

Finding Help When You Need It



What's Happening

Being a parent is a 24-hour-a-day job, and sometimes it can feel overwhelming. Extra challenges can add to a parent's stress. For instance:

- Having a new baby
- Having a child with a disability
- Feeling alone, or not having friends or family nearby
- Being a single parent or having a partner who does not support you
- Dealing with money troubles, problems with your job, or housing concerns

What You Might Be Feeling

When life is stressful, parents sometimes feel:

- Angry—at your spouse, your friends, or even your children
- Lonely—like you are the only person dealing with so many problems
- Depressed—sad and unable to face your problems
- Overwhelmed—you don't know where to begin or you feel like giving up

What You Can Do

Stay in contact with friends and family who support you and make you feel good about yourself. Other parents can be a good source of support. If you think stress may be affecting the way you treat your children, or if you just want some extra support, try the following:

- **Talk to someone.** Tell a friend, health-care provider, counselor, or a leader in your faith community how you feel. Or, join a support group for parents.
- **Get babysitting help when you need a break.** Some parents trade babysitting with another family, so each parent gets a break.
- **Reach out to other parents.** You may find parents with children the same ages as yours at a local playground, your church, or your child's daycare or school.
- **Call a help line.** Most States have help lines for parents. Childhelp® runs a national 24-hour hotline (1.800.4.A.CHILD) for parents who need help or parenting advice.
- **Talk to your child's school.** Teachers and school counselors often can point you to other places that can help.
- **Take a class for parents.** You can always learn new skills to care for your children. Classes for parents on discipline, school success, or child development can help you build on what you already know about raising a happy, healthy child.

It is normal for parents to feel overwhelmed sometimes, but don't let these feelings affect how you treat your children. Help is just a phone call away! Call a friend, family member, church, or social service agency to talk to someone.

This tip sheet was created with input from experts in national organizations that work to protect children and promote healthy families. To download this tip sheet or for more parenting tips, go to www.childwelfare.gov/preventing/promoting/parenting or call 800.394.3366.

