



THE WEEKLY MEMO

2021-2022, Issue #20 - January 23, 2022- Editor: Ashley Clayton

Mission Statement

Southern Oregon Head Start prepares all children and their families for success in school and throughout life.

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Stress Management and Wellness

Head Start Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center has a newsletter to offer resources for stress management.



Meetings and Trainings

January 24—Monday

- 9:00-10:00 PFCE Weekly Team Mtg, TEAMS
- 10:00-11:30 ED Department Mtg, TEAMS

January 25—Tuesday

- 9:00-11:00 Directors' Mtg, Blue Conf. Rm
- 1:00-2:30 Management Team Mtg, TEAMS

January 26—Wednesday

- 10:30-11:30 Health Mtg, Blue Conf. Rm
- 1:00-2:00 Onboarding Updates Mtg, TEAMS

January 27—Thursday

- 9:00-10:00 PFCE Weekly Team Mtg, TEAMS

January 28—Friday

- 8:00-10:00 Education Planning
- 9:00-11:30 FS Meeting, Foothills
- 10:00-11:30 Education TLC
- 1:00-3:00 Jackson & JoCo Safety Committee Mtg, TEAMS

January 31—Monday

- 9:00-10:00 PFCE Weekly Team Mtg, TEAMS
- 10:00-11:30 ED Department Mtg, TEAMS

February 1—Tuesday

- 9:00-11:00 Directors' Mtg, Blue Conf. Rm
- 1:30-2:30 PC Executive Cmte. Mtg, TEAMS

February 2—Wednesday

- 10:30-11:30 Health Mtg, Blue Conf. Rm
- 11:00-12:30 Department Directors' Mtg, Blue Conf. Rm

- 1:00-2:00 Onboarding Updates Mtg, TEAMS

- 3:00-4:30 Head Teacher Cohort, VIRTUAL

February 3—Thursday

- 9:00-10:00 PFCE Weekly Team Mtg, TEAMS

February 4—Friday

- 8:00-10:00 Education Planning
- 10:00-11:30 Center Meetings
- 10:00-11:30 Center Meetings

Visit our Facebook page, and give us a like.





Health Services Newsletter

Staff Wellness— Managing Stress

Working in a Head Start program can be an extremely rewarding and demanding career. It is inevitable to feel stress in the workplace and some stress is natural and even healthy. Good stress helps to focus on a task or perform at a higher level. Unfortunately, negative or chronic stress can take a toll on your health and effectiveness as a Head Start team member. Caregivers who are stressed find it more difficult to offer praise, nurturance, and the structure young children need. This can lead to children exhibiting even more challenging behaviors. Harmful levels of stress can create a negative impact on the body.

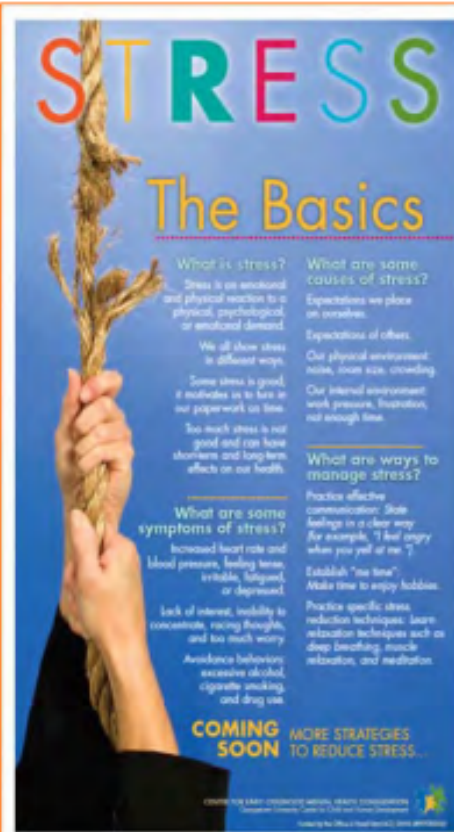
What are some signs and symptoms of stress?

