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How To Combat Parenting Stress

Stress Management for Parents: Important Steps to Take

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If you have children, you've likely experienced your share of parenting stress, and you're not alone. A [recent study](#) found that parents of all types tend to suffer more symptoms of depression than non-parents. As this study illustrates, parents need to take care of their own emotional well-being as well as their children's, and find enough social support for themselves and their family. Here are some important things that parents can do.

[Maintain a supportive network.](#)

Parents today may experience less [social support](#) than in previous times. The reality that now families live further from each other, parents work more, and we have less time and energy to spend together, along with a host of other factors, leaves families with fewer resources and less emotional support to give and share. However, if you make an effort to develop a supportive network, you can still find these benefits. While you might not be getting these benefits from extended family and neighbors like families in the past had, you can find people with similar needs and values to network with and share support. These people can keep you feeling nurtured and supported for years to come, buffering you from some of the factors that contribute to parenting stress and depression in parents.

[Practice time management and organization techniques.](#)

Parents these days, especially mothers, feel rushed much of the time, as we shuttle kids from sports practices to music lessons to scout meetings to play dates. And this doesn't include household and work responsibilities! All these activities, some of which are necessary and some of which are desirable for their ability to develop our children's talents and social skills, can contribute to feelings of stress and of being overwhelmed, and can keep us from having important family time and 'down' time. [Being organized](#), [managing time wisely](#), and [learning to say no](#) to activities that aren't a top priority can open up more time for family bonding, relaxation and, well, sanity.

[Practice stress management techniques.](#)

After opening up some time in your schedule, finding a stress management practice (or a few) to regularly practice can help you manage parenting stress, keep you healthier and happier in the long run, and help you feel better emotionally now.

[Develop interests that 'feed your soul'.](#)

While we see value in signing our children up for lessons and enriching classes, many parents forget to put themselves on the list of people need to learn and grow. Having a hobby or other creative outlet can help you relieve stress, lift your spirits, and help you maintain your identity as a person and not just a parent. This can help you keep your children's lives in perspective and deal with some of the worry and anxiety that comes from being a parent.

[Take care of your body.](#)

Taking care of your body can have lasting physical and emotional benefits. Eating a [healthy diet](#), for example, can stabilize your blood sugar levels and help keep mood swings at bay. It can also keep your body healthier so you're sick less often, feel better about yourself, and live longer. Maintaining a [regular exercise regime](#) can provide the same benefits, plus give you a release of endorphins and other positive emotions, help you release tension, and lower levels of stress hormones like [cortisol](#).

[Be smart with your finances.](#)

As we all know, raising a child is expensive! The financial cost of raising a child can take an emotional toll in the form of money worries. Learning better [money management techniques](#) can give you more financial choices and keep you less stressed about your budget and your future.

[Enjoy your children!](#)



Enjoying your children is one of the best ways to care for yourself.
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Most of us have children because we want to enjoy them as we help them become and remain healthy, productive, compassionate and fun adults. Don't forget to thoroughly enjoy your kids throughout their lives and yours. Hug them often, tell them you love them and what you love about them, and enjoy (and learn from) the unique people that they are. Don't let a day go to waste!

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