

# The Four F's of Stress



When our nervous system is presented with prolonged feelings of being in danger or experiencing trauma, we can go from a rational thought mode into survival mode. This is an intense shift in how our brain operates and responds to the environment. The “4 F’s” describe different types of responses to stress and trauma

## *What are the 4 F's?*

## *How to Support*

### **Fight**

Fight resembles the body preparing to go into battle

### **Make the body safe**

bring more awareness to body using tactile, proprioceptive, and vestibular inputs

### **Flight**

Flight appears as the body wanting to run away or flee from danger

### **Ground in the present**

Connect to the earth and the surroundings with deep breathing, visual and auditory inputs

### **Freeze**

Freeze is a shut down as the body stops and disconnects from the situation

### **Move out of shut down**

Get “unstuck” with movement, compression, and tactile inputs

### **Fawn**

Fawning is appeasing the person with power and submitting to their will in order to avoid conflict

### **Build Confidence**

Participate in fun activities, planning for predictability, emphasize strengths and as much autonomy as possible