- Increased heart rate
- Increased blood pressure
- Fatigue
- Depression
- Inability to concentrate
- Feeling tense or irritable
- Frequent illness
- Headaches
- Nausea/dizziness
- Increased/decreased appetite
- Difficulty sleeping

To manage stress, it is helpful to recognize your stressors and how to minimize any negative effects. When you are stressed, it is easy to react before even realizing you have reached your tipping point.

- Try to answer the following questions:
- What causes me stress?
- How do I know when I am stressed?
- What do I do when I'm stressed?
- How do I relieve my stress?

Stress doesn't just effect you; it also impacts your relationships with children in your care and with coworkers.



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MANAGING YOUR STRESS



FOR YOUR FAMILY NEWSLETTER

YOU CAN TAILOR THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE TO INCLUDE IN YOUR FAMILY NEWSLETTER:

We all experience stress in our daily lives. Sometimes stress can be harmful and make everyday things feel overwhelming. Our children are even affected by how much stress we are under as parents. It can cause them to act out, have trouble sleeping or concentrating— all things important to how well they learn at Head Start. If you feel overwhelmed, talk to our health manager (or family service worker) to help you create a plan to manage your stress. They can also offer techniques for you and your child to cope with stress at home.

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Now, that you know what causes you stress, it is important to learn how to deal it. Below are some stress management techniques you might consider adding into your daily life, at home and the office. Many techniques build our ability to cope with stress over time. Other techniques offer “in the moment” coping strategies for when we feel overwhelmed. It is helpful to practice both types of strategies for when stressful moments occur.

- **Be active:** Being physical active reduces our body’s immediate reaction to stress and builds our ability to cope with future stress. Find an activity you enjoy and try to dedicate time each day or even each week to being active.
- **Eat healthy:** Drinking plenty of water and choosing healthy foods such as fruits and vegetables can help you stay healthy and fight the physical symptoms of stress.
- **Get enough sleep:** Sleep is the time our body uses to relax and repair the damage stress can create. Try to find a regular time for bed that allows 7-8 hours of sleep a night.
- **Breathe:** Belly breathing or deep breathing exercises are a proven way to reduce stress. Find proper techniques at www.echmc.org.
- **Visualize:** Visual imagery is a proven way to help reduce stress. It helps you to relax by focusing on a place or image that brings you comfort. It also allows you to slow down and breathe. Sometimes it’s helpful to participate in a “guided” visual imagery tour. Find more information including a guided visual imagery video on www.echmc.org.
- **Me time:** Find time for yourself each day to relax and take a few deep breaths, even if it is only a short time.
- **Giving yourself a time out:** If you find yourself becoming overwhelmed by a stressful situation, take a moment to leave your environment and take a walk, calm down, and then return to address the issue. This is a great opportunity for staff to support each other and provide backup when a colleague needs a break.
- **Keep a stress log:** Recording your reactions to stressful situations is the best way to determine how to best help yourself. It also allows you to see a bigger picture about what is going on in your life and how you manage.

Learning to manage stress in a healthy way may not come naturally. When starting any new behavior, it is important to develop a strategy for using it ahead of time. Think about one thing that causes you stress and one sign that you can recognize as being stressed. Then identify a technique you will use for dealing with your stress in a healthy way. Keep this plan handy at work and home as a reminder. This will increase the chances of the new behavior being successful.

Legs Up a Wall

Operation Breakthrough, Kansas City MO. This trauma focused Head Start program utilizes a common yoga pose to provide staff with a stress relieving exercise that can easily be fit into the program day.

“The restorative yoga pose, **Legs Up a Wall** has become a frequent practice in our Clinical hallway. After learning and experiencing the immediate impact of this simple stress reducer; therapists can be found in a play room with their legs up a wall following an emotionally demanding session with a client, before meeting with a frustrated parent or after being called into a crisis. It was valuable for these skills to be taught to the whole team at the same time; everyone comprehends its’ usefulness. I have found by giving clinicians permission to engage in self-care strategies “on the clock” they have increased self-awareness; moving from knowing they are stressed to doing something about it, which makes for a more productive and energized employee. Additionally, therapists have translated this self-care skill into a hands-on transition activity that helps children calm down for nap in the classroom.” - Brijin Gardner



SUPPORT OTHER TEAM MEMBERS

Health Managers can be a great resource to start staff wellness or stress management activities into their program. It is important to get “buy-in” from all staff, especially your Program Director, but you have the skills and knowledge to help others understand the importance of stress management and implement strategies for managing stress as a program.

