
Session Ten: Stress and Humor/Play; Specific Health/Special Needs

Session Ten Supply List

Basic Supplies:

Flip chart and markers
Parent Handbook

Equipment: None

Other: Snacks for children and adults

Activity	Time
10.1 Icebreaker: Well-being Check-In	5 Minutes
10.2 Check-In: Label-Listen-Honor the Desire, Calming	15 Minutes
10.3 Stress: Self and Children	40 Minutes
10.4 Humor and Play	10 Minutes
10.5 Specific Challenges	15 Minutes
10.6 Home Practice Assignment: Stress Reduction	5 Minutes
10.7 Program Family Time: Humor	30 Minutes
Home Family Time Assignment: Stress Buster Activity	

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Activity 10:1 **Icebreaker: Well-being**
Population: **Adults**
Time: **5 Minutes**
Construct: **Self-Awareness, Empathy**
Materials: **None**

Goal: To recognize and validate the level of well-being that each parent identifies going in to the session and provide empathic support.

Objectives:

1. To increase parent awareness of their well-being.
2. To validate the level of well-being and vitality each individual has identified.
3. To provide opportunity for empathic responses from group members toward parents who have identified the need for support.

Before the Session Begins

Before the participants arrive, write the Icebreaker on the flip chart to serve as a visual reference point.

On a scale of 1 to 5, I give myself a _____ this week in the area of well-being.

Procedures:

1. Ask participants to sit in a circle (prior to group members arriving chairs should be placed in a large circle with no obstacles in the center.) Welcome parents to the group and review the agenda for the session. Explain that each of the next sessions will begin with an identical Icebreaker. Explain that the parents are to identify their level of well-being and vitality. Well-being means how you are personally handling and coping with the challenges of family life. They are to rate themselves on a scale of one (1) to five (5). One (1) being low and five (5) being high.
2. Ask the parents to respond to the following statement:

On a scale of 1 to 5, I give myself a _____ this week in the area of well-being.

3. Ask parents to note which group members are feeling a bit depleted in the area of well-being (rate themselves a 1 or 2) and which parents rated themselves on the higher end (4 or 5). As a group we can share and balance our vitality by supporting others when they are depleted and we have energy to spare.
4. Ask in general for those who are feeling depleted: *“Is there anything that the group could do to be helpful?”*
5. Remind the group that the Nurturing Program is designed to help them process challenges and learn coping skills that can help them when times get tough.

Notes and Suggestions:

There are no notes and suggestions for this activity.

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Activity 10:2 **Home Practice Check-in**
Population: **Adult**
Time: **15 Minutes**
Construct: **Self-Awareness, Empathy**
Materials: **Parent Handbook**

Goal: To provide parents with the opportunity to discuss the home practice assignment from last session and to enhance understanding of concepts and skills.

Objective:

1. To practice the label, listen, honor-the-desire technique
2. To enhance ability to self-regulate when stressed
3. To create opportunities for communication with typically developing siblings

Procedures:

1. Review with parents the philosophy of the Home Practice Assignment: ***practice skills, try your best, and share your experiences with the group.***
2. Ask parents to turn to the **Home Practice Assignment** for **Session nine** in their **Parent Handbook**. Facilitate a discussion based on their responses to the Home Practice Assignment:
 - a. Use the label, listen, honor-the-desire technique one time. What was the situation? How did it go?
 - b. Talk to your typically developing children to determine any concerns they may have. What did you find out?
 - c. Use a calming technique when you are feeling stressed, and model it for your children. What was the situation and what did you do to calm yourself?
3. Ask parents how the **Family Home Time Assignment** went.
 - a. Consider the “social” environment of your child with health challenges or special needs. Attempt to include your child in a social experience with other children. Guide the children in how to interact, and/or answer questions that come up.
 - b. Spend individual time with each of your children. Keep it simple – take a walk, read a book, go out for ice-cream etc.
 - c. As a family, take time to play with bubbles. For example - blow bubbles with a bubble wand, color bubbles with food coloring and make bubble pictures, fill a tub with warm water and bubbles, come up with your own creative ideas.
4. Collect the family log and pass out the logs for next week.

Notes and Suggestions:

There are no notes and suggestions for this activity.

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Activity 10.3 **Stress**
Population: **Adult**
Time: **40 Minutes**
Construct: **Self-Awareness**
Materials: **Flip chart, markers, Parent Handbook**

Goal: To gain awareness of how stress impacts physical health and mental well being and to identify ways to enhance coping in adults and children.

Objectives:

1. To understand what stress is – physical impact.
2. To recognize personal reactions to stressful situations.
3. To recognize the impact that negative stress has on health.
4. To recognize stress reactions in children.
5. To identify stress reducers for adults and children.

Procedures:

1. Ask parents to think about what **STRESS** means to them and ask them to respond to the following statement:

When I am feeling stressed, it shows up as _____ (name sensation) in my _____ (name part of body).

One thing that is creating stress for me in my life is _____.

(Example: When I am feeling stressed, it shows up as tightness in my shoulders and neck. One thing that is creating stress for me in my life is finances)
2. Ask parents to call out the words that come to mind when they think of stress. Validate the thoughts of the parents and explain that:

STRESS is... A physical reaction based on our primitive response of fight or flight.

A physiological response to change in our lives (often related to a sense of loss of control).

A normal part of everyday life.
3. Ask parents if some people (adults and children) are more prone to stress than others? Validate the thoughts of parents and explain:
 - a. All people experience some stress in their lives.
 - b. Stress can be positive – for example feeling anxious about a blind date or having a deadline at work that forces you to use your time efficiently.
 - c. Stress can be negative – for example waiting for lab test results or financial strain from medical bills.