

Lesson 1: Introduction to Stress

Today was our first session focusing on positive ways to express feelings and develop habits to cope with stress using “The Relaxation and Stress Reduction Workbook for Kids: Help for Children to Cope with Stress, Anxiety and Transitions” by Lawrence Shapiro, PhD and Robin K. Sprague, LCPC. We began by learning what stress is. We watched the video [Kids and Stress - Kids News Break](#). We learned that stress releases chemicals in our body that give us a quick boost of energy. However, if this happens in excess, it can impact our health.

We also discussed the difference between big and little stressors. For example, the stress we experience when our parents are fighting may be more than when we have a challenging homework assignment. Your [Choose an item](#). discussed different situations that cause them stress.

Recognizing the clues our body gives us when we experience stress can help us be proactive in addressing it. Some physical symptoms of stress include: stomach aches, headaches, asthma, rashes, sweaty palms, dry mouth, and bowel concerns. Your [Choose an item](#). identified their own physical symptoms associated with stress.

It is also important for us to realize that some of the things we really enjoy can increase or stress. For example, listening to loud music, watching too much TV, or laying around on the couch all day may be enjoyable, but actually increase our stress.

Some healthy lifestyle choices to reduce stress could include:

- eat lots of fruits and vegetables, not too much sugar
- good night’s sleep (8-9 hours)
- exercise every day (at least 1 hour)
- Limit time watching TV or playing video games (only 2 hours)

We used the last of our time together to create a healthy lifestyle plan. Your [Choose an item](#). identified areas they can control related to exercise, sleep, nutrition, and screen time.

This week, talk with your [Choose an item](#). about things that cause them stress and where they feel it in their body. Explore healthy habits your family could increase to help reduce overall stress and encourage your child to share their own healthy lifestyle plan.

In our next session we will focus on feelings, self-talk, and belly breathing.

ATTACHMENT:

Lesson 2:

Today was our second session focusing on positive ways to express feelings and develop habits to cope with stress using “The Relaxation and Stress Reduction Workbook for Kids: Help for Children to Cope with Stress, Anxiety and Transitions” by Lawrence Shapiro, PhD and Robin K. Sprague, LCPC.

We learned that stress can get in the way and cause us to focus on negative feelings. With our focus on negative feelings, it is difficult to see the positive. Talking about our feelings with others is a healthy way to combat stress.

We practiced talking about feelings by playing a game (Fishing for Feelings). It was very similar to the game Go Fish. After each match, we engaged in discussion from the card focusing on different feelings and times we have experienced them.

We also discussed how self-talk can help reduce stress. Just like someone else may give us a pep talk to keep going and to overcome challenges, we can also use positive self-talk to encourage ourselves. We practiced challenging difficult