

# Arizona Peace Officer Standards and Training

## Basic Curriculum Lesson Plan

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LESSON TITLE: STRESS MANAGEMENT FAMILIES PART II - 1.6

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SUBJECT:	Stress Management, Families Part II
AZ POST DESIGNATION:	1.6
HOURS:	2
COURSE CONTENT	A discussion of the sources, manifestations and stages of stress, plus techniques for managing stress and keys to emotional survival. This section is designed to educate family members as to the stresses their loved one will be experiencing while they are training to become a police officer. This portion to be taught just prior to graduation
PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES	
NOTE OF INTEREST:	Stress inoculation (exposing recruits to stress) in a controlled setting may help them to be able to increase confidence for working the street. When recruits are exposed to a tense environment that includes physical exercise, where things are regimented, timelines are necessary, and attention to detail is demanded, then it gives them the opportunity to inspect their physiological response (increase in heart rate, increase in breathing, increase in blood pressure, internal messaging to their brain). This environment can help strengthen resolve, causing recruits to focus, work together, and accomplish tasks with tight deadlines. This can lead to increased confidence, and help them to utilize effective coping strategies (breathing). Family members will be introduced to what their loved one is experiencing on a daily basis while at the academy. How their lives have changed and how it will impact their lives in turn. The understanding of how their loved ones respond to their training will open dialogs to the life of a law enforcement officer.

DATE FIRST PREPARED: October 2023

PREPARED BY: SME Committee

REVIEWED – REVISED:

DATE:

AZ POST – APPROVAL: Lori Wait

DATE: October 2023

CLASS LEVEL: Student

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGY: Interactive lecture, class discussion and demonstration.

SUCCESS CRITERIA: 70% or higher on a written, multiple-choice examination.

COMPUTER FILE NAME: 1.6 Stress Management, Families Part II

DATE RELEASED TO THE SHARE FILE: October 2023

**I. INTRODUCTION**

- A. Instructor – (self) introduction.
- B. Preview of performance objectives.

**II. CLASS RECOMMENDATIONS AND LOGISTICS**

- A. Recommendation is to have the class at the completion of an academy day. This allows for families to not have to take off work and is easier for day care issues when it is after hours. Academies have seen success with scheduling this at the end of the week during the evening of the last day of that week.
- B. Recommendation is to have a dynamic and engaging speaker, preferably not academy staff as the stress of the academy is still ongoing, but someone who is familiar with the academy and also has knowledge of teaching Stress Mgmt.
- C. Recommend to allow the recruits to be in plain clothes so they can relax and be more involved in the discussion.
- D. Family guests should be limited to spouses, significant others or whoever the recruit confides in or considers their support system (best friends, mentors, loved ones). If possible, young children can be a distraction and should not be present during the presentation.
- E. If possible, have water, coffee, and snacks available for the families. This also helps to create a more relaxed atmosphere where families will be more involved and engaged. For most of them, like the recruits, this is their first time in a law enforcement setting and anything you can do to help ease the nerves is beneficial.
- F. Music or a loop video playing as guests arrive also helps. This music should be played during the break as well.

**III. CLASS TOPICS RECOMMENDATIONS**

- A. Focus is on stressors of the career(what to expect)
- B. Instructors should cover the following topics:
  - 1. What is stress?

2. How to recognize burnout (If instructor is educated in it, have them go over Maslach's Burnout Inventory)
3. If the instructor is educated in it, have them discuss the four pillars of health.
4. Discuss the consequences of stress and the differences between moral injury, moral distress, compassion fatigue and PTSD and how they all intertwine after an event if left untreated.
5. Discussion on post traumatic growth is also good if the instructor has education and knowledge on the topic.
6. If the instructor has knowledge on teaching the topic, they should discuss how individual perception relates to stress.
7. Discuss the different types of work stressors that the new officers may see in their careers.
8. Go over several coping mechanisms on how to handle those stressors. Ex., breathing, meditation, therapy, mindfulness, exercise, etc.
9. The more coping mechanisms and strategies given will allow the new officer and their family to consider what may work for them.
10. Through personal experience or through what they have observed in their careers, the instructor should include real and practical stories and how they have succeeded and what they did to be successful in their careers while managing the stressors of the job and family.
11. The new officers should be given real and practical advice on anything from the stresses of a critical incident, finances, sex, raising kids, managing family and friends, etc. while in law enforcement. The law enforcement world is different than what they are used to and any real and practical advice could be helpful.
12. The new officers should be made aware of all of the support systems that are available to them and their families through their agencies health and wellness units, EPA units, or any outside organizations that may be useful to them.

- C. At some point, typically after the first hour, a break should be given. Upon returning from break, a good ice breaker is to have each recruit introduce who they brought with them to the class. This gives the instructor a better understanding of the audience and how to direct statements and questions for the remainder.
- D. Recommended to leave at least 15 minutes at the end of the presentation to take Q&A from the families.
- E. Suggested closing is to remind the families that they are now part of our law enforcement family and reinforce to them how we stick together and they are not alone when dealing with the career. Re-emphasize the resources available to them and welcome them to the law enforcement family.

**IV. CONCLUSION**

- A. Review of performance objectives.
- B. Final questions and answers.
- C. Instructor closing comment(s).