

Curriculum Framework on Parent Education (Kindergarten)

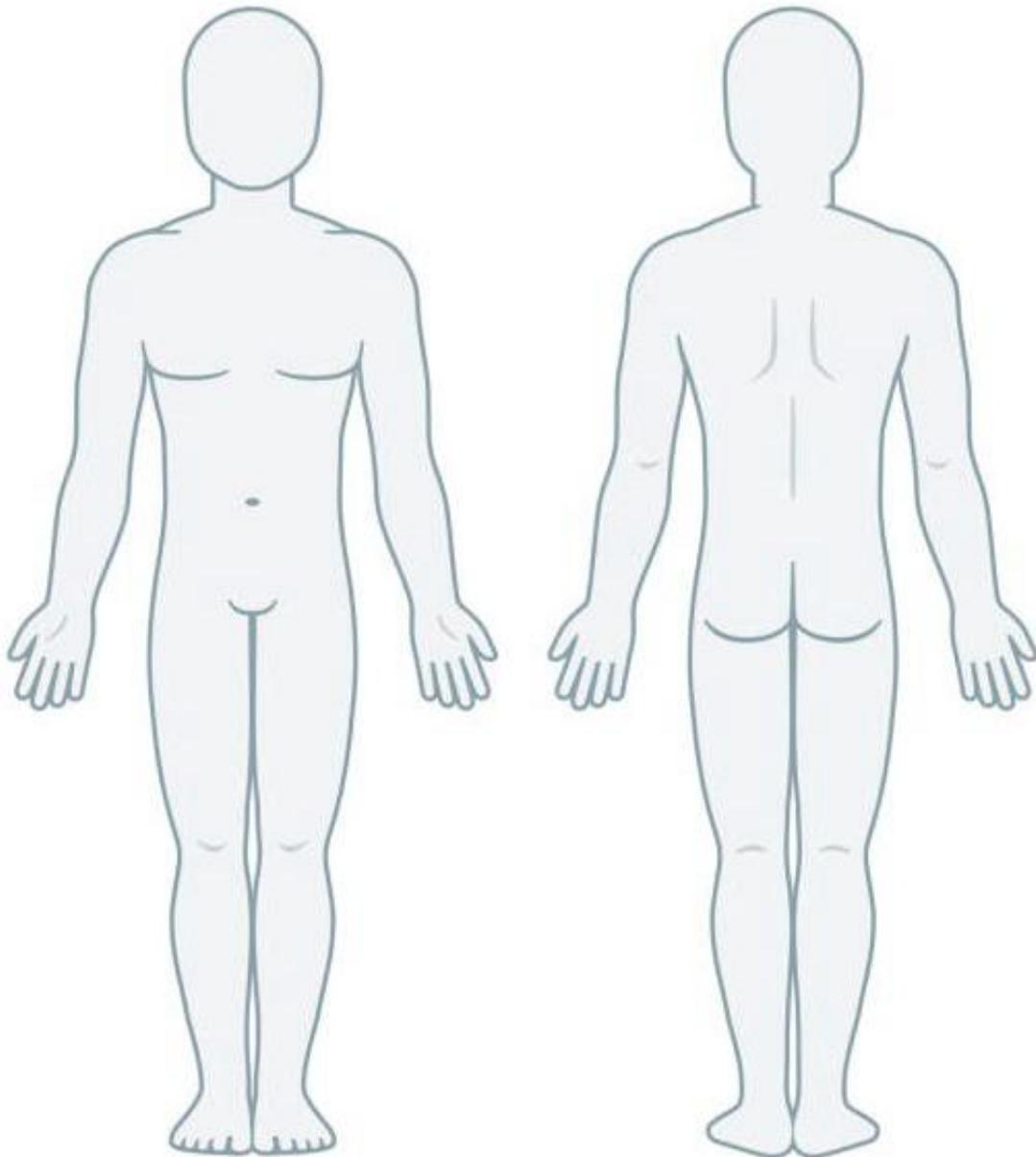
Mind-body Connection

Notes for Parents

(To be distributed to participants at the beginning of the session)

