Handling Stress (Bucket Exercise)

Give each parent a cup. Do the process of identifying ways they met their needs (6 SPICES) during the past week and pour water into their cups if they met each need.

Tell parents the group will use the water in the cups to demonstrate what life’s stresses and conflicts do to us. After each statement is read, if that statement applies, have parents pour water out of their cup into the bucket based on how they feel. Read the following statements to the group and have them pour out water when each statement applies to them.

• In the U.S., we consume 155 tons of pain reliever a day because of stress, conflicts, and illnesses. Pour water from your cup if you took a pain killer today. Pour out more water if you have taken several pain killers this past week.

• Stress-related illnesses fill doctors’ offices. Pour water from your cup if you have someone in your immediate family with an illness.

• Pour water from your cup if in the last week you were involved in a conflict with a family member.

• Pour water from your cup if you forgot to do something that was important to you or others.

• Pour water from your cup if someone took control of a situation and was totally unaware of your feelings and how it affected you.

• Pour water from your cup if you got irritated with a friend or family member.

• Pour water from your cup if one or more people created a difficult or stressful situation for you.

• Pour water from your cup if you felt under a great deal of pressure.

• Pour water from your cup if you were late getting somewhere this week.

• Pour water from your cup if you were not able to find your keys this week.

• Pour water from your cup if you haven’t had enough time for yourself.

• Pour water from your cup if you and not feeling well and don’t know why.

• Pour water from your cup if there is too much to do and not enough time.

• Pour water from your cup if you had said “yes” to too many things this week.