

Kin and Kids Outreach & Support Program



Managing Stress

Caring for children can be exhausting and stressful. If you are a grandparent, relative or other non-parent caregiver providing full time care to children, then you are most likely stressed and dealing with a particular set of challenges related only to care giving to a child that is not yours.

It does not matter if you experience a lot of stress or just a little, stress has an impact on your body, thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. Stress can wear you down and become overwhelming. Stress can lead to frequent bad moods, decreased productivity, and affect your daily routines and personal relationships.

Some symptoms of stress consist of but not limited to stomach issues, headache and body aches, heart and blood pressure issues, sleep disorders, anxiety, depression, anger, lack of focus and forgetfulness. Often things that are not in our control can cause stress. However, what is in your control is the way you deal with stress by making a positive choice to maintain good physical and mental health so you can be there for your children.

It is important to keep your self mentally rejuvenated and avoid spending too much time alone. Connect with someone you feel comfortable talking with such as a friend, someone through a shared spiritual faith, or join a support group. Staying physically rejuvenated also helps to increase the production of endorphins which are messages in your brain that say "I feel good".

Focus on the positive aspects of your life. Try not to focus on the things that you can't change rather keep the focus on what you can change. De-clutter your life. Clutter has a way of causing stress. When you're surrounded by more things than you can manage, it sends a visual message of disorder which can lead to unmanageable chaos.



Learn to say No. Care giving for children come huge responsibility. Trying to balance the demands of family members with limited time can result in stress. By prioritizing and not giving into guilt (By saying no) can reduce stress.



BE KIND TO YOURSELF

- Exercise & enjoyable activities can reduce high blood pressure and increase overall wellness
- Get plenty of rest
- Do not skip meals and eat fresh fruits, and veggies
- Stay hydrated, drink plenty of water
- Take advantage of nice weather, enjoy a walk, work in the garden, go on a picnic
- Affirm your own strengths
- Try something new such as yoga or Tai chi or meditation
- Read a book, find or enjoy a hobby
- Pamper yourself!

If you are healthy and happy, your children will be too.