PARENTING STRESS and the EARLY INTERVENTIONIST

What Is Parenting Stress?
Parenting stress is the presence of personal, situational, and demographic factors that place strain on the parent-child system and impact parent-child relationship and interactions.

- Stressors can be factors both within and outside the parenting system
- Stressors within the parenting system can relate to either the child and/or the parent
- Stress is a normal part of parenting BUT heightened stress can lead to
  - Reduced parental sensitivity
  - Reduced sense of parental efficacy
  - Increased risk for abuse and neglect

What Are the Stressors?

Within-child stressors:
- Adaptability to change
- Demandingness of parents’ attention
- Mood and temperament
- Difficult behaviors (hyperactivity, distractibility)
- Attachment and interaction style
- Fulfillment of parents’ expectations

Within-parent stressors:
- Sense of competence and self-efficacy
- Motivation to fulfill parenting role
- Emotional availability
- Availability of social support
- Role restriction beyond being a parent
- Spousal or parental conflict

Life stress:
- Change in employment
- Change in housing
- Death or illness of a loved one
- Marriage, separation, or divorce
- Changes to physical health
- Legal problems

How Do I Measure?
- Parenting Stress Index Short Form (PSI/SF; Abidin, 2012)
- Parental Stress Scale (Berry & Jones, 1995)
- Parental Stress & Coping Inventory (Daire, Gonzales, & O’Hare, 2016)
- Parents’ Assessment of Protective Factors (QIC–EC, 2014)

How Do I Use this Info?
- Get to know your families better
- Identify areas warranting further counseling or referrals
- Gauge parent and caregiver receptiveness and readiness for learning and coaching
- Help parents understand their child’s strengths and their own parenting strengths
- Recognize greatest barriers to success and contributors to familial strain
- Pinpoint goal areas where strategies and training for parents can reduce stress
- Monitor gains in parent-child interaction and parent-child relationship

(Abidin, 2012; Barnette et al., 2012; Deater-Deckard, Chen, & Mallah, 2017; Perkin, Finegood, & Swain, 2013; Tamis-LeMonda et al., 1996)