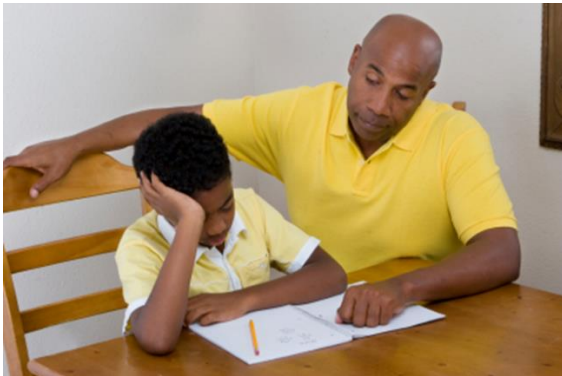


## *Types of Stress: Positive, Tolerable and Toxic Stress*

**Positive stress** is a normal and essential part of healthy development, characterized by brief increases in heart rate and mild elevations in hormone levels. Some situations that might trigger a positive stress response are the first day with a new caregiver or receiving an immunization shot.



**Tolerable stress** activates the body's alert systems to a greater degree as a result of more severe, longer-lasting difficulties, such as the loss of a loved one, a natural disaster, or a frightening injury. If the time is limited and protected by relationships with adults who help the child, the brain and other organs recover from what might otherwise be damaging effects.



**Toxic stress** can occur, when a child experiences strong, frequent, and/or long lasting difficult events — such as physical or emotional abuse, caregiver substance abuse or mental illness and exposure to violence without enough adult support. This kind of prolonged activation of the stress response systems can disrupt brain building and other organ systems, and increase the risk for stress-related disease and intellectual impairment, throughout the adult years.