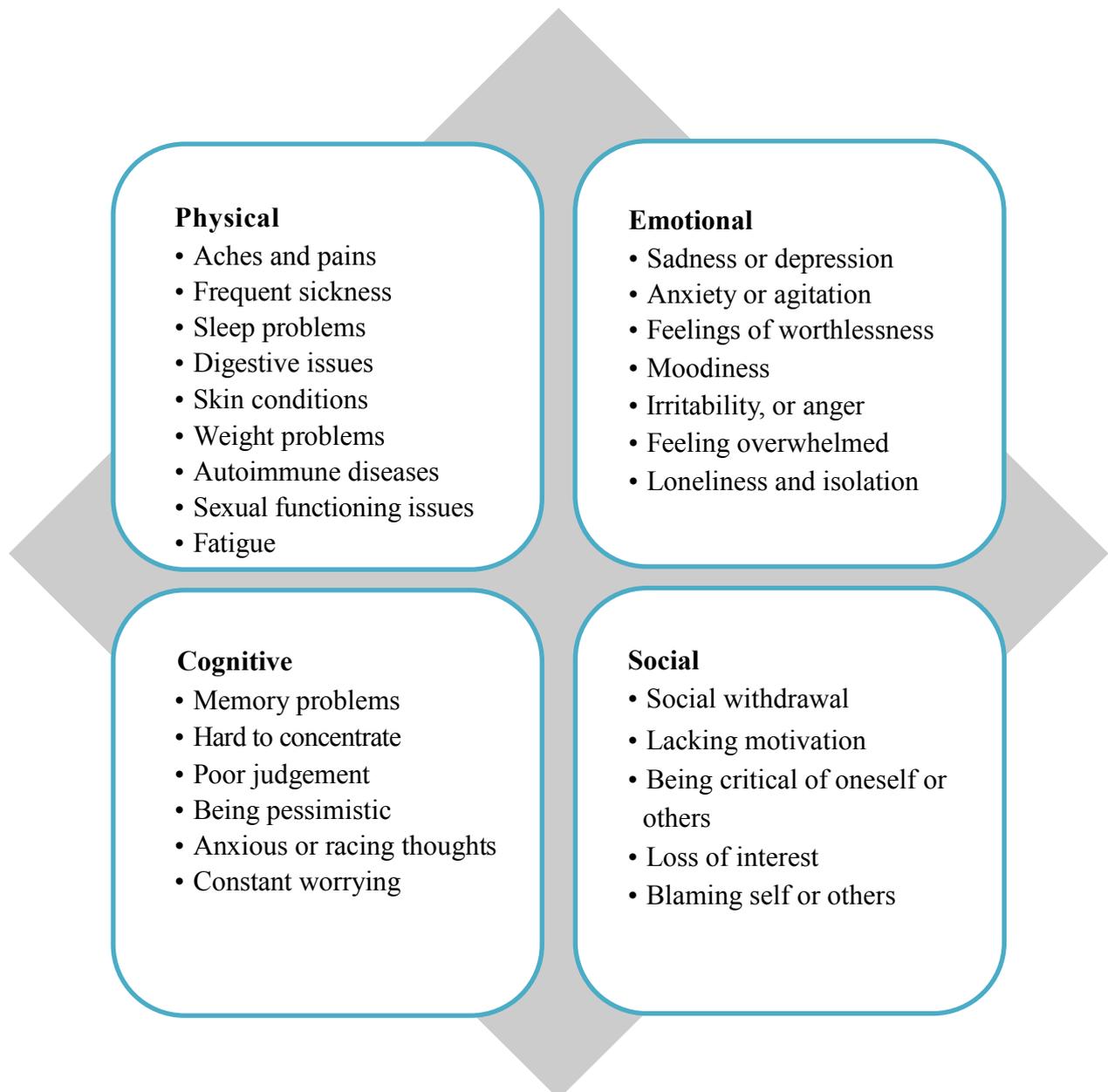
Exercise 1: My Body

Please put a 'X' to the body parts where you have been feeling painful or discomfort over the past two weeks.



