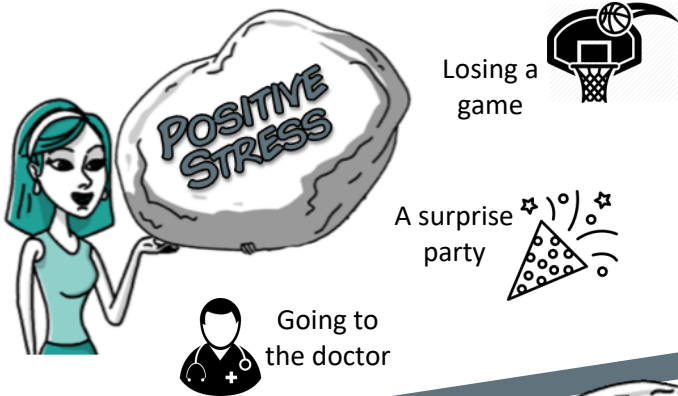


How can you help?

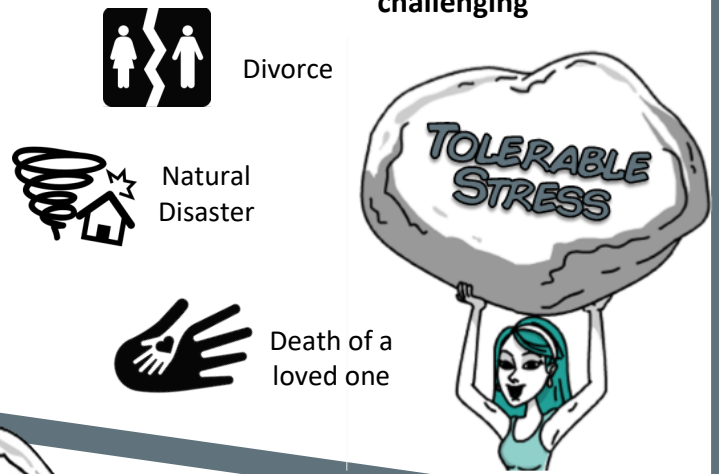
Stress and Childhood

It's not a secret that we live in a stressful world. Stress is often thought of as an adult issue but children are exposed to stress every day through school, home or social interactions. There are three types of stress that can make a difference in the impact on a child's brain and body: positive, tolerable and toxic stress. Potential effects of stress can last a lifetime for children, so it is important that families understand the difference between these types of stress.

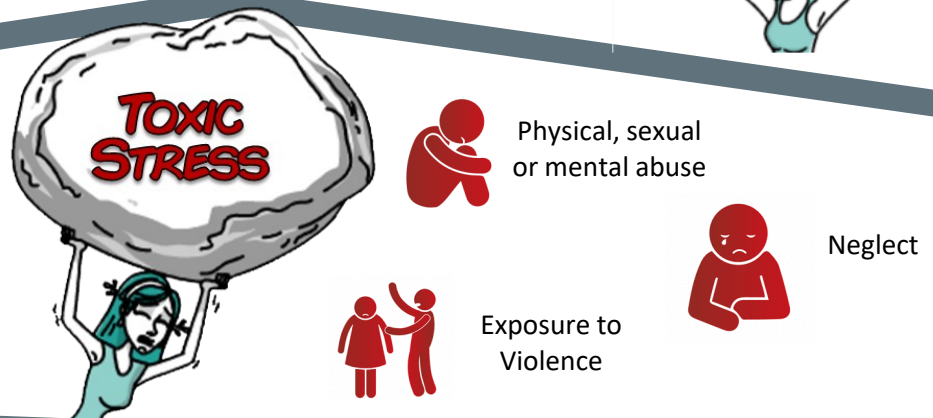
Normal everyday stress



More complicated and challenging



Severe, long-lasting and/or uncontrollable



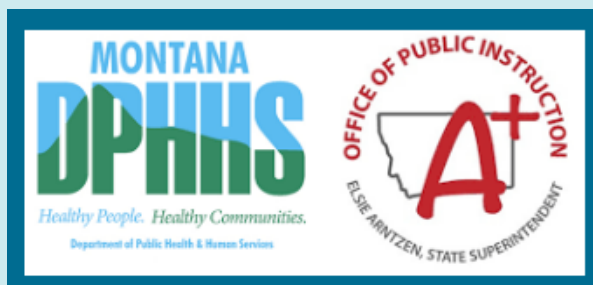
What are the signs your child is experiencing Toxic Stress?

Long-term stress response can disrupt a child's development both physically and mentally.

- Sleep Issues
- Frequent headaches or tummy aches
- Regressing to bed wetting or baby talk
- Crying more than usual
- Developing new fears
- Poor coping skills
- Behavior and learning difficulties
- Mood swings
- Overeating and other compulsive behaviors
- Fear and anxiety triggered by places or people that remind them of the past

Brandi Loch

CFSD Program Planning Supervisor
Child and Family Services Division
brandiloach@mt.gov
406.799.1823



Christy Hendricks

Foster Care Point of Contact
Montana Office of Public Instruction
christy.hendricks@mt.gov
406.444.0794

How do you prevent damage from toxic stress?

- Eliminate or reduce exposure to extremely stressful conditions, such as recurrent abuse, chronic neglect, caregiver mental illness or substance abuse, and/or violence.
- Provide supportive, responsive relationships with caring adults. Stable, loving relationships can buffer against harmful effects.
- Intervene with support, services and programs that address any severe and long-lasting stressors to address the source of the stress and lack of stabilizing relationships.

"Everybody wins if we prevent toxic stress in young children, and everybody loses if we don't."
~ Dr. Jack P. Shonkoff, Director of the Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University



Resources

Stress Health - www.stresshealth.org

A Guide to Toxic Stress

www.developingchild.harvard.edu/guide/a-guide-to-toxic-stress/

NAMI: What You Should Know about Toxic Stress

www.nami.org/Blogs/NAMI-Blog/August-2017/What-You-Should-Know-About-Toxic-Stress

Who can help?

- Trusted educators
- Doctors
- Friends
- Clergy
- Mental health professionals

"Every kid is one caring adult away from a success story." ~ Josh Shipp, author