

# Building Strong Families

## Warning Signs of Stress

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This handout lists some of the warning signs that help you recognize stress in your own life. Please place a check mark next to any statement that is true for you. Are there other stress signals that are not listed here? If yes, add them.

- I am often irritated by other people.
- I easily become angry with others.
- My neck or back often feels tense.
- I have frequent headaches or stomach aches.
- I have trouble sleeping at night.
- I sometimes eat when I'm not hungry.
- I often lose my appetite.
- I often release anger in a destructive or aggressive way.
- I spend a lot of time worrying about things I cannot change.
- I often have diarrhea or constipation.
- I have high expectations for others and myself.
- I get upset when others or I don't meet my expectations.
- I have increased my use of alcohol, drugs (even aspirin), coffee or cigarettes.
- I am short tempered with others.
- Music, laughter, noise, or people talking gets on my nerves.
- I often yell at other people.
- I have nervous habits, such as cracking knuckles, shaking a leg, scratching.
- I find it difficult to talk about a problem with the person who is involved.
- I have a hard time listening to another's point of view.
- I don't have a close friend or acquaintance with whom I discuss problems.
- I often "escape" by napping or daydreaming.
- I take long lunch breaks and/or coffee breaks.
- I take the "long way" to work.
- I feel rushed, but I'm getting nowhere fast.
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Adapted from Roma Gay Adkins, Stress Level Questionnaire, Cooperative Extension Service, West Virginia University, Center for Extension and Continuing Education.