



### Some Stress Relievers

When you feel overwhelmed with stress and need to calm down, here are some tips...

- Breathe deeply or count to ten. Put your child in a safe area and go outside or to another room for a few minutes.
- Lie on the floor with your feet up on a chair. Place a cool cloth on your face and think of a peaceful scene. Stay there for five minutes.
- Stop. Try to think what is making you so angry. Is it the children or is it something else? Are you taking your frustrations out on them?
- Designate a place, even a chair or a corner, as a “time-out” spot where you can go when you feel you are losing your temper. Designate a safe, separate place for your child. When you are cool and collected, tell your child what made you angry.

### People Who Will Help

For parent discussion groups and communication skills workshops in your area, contact:

- Your County Extension Family Living Agent  
<https://counties.uwex.edu>
- Prevent Child Abuse Wisconsin  
920-969-7925 or 1-800-CHILDREN

### Helplines:

Milwaukee – 414-671-0566

Madison – 608-241-2221

### Others who will help:

Look online or in the yellow pages of your telephone directory under social or human service organizations. Examples might include:

- Mental Health Association
- Catholic Social Services
- Lutheran Social Services

### Contact your county...

Social or Human Service Department

To order additional copies of this brochure, contact the Child Care Information Center (CCIC) at [ccic@wi.gov](mailto:ccic@wi.gov) or 1-800-362-7353.



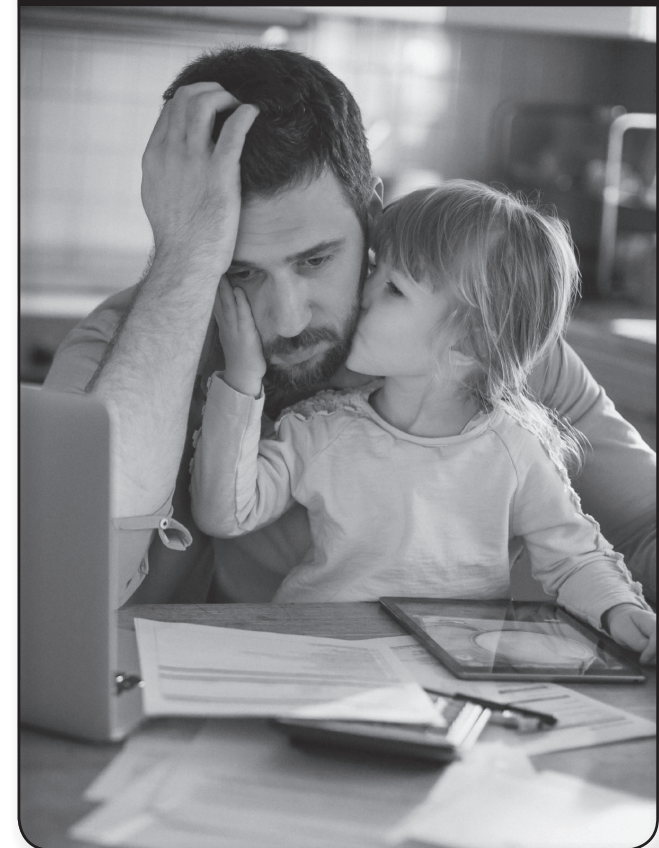
WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF  
CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

State of Wisconsin Department of Children and Families  
Division of Early Care and Education  
P.O. Box 8916, Madison, WI 53708-8916

The Department of Children and Families is an equal opportunity employer and service provider. If you have a disability and need to access services, receive information in an alternate format, or need information translated to another language, please call the Division of Early Care and Education at 608-422-6002. Individuals who are **deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind or speech disabled** can use the free Wisconsin Relay Service (WRS) – 711 to contact the department.

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# What Parents Can Do About STRESS



## On Being a Parent

Being a parent is one of the hardest jobs in the world. It places constant demands on your time and patience. The pressures can be overwhelming. These pressures can make you feel frustrated, irritated, resentful and helpless — all normal feelings.

The word for these feelings is STRESS. If you consistently have any of these feelings, you could be under stress:

### Lonely and cut off

- “I’m always tied down to the house and kids!”
- “I don’t have anyone to talk to.”
- “Nobody could understand...”
- “If I were only closer to my family...”

### Resentful and angry

- “No one appreciates me.”
- “Why does the burden fall on me?”
- “I can never do what I want to do.”
- “Being a parent is not what I thought it would be.”

### Up the wall with your kids

- “I lose my temper more often lately.”
- “I can’t stand the crying another minute.”
- “I’m afraid of what I might do to him.”
- “I’m in constant conflict with my teenager.”

### Down on yourself

- “I can’t do anything right.”
- “I feel so unimportant.”
- “I try hard, but never get anywhere.”

### Unsure

- “I don’t know what to do with this child.”
- “I can’t decide what to do next.”
- “I want to be a ‘good’ parent, but I don’t know how.”
- “I never know if I’m doing the right thing.”

## Stress Takes Its Toll

When you are under stress, you may lash out at those closest to you — even your children. Lashing out can cause more stress — for you **and** your child. It’s painful for your child. It’s painful and scary for you. It can be a vicious circle.

Or you may just withdraw or escape by whatever means—watching TV, overeating or drinking or spending time away from your family — so you won’t have to deal with the problems. This doesn’t help either.



## No One Can Do It Alone

When these stresses build and you find yourself losing control or giving up, there are people who can help. You just have to reach out to them.

### Talk It Out

Share your feelings with someone you trust — a friend, a relative, your spouse, your clergyman, your doctor, a close neighbor.

Find a parent support group or parent education course in your area. (See back page for agencies that can help you and your family.)

## When You Reach Out You Will Discover That ...

- You are not alone . Other parents have problems like yours.
- There are people who care about you and will listen to you.
- There are people who can help you with your children.

### You will learn ...

- How to meet your own needs and take time for yourself.
- How to deal with the stress in your life — in a constructive way.
- What to expect of children at each stage of their development.
- Ways to discipline that may work best for you and reduce stress for you **and** your children.

### You will realize ...

- That you are important.
- When you feel better about yourself, you are better able to deal with the day to day crises.
- When **you** feel good, you help everyone near you feel good, too.

