



SESSION 2: KNOW THE SIGNS

The purpose of this group is to learn more about how youth, families, and your community are impacted by trauma and violence and what you can do to help. Each week we will review a new topic or theme. Our sessions will begin with a brief check-in and video about the session. We will then have a discussion and activity connected to the theme for the week. There will also be some activities that you can work on at home to practice the skills learned in the session or to prepare for the following week's topic.

There are a few important rules and reminders for the group! Important things to remember are that no one has to share if they do not want to, be generous to others in the group and active listeners, do not share information heard here with others outside of the group, and that group facilitators are mandated reporters.

Today's session *Know the Signs* is about recognizing when and how caregivers and children notice and communicate that they are stressed, having a hard time, or feeling overwhelmed by current circumstances or memories of painful events.

Exposure to stressful and traumatic events can lead to a range of social, emotional, behavioral, and cognitive problems. Learning these signs will help you know when your child is struggling. During this session, we discuss how everyday stress, intense stress, and traumatic stress all deplete our resources and have an impact on our well-being. We all experience stress at some point and during stressful times our ability to handle common problems are limited. This session also explores the difference between stress, adversity, and trauma.



Each week you will be encouraged to take time to reflect on what has been discussed in the group and examine how it relates to your current situation or experiences. Important things to consider include what are some of the signs that help you know when you or your child may be struggling or having a hard time dealing with a stressful situation and how do you usually respond?

Resiliency, or the ability to adapt or overcome difficult situations, is really important in helping us manage experiences in our daily lives that may be challenging. What are some things that help you to be resilient even during stressful times?

At-Home Activity

- Watch the "Still Face Experiment" video by Dr. Edward Tronick. To watch the video, click on the following link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=apzXGEbZht0&t=2s>
- Have a conversation with your child(ren) about how you can best support them during stressful or challenging situations.
- Upcoming session: *A Sense of Trust- Developing safe, stable, and nurturing relationships between children and their parents, caregivers, and caring adults*

BEST PRACTICE 1: KNOW THE SIGNS

Identifying, helping, and supporting survivors of community violence.

Youth Action Statement

Recognize when there is a problem...seek support.

Caregiver Action Statement

You are the expert on your child –recognize changes in behavior, identify possible causes, and seek support.

Children living in areas where there are high levels of violence exposure may often feel that they are caught in a cycle of violence. Early exposure to an array of traumatic events such as shootings, gang activity, and death can lead to a range of social, emotional, behavioral, physiological, and cognitive problems. It is important that caregivers are able to identify the signs that youth are struggling with trauma and the best ways that they can provide support.

Everyday stress, intense stress, and traumatic stress all deplete our resources and can have an impact on our well-being. We all experience stress at some point and under times of stress our ability to handle common problems may be limited. We define *stress* as the physiological response that we experience in response to typical changes in life including developmental transitions and other changes. *Adversity* is a little different and describes the unpredictable changes we experience that are magnified by lack of resources or supports. Last, the word *trauma* is used to describe witnessing or directly experiencing an event that is overwhelming to your mind and body.

What are some of the signs to watch for if you think your child may be struggling?

