

Suggested Presentation Timeline: Stress



This lesson outline is designed to be a teaching tool for early learning professionals who teach this information in a wide variety of settings. Therefore, please use the outline below as a guide and modify it as necessary to meet the needs of your audience and schedule.

Minutes 0 - 10 Welcome and Introductions

- Begin your presentation or workshop by creating a comfortable environment.
- Introduce yourself to your group / audience and orient them to the environment (restrooms, important announcements).

Minutes 10 - 40 Presentation of Topic

Provide your group with an overview of the topic you will be presenting. This brings all the participants together quickly as well as to engage the group in the learning. Here are some options for how to do this:

1. Tell a story that engages the audience.

Marisa is 3 years old and heading off to preschool for the first time. The first few days are hard; she cries and cries when her mother leaves her. She starts getting upset from the moment she wakes up and finds out it's a "school day." This kind of separation is understandably a form of stress. Should her mother keep her home, or continue to send her to school?

2. Provide a definition of the topic / terms that are being discussed.

Definition of Stress: The ability to cope with new and/or potentially threatening situations such as unfamiliar environment or physical danger, is essential for survival. This capacity is built into specific brain circuits and is influenced by experiences beginning early in life (Harvard University Center on the Developing Child, 2009).


3. Some educators find it helpful to begin with a general question. For example:

- When you think of the word stress, what ideas come to mind?
- What causes stress in parents? In children?

4. Provide an overview that introduces your audience to the research-based information about the topic.

Parents often believe that children are too young to experience stress, yet stress. Children can experience, feel, and react to stress and stressors on a daily basis. Researchers have found that excessive stress may affect young children's physical, emotional, cognitive and language development. The foundations for the stress response system develop during the first years of life (Gunnar, 2000).



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- Review the goals of what you intend to teach, describe what tools/resources they can expect to gain by attending the event, and present the Parenting Counts Program Curriculum.

Minutes 40 - 50 Applied Learning Activity

- Most audiences are ready for a change in activity after 20-30 minutes of lecture. Consider the composition of your group and decide what type of activity best meets their needs.
- Some educators choose to have participants work in pairs to maximize comfort with the topic, others opt for a group discussion to allow a variety of opinions to be heard and validated.
- Parenting Counts offers multiple video options that can be used during this time to encourage discussion or to continue the learning experience.

Minutes 50 - 60 Closure and Evaluation

- Closure: Be sure to recap the key messages of the presentation as well as provide tools that incorporate the learning into parenting practices.
- Evaluation: Please distribute an evaluation form as part of your presentation. It is important to give participants an opportunity to comment on the presentation as well as to provide you with an assessment of their learning.

