Travel, shopping, loud music, bright lights, unfamiliar food, and busy schedules can turn typical routines upside down! The disruption to routine can be particularly difficult for children who depend on routine and predictability to engage in appropriate behavior. This tip sheet provides strategies to reduce stress during cultural holidays and enhance quality family time together.

[Making Life Easier: Running Errands](#)

Everyday errands can be stressful, especially when children are tired, traffic is bad and store lines are long. This resource offers tips for making routine errands more enjoyable, for caregiver and child.

[Helping Children Cope with Stress in Child Care](#)

This article from Extension Alliance for Better Childcare addresses the most common stressors for children in child care and provides coping strategies as well as stress reduction activities.

[Belly Breathe with Elmo](#)

This 2.5-minute interactive Sesame Street music video featuring Colbie Caillat, Common and Elmo teaches children how calming belly breathing can “chill your inner monster out.”

[What the Kids Say](#)

In this unscripted 3-minute video, young school age children explain how they feel when they're angry or frustrated, and how breathing and meditation helps them cope. This film is produced by Julie Bayer Salzman & Josh Salzman of Wavecrest Films.



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Contact Us: The National Center on Early Childhood Health and Wellness welcomes your feedback as well as your suggestions for topics for future resources!

Please forward your comments to: health@ecetta.info or call us at 888-227-5125.

School readiness begins with health!