- Offer a stress reduction workshop. Find resources, including posters, and PowerPoints at [Center for Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation](#).
- Organize regularly exercise breaks for staff including walking meetings.
- Create a comfortable space for staff breaks.
- Schedule time when staff are available to offer breaks to others.
- Put resources or posters of stretches, breathing exercises, or other stress management techniques in the break room.
- Use stress management techniques before staff meetings or before children arrive/leave for the day.





NATIONAL CENTER ON
Early Childhood Health and Wellness



Wellness: Tools for Promoting Healthy Living

Wellness is an active process that requires awareness and directed, thoughtful attention to daily choices. Early learning programs play a critical role in helping children, families and staff implement healthy lifestyle changes that promote both physical and mental well-being. The two, in fact, are closely linked. Feelings, thoughts and behaviors directly affect health. Similarly, health has a direct effect on feelings, thoughts and behaviors. The following tools to help create a culture of wellness for young children and the adults who care for them.

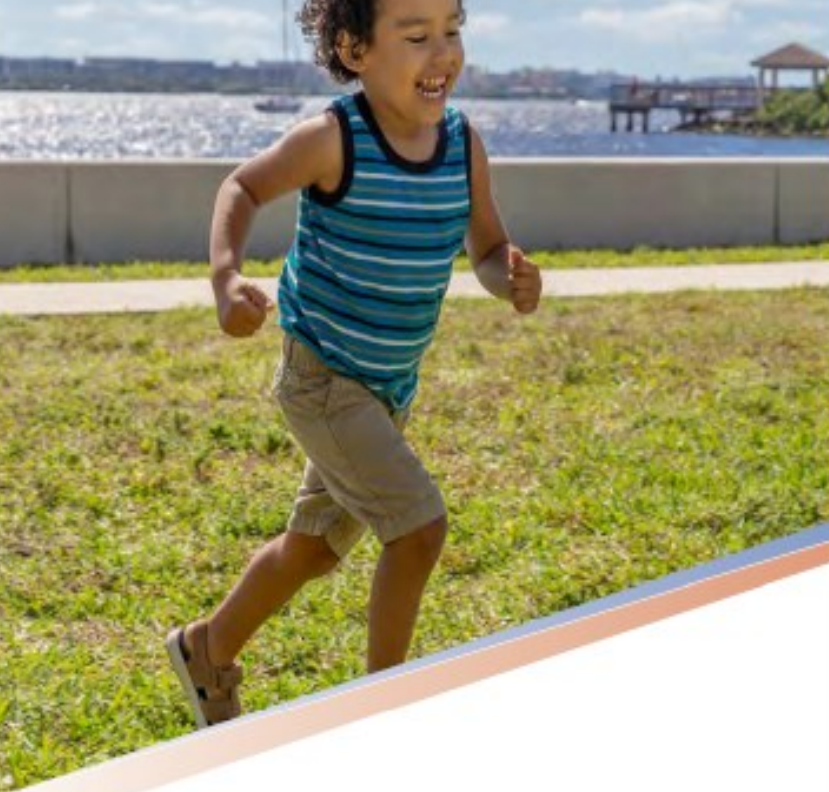
For Practitioners

These resources are developed for staff and consultants working in early childhood settings. Some resources may also be useful to families.

Healthy Active Living

This web page compiles several resources that early childhood educators and staff can use when planning activities or when talking with families about healthy choices. Included are worksheets, posters, flipcharts, and fact sheets.

[Wellness: Tools for Promoting Healthy Living \(hhs.gov\)](https://www.hhs.gov)



Refer to the Reducing Stress and Promoting Resilience handouts for more wellness resources.