Points to Learn: Symptoms of Stress

Stress is a natural physical and psychological reaction to changes in the environment, and it triggers the body's fight-or-flight response in order to deal with the stressor. The body reacts to these changes with physical, mental and emotional responses¹. Stress can affect all parts of an individual's life, including physical health, emotions, and thinking ability. Nevertheless, symptoms of stress will vary depending on the ways people manage their stress. Below is a list of symptoms of stress:



¹ Casarella, J. (2019). The Effects of Stress on Your Body. Retrieved from <https://www.webmd.com/balance/stress-management/effects-of-stress-on-your-body>

Exercise 2: Progressive Relaxation Exercise

This technique involves progressive tightening and relaxing of different muscle groups in the body. In the process, awareness of both body and physical sensations is being enhanced. When muscles are relaxed, the mind will relax. When practising progressive relaxation, people can use about 80% of the strength to tighten the specific group of muscles, feel the tension, then slowly release the tension, and shift the focus to feeling the relaxation. Finally, people can experience the difference between muscle tension and relaxation. Progressive relaxation techniques have many benefits, including but are not limited to improved sleep, reduced anxiety, decreased blood pressure, lowered stress level and alleviated low mood.

Instruction (Benson, 1976)

1. Sit or lay down in a comfortable position. Keep quiet.
2. Close your eyes.
3. Relax all your muscles, beginning at your feet and progressing up to your face. Keep each muscle relaxed.
4. Breathe naturally through your nose, becoming mindful of each breath as you do.
5. While inhaling, contract one muscle group (for example your upper thighs) for 5 seconds to 10 seconds, then exhale and suddenly release the tension in that muscle group.
6. Give yourself 10 to 20 seconds to relax, and then move on to the next muscle group (for example your buttocks).
7. While releasing the tension, try to focus on the changes you feel when the muscle group is relaxed. Imagery may be helpful in conjunction with the release of tension, such as imagining that stressful feelings are flowing out of your body as you relax each muscle group.
8. Continue this process for 10 to 20 minutes, keeping your eyes gently closed.
9. Gradually work your way up the body contracting and relaxing muscle groups.
10. When you finish, sit quietly for several minutes.

Source: Benson, H. (1976). The relaxation response. New York: William Morrow & Co, Inc.

Points to Learn: Dialogue with the Body

This is a communication process to bridge the chasm between mind and body. Listening to and appreciating the body's signals is essential in having supporting a healthy relationship with our bodies.

Body Parts/Problems	Self-affirmative Messages
Ankle	I move forward easily in life.
Anxiety	I love and approve of myself, and I trust the process of life. I am safe.
Back Problems - Lower	I trust the process of life. All I need is always taken care of. I am safe.
Back Problems - Middle	I release the past. I am free to move forward with love in my heart.
Back Problems - Upper	I love and approve of myself. Life supports and loves me.
Backs	I know that life always supports me.
Brain	I am the loving operator of my life.
Cramps	I relax and allow my mind to be peaceful.
Diarrhea	My intake and digestion are in perfect order. I am at peace with life.
Elbow	I easily flow with new experiences, new directions and new changes.
Face (Acne)	I love and accept myself where I am right now. I am wonderful.
Glands	I am the creative power in my world.
Heart Problems	Joy. Joy. Joy. I lovingly allow joy to flow through my mind and body and experience.
Indigestion	I digest and assimilate all new experiences peacefully and joyously.
Knee Problems	Forgiveness. Understanding. Compassion. I bend and flow with ease, and all is well.
Leg Problems - Lower	I move forward with confidence and joy knowing that all is well in my future.
Leg Problems - Upper	They were doing the best they could with the understanding, awareness and knowledge they had. I set them free.
Legs	Life is for me.
Migraine Headaches	I relax to the flow of life and let life provide all I need easily and comfortably. Life is for me.
Neck	I am peaceful with life.
Neck Problems	It is with flexibility and ease that I see all sides of an issue. There are endless ways of doing things and seeing things. I am safe.
Nervousness	I am on an endless journey through eternity, and there is plenty of time. I communicate with my heart. All is well.
Pain	I lovingly release the past. They are free, and I am free. All is well in my heart now.
Shoulders	I am free to be joyous.
Stomach Problems	Life agrees with me. I assimilate the new every moment of every day. All is well.
Toe	All details take care of themselves.
Whole Body	I am healthy, whole and complete.
Wrist	I handle all my experiences with wisdom, with love, and with ease.

