

Parent and Adult Wellness



You are the first and most important person in your child's life, it's important to take time to care for yourself too. Healthy parents raise healthy children!

The following tips from Smart Start Central Oklahoma and [this recent article](#) from The New York Times may be helpful.

Reach Out

Call a friend, family member, coworker, neighbor...right now we can use all the friends and support we can get. Make sure these are POSITIVE people (those that appreciate you and help you feel good about yourself). Stay in touch with friends and family members by setting up a recurring time to talk.

Find Moments for Yourself

- Try to find adult time – you can get worn down dealing with young children all day and you need some adult interaction.
- Take a walk – pack up your baby or young child in the stroller and just get out of the house for a few minutes. Fresh air and a moving body will relieve stress and increase energy and your baby/young child will enjoy the ride!
- Close your eyes and think of one person you trust and know you can share your feelings with. Now, the next time you are feeling stressed or overwhelmed as a parent, find that person to talk to!
- Learn a new hobby—you don't have to leave your house to learn something new try learning a new recipe, drawing, yoga, reading, journaling, etc.
- Drink plenty of water—dehydration can cause headaches and irritability!

Give Yourself Grace

- These are unusual circumstances it's okay to change the rules in your home. For instance, if you're working from home then you may need to change screen time rules.
- Give yourself permission to cut corners so you and your family can get through this together.
- Your children may have lots of question and you may not have all the answers. Reassure them that you are here for them and things will get better soon.

Don't Judge Coping Styles

- These are unusual circumstances and everyone is going to handle the stress very differently. It's important that we try not to judge our own coping mechanisms and others coping styles as well.
- When there are disagreements, practice starting sentences with the phrases "I need" or "I would feel better if."

Remember Sleep Hygiene

- You may be working from home but you can still create a schedule for yourself and try to have a designated work area that is not your bed.
- Plan ahead and try to keep to a routine—knowing your schedule and what to expect can relieve stress—but always be ready for changes and expect a few bumps in the road.
- Make sure your child gets to bed early and you get to bed and get your rest—the house cleaning can wait!! You are not going to be parenting well if you are exhausted!

Timebox Your Worries

- Create boundaries, tell yourself: I'm only checking news twice a day, and I'll set a timer to limit my exposure.
- You can also designate a half-hour per day to be your "worry time." If worries arise outside that 30 minutes then write them down on a piece of paper to get them out of your head.
- Keep a sense of humor—things are not usually as bad as they seem.

Help Others as Much as You Can

- Be there for others by sending a loving text or calling them.
- Listen for opportunities to help and support in your neighborhood and community. There are many people in great need and could benefit from your donation or support.