[I Am Moving, I am Learning, Interactive Tool \[English only\]](#)

The *I Am Moving, I Am Learning* tool is filled with quick and easy ideas for integrating movement, nutrition, and healthy habits into everyday life. It may be useful to home visitors, classroom teachers, and other caregivers.

[Let's Go! Child Care Toolkit](#)

Let's Go! is working in schools, child care centers, after school programs, workplaces, and health care practices to ensure that healthy choices are the easiest choices. This toolkit provides resources for implementing a comprehensive program that encourages healthy eating, physical activity, screen time limits, staff wellness, breastfeeding, parent engagement, and other aspects of wellness.

[Little Voices for Healthy Choices](#)

The Little Voices for Healthy Choices is a national initiative for Early Head Start and Migrant and Seasonal Head Start programs. It was developed to promote wellness in infants, toddlers, and expectant families. The initiative includes training and resources with strategies designed to address healthy nutrition, physical activity, brain development, and sleep for children birth to 3, their families, and communities.

[Embracing Health and Wellness](#)

Learn about current research topics, best practices, and safety tips for Head Start and child care programs. Discover tips for supporting staff and engaging families on a variety of wellness topics.

[Program Approaches for Staff Wellness](#)

Turnover in staff can be costly for programs and difficult for children. In this video, learn key factors that can help your program create an effective approach to supporting staff health and wellness.

For Families

[A Healthy Baby Begins with You \[.gov link – English only\]](#)

An infant's survival and long-term health is influenced by many factors, including the mother's age, health status and behavior during and after pregnancy. This brochure provides practical tips for a healthy start for mothers and babies.

[Health Tips for Families](#)

These tip sheets help Head Start health managers provide important information to families. Available in 13 languages, tips are provided on active play, health literacy, healthy breathing, healthy eating, mental health, oral health, and safety and injury prevention.

[Wellness: Tools for Promoting Healthy Living \(hhs.gov\)](#)



Growing Healthy Family Postcard

The message featured in this postcard provides suggestions for building healthy, active lives for everyone in the family. Staff can share this resource with parents to put on the refrigerator as a reminder to make healthy choices every day. [English and Spanish]

Growing Healthy Family Goals Worksheet [English only]

Most parents know the benefit of teaching their children to eat healthy foods and encouraging them to exercise. However, that can be hard to do, especially when it feels like everything about your current lifestyle needs to change. Early learning program staff may use this worksheet with families to help them start behaviors that will improve the health and wellness of everyone at home. The 5-2-1-0 message provides suggestions for building healthy, active lives for everyone in the family.

Cues to Increase Positive Social-Emotional Interactions [English and Spanish]

These tip sheets are designed to help support family mental wellness by encouraging routines-based positive social emotional interactions.

GROWING HEALTHY
There are lots of ways to grow healthy but you don't have to do them all at once.

Child's Name _____ Date _____

IDEAS FOR LIVING A HEALTHY ACTIVE LIFE

- 5 Eat at least 5 fruits and vegetables a day.
- 2 Keep screen time (like TV, video games, computer) down to 2 hours or less per day.
- 1 Get 1 hour or more of physical activity every day.
- 0 Drink 0 sugar-sweetened drinks. Replace soda pop, sports drinks and even 100% fruit juice with milk or water.

OUR GOAL FOR THIS MONTH IS TO:
Need help getting started? Turn this card over for more healthy ideas.

- 5 Eat _____ fruits and vegetables a day.
- 2 Limit screen time to _____ minutes a day.
- 1 Get _____ minutes of physical activity a day.
- 0 Limit sugary drinks to _____ a day.

Our plan: _____

Parent's Name _____ Child's Name _____

NATIONAL CENTER ON
Early Childhood Health and Wellness
1-888-227-5125
www.ncech.org

Adapted from the
American Academy of Pediatrics
Initiative for Healthy Childhood Weight

[Wellness: Tools for Promoting Healthy Living \(hhs.gov\)](https://www.hhs.gov)