Exercise 3: Situating Body Signals

Social Readjustment Rating Scale

Each life event is assigned a value in arbitrary “life changing units” chosen to reflect the relative amount of stress the event causes in the population studied. Stress is cumulative, so to estimate the total stress you are experiencing, add up the values corresponding to the events that have occurred in your life over the past year.

<u>Life Event</u>	<u>Unit</u>	<u>Life Event</u>	<u>Unit</u>
1. Death of spouse	100	22. Change of responsibilities at work	29
2. Divorce	73	23. Son or daughter leaving home	29
3. Marital separation	65	24. Trouble with in-laws	29
4. Jail term	63	25. Outstanding personal achievement	28
5. Death of close family member	63	26. Spouse begins or stops work	26
6. Personal injury or illness	53	27. Begin or end school	26
7. Marriage	50	28. Change in living conditions	25
8. Fired at work	47	29. Revision of personal habits	24
9. Marital reconciliation	45	30. Trouble with boss	23
10. Retirement	45	31. Change in work hours or conditions	20
11. Change in health of family member	44	32. Change in residence	20
12. Pregnancy	40	33. Change in schools	20
13. Sex difficulties	39	34. Change in recreation	19
14. Gain of new family member	39	35. Change in church activities	19
15. Business readjustment	39	36. Change in social activities	19
16. Change of financial state	38	37. A moderate mortgage or loan	17
17. Death of close friend	37	38. Change in sleeping habits	16
18. Change to a different line of work	36	39. Change in number of family get-togethers	15
19. Change in number of arguments with spouse	35	40. Change in eating habits	15
20. A large mortgage or loan	31	41. Single person living alone	**
21. Foreclosure of mortgage or loan	30	42. Others (Please specify)	**

** Estimate the impact on yourself

(Holmes & Rahe, 1967)

Total no. of units:

Exercise 4: Breathing Exercise

This is the most basic and easy way to handle stress which can be done anywhere. Breathing exercises do not have to take a lot of time out of the day. It is just about setting aside some time to pay attention to your breathing.

Parents can do it while waiting for the children outside the kindergarten, walking along the street, or sitting in a chair while they are taking on buses.

Instructions (NHS, 2018):

1. Let your breath flow as deep down into your belly as is comfortable, without forcing it.
2. Try breathing in through your nose and out through your mouth.
3. Breathe in gently and regularly. Some people find it helpful to count steadily from 1 to 5. You may not be able to reach 5 at first.
4. Then, without pausing or holding your breath, let it flow out gently, counting from 1 to 5 again, if you find this helpful.
5. Keep doing this for 3 to 5 minutes.

Source: National Health Service. (2018). *Breathing exercises for stress*. Retrieved from <https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/self-help/guides-tools-and-activities/breathing-exercises-for-stress>

Exercise 5: Self-care Plan

My signs of burnout

New practice of stress-relieving

Resources that I can reach out for support

Helpful reminders

Points to Learn: Tips for Lifestyle and Self-care Management

Parents are encouraged to take care of themselves in addition to performing household and childcaring responsibilities. When parents neglect to take care of themselves, they put stress on their mind and body. It is important that parents pay attention and take care of themselves. Practising self-care is an important step to becoming a better parent.

Physical Self-Care

- Taking care of your body
- Incorporating physical movement into daily life
- Eating a well-balanced diet
- Getting enough and quality sleep

Psychological Self-Care

- Accepting own feelings
- Setting healthy boundaries with children
- Journaling and expressive writing
- Reading
- Reflecting

Social Self-Care

- Having meaningful connection with other people
- Keeping contact and interactions with family and friends
- Engaging into social activities
- Participating into altruistic acts such as volunteering

Lifestyle Self-Care

- Engaging into physical activities on a regular basis
- Arranging and taking a break on a regular basis
- Setting personal goals on personal life management
- Doing relaxation exercise
- Taking vacations away from home and work

Creative Self-Care

- Engaging in pleasurable or fun activities
- Developing hobbies such as painting, pottery, writing, music, cooking, and/or gardening

Spiritual Self-Care

- Practising gratitude
- Practising meditation
- Praying
- Reading religious texts
- Spending time in nature
- Revisiting meaning of life