



STRESS RELIEF WHILE CARING FOR YOUNG CHILDREN

CHALLENGES

Realize the challenges of parenting



Young children often test limits and boundaries. This is a normal part of development. If you feel yourself getting overwhelmed, take a break. Give them an activity they can do alone for a minute and take a step back to calm yourself. Remaining calm is more important than disciplining every misbehavior.

LIMIT TIME ON SOCIAL MEDIA AND NEWS

Less news, less stress



Give yourself limits on the amount of time you spend on news articles and social media that will fill you with worry and anxiety. Choose a time of day to get caught up for 5-10 minutes and then unplug. Limit the amount of exposure your child has these outlets as well. Children may be made fearful by something they hear or see on the news.

CREATE CONNECTION

Simple times are the best times



Young children crave caregiver attention and interaction. Sit on the floor and play their favorite game with their rules. It's ok if they move on to something else in 2 minutes. Just follow their lead. Reading books, singing songs, or making a parade through the house can be fun and entertaining too.

DOWN TIME, ME TIME

Plan a rest time for everyone



Find a time for everyone in the family to safely go to their own space for rest. The amount of time needed will depend on the age of child, but everyone can use a 10 or more minute break to lay quietly and rest. Use this time to let yourself rest too. Dishes and clean up can wait. You deserve a break too!



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ROUTINE AND REPEAT

Setting a schedule for you and your child



Build a routine that works at your child's pace. If you get off a little bit no big deal. Having a routine helps children know what to expect next. Reminding them of transitions, "Choose one more thing, and then it's time to go inside, pick up, eat dinner, etc." helps them anticipate that change is coming.

GO OUTSIDE

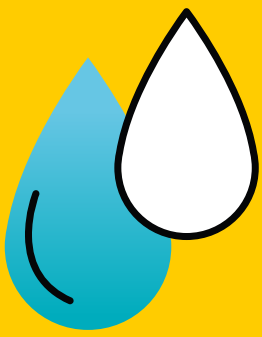
Fresh air and the brain



Being outside is a great way to pass time. Children will enjoy exploring the changes of the seasons, taking a walk, or just laying in the grass. Bring out the bubbles or chalk too. Sunlight helps our bodies stay in rhythm with time and is a great mood booster for everyone.

GRUMPY AND HUNGRY

Taking care of their needs, your needs



Your little one can easily get overwhelmed by the world around him or her and melt down. Use the HALT method and check in on their needs (and your own). Hungry, Angry, Lonely, Tired. Have you had enough water today? Are you just tired of doing all the things? We can get out of the habit of taking care of our bodies when routines change.

WHEN IT GETS TO BE TOO MUCH

Call for back-up



Parents need support with young children at home. Have a couple of friends or relatives you can call when you need to vent. If you feel like you might "lost it" ask for help from a trusted relative or friend. Parenting is draining and challenging. If you need support call 1-800-CHILDREN or 1-800-4-A-Child.