Deep Breathing-Stretching Relaxation Activity

Explain to the parent we are going to try a relaxation technique you may find helpful. You are going to sit with your eyes closed. Try to let your muscles relax and focus on the music. Remind the parents this is a safe environment.

(If children are present, tell the parents to hold them on their laps facing towards them while they massage the child’s back.)

Turn down lights.
Begin playing soft Native music.
Ask parents to take big stretches and to help their children stretch.
Ask parents to sit in a comfortable position, right ankle over the left.
Close eyes and take 12 slow deep breaths.
Massage your hands.
Focus on the music.
Continue to keep their eyes closed and breathe slowly.
When the song ends tell the parents to slowly open their eyes when they are ready.
When the group is ready turn the lights back on.

Ask parents how they feel. Do they think they can take time each day to practice the activity? Ask what other strategies they can use?
"Summer Field" Meditation

Take a deep breath in through the nose and out through the mouth.

Allow your body to just let go.

Become aware of any tension in your body and just breathe into that area for a moment.....

Now as you take in each breath say to yourself "I am.." and as you breathe out say to yourself "relaxed", in "I am"....out "relaxed", "I am....relaxed".

Just allow your mind and body to be peaceful, if thoughts come just let them pass and go back to focussing on your breath, as it now gently flows in through your nose notice the coolness of the air just as it enters your nostrils.......... "I am relaxed"....... now picture yourself in a beautiful meadow, surrounded by wildflowers, you can hear birds a little way off and you know that you are completely safe.

You can feel the warmth of the sun on your face and body. As you gently lay down on the soft grass and feel supported by the earth and warmed by the sun you know that you have everything you need.

Your mind, body and spirit are happy healthy and relaxed...... just lie here for a moment and enjoy this wonderful place of peace and calm.

Now when you are ready just breathe a little more deeply, feel the vital flow of energy through your body as you gently come back to the room and continue on with your day refreshed and re-energised, knowing that you can return to your special place of calm anytime you want just by recalling it.
A lecturer, when explaining stress management to an audience, raised a glass of water and asked, "How heavy is this glass of water?"
Answers called out ranged from 20g to 500g. The lecturer replied, "The absolute weight doesn’t matter. It depends on how long you try to hold it."

"If I hold it for a minute, that’s not a problem. If I hold it for an hour, I’ll have an ache in my right arm. If I hold it for a day, you’ll have to call an ambulance. In each case, it’s the same weight, but the longer I hold it, the heavier it becomes."

He continued, "And that’s the way it is with stress management. If we carry our burdens all the time, sooner or later, as the burden becomes increasingly heavy, we won’t be able to carry on."

"As with the glass of water, you have to put it down for a while and rest before holding it again. When we’re refreshed, we can carry on with the burden."

"So, before you return home tonight, put the burden of work down. Don’t carry it home. You can pick it up tomorrow. Whatever burdens you’re carrying now, let them down for a moment if you can."

"Relax; pick them up later after you’ve rested. Life is short. Enjoy it!"

http://www.appleseeds.org/Stress-Manage.htm