






















 <p>Levels of stress/distress</p>	 <p>What tells you that you are at this level?</p>	 <p>What steps can you take?</p>	 <p>Who supports you at this level?</p>
<p>Level Zero (calm, pre distress)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can fully focus on what I am doing right now • I feel fully connected to the people around me • I'm in a good place to support people around me • My thinking is clear • My breathing is steady • My muscles are relaxed • I feel safe right now 	<p>Plan and prepare during this time.</p> <p>Have activities ready for the children when you need to take a moment for yourself.</p> <p>With a clear and calm head, plan and create your tools, strategies, resources that can help you unwind and destress for when you're feeling like you need them.</p> <p>Fill out this sheet!!!</p>	<p>Who can support me?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who are the people who you regularly speak to and who are the important support figures in your life? • Keep in touch and stay connected to your communities, especially through social distancing, lockdown and shielding • Make space for important adult relationships • Have regular conversations with others where you can share moments of joy and laughter.

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<p>Level one</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am a little distracted and cannot fully focus on what I am doing right now • I feel a little less connected to the people around me • I'm finding it a little difficult to be so available • My thinking is a little unclear and fuzzy • My breathing is a little faster • I can feel some tightness in my muscles (neck, shoulders, back, hands...) • I feel a just a little wobbly right now 	<p><i>Example:</i></p> <p>Soothing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a warm, soothing drink e.g. Hot chocolate, tea. • Put on some hand cream • Wear your favourite socks <p>Safety</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play your favourite music • Watch a family-friendly feel good movie • Wrap up in a blanket and read a book together <p>Supportive words</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Sometimes even the sun needs to take a rest behind the clouds. You're allowed to rest too" 	<p>In addition to what you're already doing in level zero, who else supports you at this level?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you're a Foster Carer, speak regularly with your SSW and share the ups and down, magical and challenging moments of the role • Connect with people who 'get it' • Be mindful of groups or communities that make you feel anxious or that you're not doing enough

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<p>Level two</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am a more distracted and struggle to focus on what I am doing right now • I feel more disconnected to the people around me • There are moments where I feel a little impatient and less available to be there for others • My thinking is fuzzy and I need some space to think clearly • I can notice I'm breathing more rapidly • I can feel parts of my body being more tight and stiff • I feel wobbly right now 	<p>Soothing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enjoy some comforting smells (use your diffuser, nice lotions, candles when it is safe to do so). • Step outside and feel the breeze on your face, the sun on your skin. • Use some stretching and yoga exercise, with others! <p>Safety</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take a moment to write down your worries in a journal • Try a nurturing activity e.g. painting each other's nails, painting faces, drawing round each other's hands. • Plan for the end of the day to have time for yourself e.g. take a bath. <p>Supportive words</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "When you can't control the world around you, challenge yourself to control the way you respond and that is your superpower" 	<p>In addition to what you're already doing in level zero and one, who else support you at this level?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you are a Foster Carer make sure to specially talk about and make room in supervision for the moments you have found difficult and challenging • Check in with yourself and consider when is the last time you spoke with the people that 'get it' and who support you • Limit your access to media that might raise your anxiety or make you feel wobbly

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<p>Level three</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am a more distracted by thoughts & worries and struggle to focus on what I am doing right now, I have to keep bringing myself back to what I am doing. • I feel even more disconnected to the people around me, and I have to try hard to be there in the moment for others • I can notice myself feeling impatient and irritable when others need me but I'm not showing it • My thinking is muddled and it's hard work to gather my thoughts • My breathing is faster and I notice it especially when I am talking • I am really aware that parts of my body are tight and feel uncomfortable • I feel fragile right now 	<p><i>Example:</i></p> <p>Soothing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hang upside down on the couch or lie on the floor with your legs on the wall • Eat some chewy or crunchy food • Drink a smoothie or suck it through a straw <p>Safety</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure the children are safe and you might want to step out the room for a moment. • 5,4,3,2,1 grounding technique • Sing your favourite song together <p>Supportive Words</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Be kind to yourself, be kind to your body, be kind to your mind" 	<p>In addition to what you're already doing in level zero to two, who else supports you at this level?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you are a Foster Carer, be proactive and call your SSW to let them know and talk things through • If you're in any of the other groups, schedule and make time to specifically speak to the people in your life that understand, who 'get it', and who you feel safe to share the difficult stuff with.

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<p>Level four</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I feel so bombarded by thoughts that it is really hard to pay attention. • I really have to work really hard to be there for others. I am experiencing others need for support as demands on me. • I'm find myself sighing and snapping when others ask for my help and support. • My thinking is muddled and I can't keep track of what I'm thinking • My breathing is fast and I have to stop for a second to catch my breath • I am really aware that parts of my body feel stiff, tight and achy • I feel like I'm on the edge and I cannot take much more as things are right now 	<p><i>Example:</i></p> <p>Soothing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sitting down, rubbing and squeeze your legs or holding yourself tight • Running on the spot or star jumps • Knead some bread, squish some playdough, make slime <p>Safety</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take the time right now to look after yourself • Make sure the children are safe and step out the room to get some space, shake your legs, do a 'lions breath', or a 'wood-chopper' move. • Name it to tame it – recognise and say how you're feeling "Hello anxiety, I see you right now" <p>Supportive words</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It's going to be hard, but it's not going to be impossible 	<p>In addition to what you're already doing in level zero to three, who else supports you at this level?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you are a Foster Carer, be proactive and call your supports in Essex County Council • If you're in any other of the groups, consider who you can call today who 'gets it'. • Call a helpline to speak with people who provide a non-judgemental, listening ear or who are experienced working with the specific challenges you are facing.

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<p>Level five</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I cannot think and I realise that I am missing what's happening right now because I'm so caught up in my head. • I cannot be there for other people. It is too much to help and support others. • I just can't deal with any demands • I just can't think • My chest is tight, I'm sweaty, my head is spinning, it feels like I just can't breathe. • Everything hurts • I feel like I've got nothing left to give, I'm done, I'm at the end of my tether 	<p><i>Example:</i></p> <p>Soothing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put your feet on the floor, push your heels into the ground. Notice the feeling of your connection to the floor. • Strong but enjoyable smells and tastes: chew a mint leaf, extra strong gum, salt and vinegar crisps • Splash your face with some cold water <p>Safety</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Say a grounding statement: My name is..., I am (where are you), the time is... • 5,4,3,2,1 • Breath in for 4, hold for 6, out for 8. <p>Supportive words</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Sometimes", said the horse. "Sometimes what?" asked the boy. "Sometimes just getting up and carrying on is brave and magnificent" 	<p>In addition to what you're already doing in level zero to four, who else supports you at this level?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have your 'emergency' contact numbers written down here and save them in your phone. • If you are a Foster Carer, be proactive, call your supports in Essex County Council and be open and honest about where you're at • If you're in any other of the groups, consider who you can call as soon as possible to help you manage what feels overwhelming right now • Call a helpline as soon as you have space, to speak with people who provide a non-judgemental, listening ear or who are experienced

			<p>working with the specific challenges you are facing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reach out to support services in your area, such as your GP or local support for emotional well-being and mental health provision.
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