

Relieving Stress Together



Caring for your family and home, juggling finances and a busy schedule, and working hard or hunting for employment can leave you weary.

Yelling, becoming easily angered, or physically lashing out at your children could be happening more often than you'd like. Or maybe instead of venting, you've become depressed, withdrawn or emotionally detached.

If either of these scenarios describes you, stress may be taking a toll. Surprisingly, it can affect your children, too.

While everyone's needs may differ, families can practice some common strategies to reduce anxiety, and in the process, grow closer.

- * **SCHEDULE** regular family meetings and allow everyone (children and adults) to express concerns without interruption.
- * **ELIMINATE CHAOS** by doing household chores together. Reinforce that you're working as a team to keep your home clean and organized.
- * **BE A GOOD LISTENER.** Don't always criticize, offer advice or provide solutions. Sometimes allowing a person to talk is the best medicine.
- * **PLAY MUSIC** and dance. It's great exercise and lightens the mood.
- * **LIMIT ACCESS TO TV** and Internet news that may cause anxiety or fear.
- * Take a few minutes of **QUIET TIME** for yourself, and with your child, every day.
- * **ACCEPT** that ups and downs are part of life, and learn to handle them in positive ways. Your children are watching how you react so they can follow your lead.

