

Looking after yourself Ask for help if you need it

Friends and family can often help - don't be afraid to ask them to have your child for a bit if you need some time out to sort out your own stuff. You can repay them when things get better for you!

Don't struggle alone

If things are getting you down, it's important to recognise this. Talk to someone you trust and see what they think. Many people go on struggling with very difficult situations because they feel they should be able to cope and don't deserve any help.

Talk to us

We are here to listen and support and will be able to offer some suggestions of where there is support locally.

Take time for yourself

It's easy to say take some time for yourself but in reality this may not feel possible. You might be too busy, exhausted or hard up for exercise or hobbies. But even a night in with a friend, a DVD box set or your favourite dinner can help.

Don't blame yourself

If your child is having problems, don't be too hard on yourself or blame yourself. Although it can be upsetting and worrying if your child is having a bad time, and it makes your relationship with them feel more stressful, you are not a bad parent. Children often take it out on those closest to them, so you might be feeling the effect of their very powerful emotions.

You're doing everything you can

If you had a difficult time growing up yourself, or have had emotional problems or mental health problems, it can be very worrying to think that the same thing might happen to your child. But the love and care you show them and the fact that you are trying to help will protect against this. Getting help for them and perhaps for yourself too can give them the best chance of feeling better.

Speak to your GP if you're struggling to cope

Go to your GP if things are really getting on top of you. Asking for some support from your doctor or a referral to a counselling service is a sign of strength. You can't help your child if you are not being supported yourself. Some people worry their parenting will be judged - but making that first step will be the best chance of feeling better.



For further support::

<https://www.annafreud.org/early-years/early-years-in-mind/resources/self-care-top-tips-for-young-parents-and-carers/>

<https://api.courageousparentsnetwork.org/app/uploads/2017/10/CPN-SelfCare-2.pdf>

<https://parentselfcare.com/free-downloads-to-boost-your-selfcare>

<https://cavuhb.nhs.wales/files/resilience-project/parent-group-resources/self-care-parents-english-pdf/>

All you need is love.



At Wheatley Lane

with special thanks to Sophia, Freddie, Elizabeth, Taffin, Afiya and Zaid for their contributions...



Parent Self care



We will always seek to work alongside parents to ensure the best outcomes for our pupils and families. If you have any concerns or questions at any time, please contact us

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What is Parent Self Care?

What is self-care? Self-care includes healthy and positive activities we deliberately engage in to take care of our mental, emotional or physical health. Drinking lots of water, exercising, engaging in mindfulness, taking a break, are all examples of self-care.

Why is self-care important? By prioritizing activities that help manage stress and promote a healthy lifestyle self-care helps us maintain our general health and sense of wellbeing. As parents we can't pour from an empty cup and self-care practices help us be the best we can be for our kids.

Why is modelling self-care to my children important? By role-modelling healthy and positive self-care practices we are teaching our kids that it is important to prioritise our physical, mental and emotional health. Self-care doesn't need to be costly or time consuming. Self-care can be as simple as taking a moment to recognize something nice in your environment and to welcome in a feeling of contentment. Consider some of the things that bring you and your children comfort and joy. Consider making them available throughout the day or at times when you are feeling overwhelmed or stressed.

Ideas and suggestions for self care—some won't be for everyone—but you might be able to find something that suits you.

Engaging in our Interests or Hobbies Finding time to engage in things that you enjoy can boost your self-esteem and have a positive impact on your wellbeing. This might include getting back into any old hobbies or interests that you may have had before, or starting a new hobby! This will look different for everyone, but some ideas could be: reading a book, time being creative (crafting, art, painting), baking, watching your favourite TV show, exercising, caring for your plants, cooking a new recipe, having a pamper evening, seeing your friends, or doing a puzzle/jigsaw.

Physical Activity Physical activity can also be a great way to de-stress and release endorphins, as well as helping to maintain our physical health, which in turn can help our mental health. Sunlight and fresh air are also instant mood-boosters. Regular exercise doesn't have to mean intense running, it can also include: taking the dog for a walk or going for a walk alone, putting on some music and dancing, following a fitness video on YouTube, practising yoga, as well as playing with the children. Research also suggests that exposure to natural surroundings is beneficial to our wellbeing, so if you can get out into green space (even if it's just your local park) all the better.

Practising Self-Compassion Be kind to yourself and remind yourself to take things one day at a time; there will undoubtedly be good and not so good days, so avoid setting unrealistic goals and try to be compassionate and empathetic to yourself. We're often much harder on ourselves than we would be to anyone else – the old saying goes that, 'You are your own worst critic'. Trying to imagine how you would speak to a friend can be a helpful first step in being kinder to yourself– how would you talk to them, how would you comfort and encourage them?

Slowing Down Slowing down can also be key in allowing us to be more present, focused, to rest and recharge. Having a bath or a shower can be a good way to create intentional space to recharge. Find some time to be alone: stretch your body, take a few deep breaths, practice mindfulness and breathing techniques, try to include having quiet time: reading a chapter of a book, lighting your favourite candle, putting on your comfiest clothes, making a hot drink and cuddling your pets.

Connecting With Others and Putting Boundaries in Place Trying to keep in touch with friends and family can help you to stay connected and supported. Connect with people that have a positive impact in your life, whether it be in person, over the phone, or a text message. Allow space for all of your feelings and reach out to people who make you feel safe. Take the time to set boundaries that will protect yourself and your energy. It's OK to say no; remember that you have the right to say yes or no without having to explain your reasons. Ask for help from others when you need it. Asking for help from others can sometimes feel as if we're failing, but parenting can be tough and reaching out for support is nothing to feel ashamed of. Whether it's looking after your child for a short period to allow you to get things done, or running a small errand for you, friends and family will often be happy to help.